



# Utah Transit Authority

## Local Advisory Council

### MEETING MINUTES - Draft

669 West 200 South  
Salt Lake City, UT 84101

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**Wednesday, November 2, 2022**

**1:00 PM**

**FrontLines Headquarters**

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**Present:** Chair Julie Fullmer  
Vice Chair Mark Johnson  
2nd Vice-Chair Troy Walker  
Council Member Karen Cronin  
Council Member Erin Mendenhall  
Council Member Dan Peay  
Alternate Council Member Ellen Birrell

**Excused:** Council Member Leonard Call  
Council Member Trent Staggs  
Council Member Bob Stevenson  
Alternate Council Member Jon Larsen

Also in attendance were UTA Board of Trustees Chair Carlton Christensen, Trustee Beth Holbrook, Trustee Jeff Acerson, along with UTA staff, media representatives, and interested community members.

#### **1. Call to Order & Opening Remarks**

Chair Fullmer welcomed attendees and called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. Council Members Call, Stevenson, and Staggs were excused. Council Member Staggs will be represented by Alternate Council Member Birrell.

#### **2. Pledge of Allegiance**

Attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **3. Safety First Minute**

Nichol Bourdeaux, UTA Chief Planning & Engagement Officer, delivered a brief safety message.

#### **4. Public Comment**

An in-person comment was presented by Mr. Andrew Gruber, Executive Director, Wasatch Front Regional Council (WFRC). Mr. Gruber shared an update on the engagement activities of the local Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), in relation to Station Area Plans (SAPs). He referenced House Bill 462, adopted during the last legislative session, which requires each municipality to develop a SAP. He expressed the desire to work with municipalities within each council member's area for their communities to be included in the planning and shared vision of the MPOs.

An online comment was received and distributed to the council prior to the meeting and is

attached as Appendix A.

## 5. Consent

### a. **Approval of September 07, 2022 Local Advisory Council Meeting Minutes**

A motion was made by 2nd Vice-Chair Walker, and seconded by Council Member Cronin, to approve the consent agenda. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

## 6. Annual Meeting Calendar

### a. **AR2022-11-01 - Resolution Giving Notice and Setting Regular Meeting Dates for Calendar Year 2023**

Chair Fullmer presented the proposed 2023 Local Advisory Council meeting dates as follows:

- Wednesday, February 15, 2023, 1:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, May 31, 2023, 1:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, September 27, 2023, 1:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, November 29, 2023, 1:00 p.m.

Chair Fullmer asked if there were any objections to the proposed dates. None were expressed.

A motion was made by Council Member Mendenhall, and seconded by 2nd Vice-Chair Walker, that this Resolution be approved. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

## 7. Capital Projects

### a. **AR2022-11-02 - Resolution Approving the Proposed 2023-2027 Capital Plan and Recommending Approval by the Authority's Board of Trustees**

Bill Greene, UTA Chief Financial Officer, was joined by David Hancock, UTA Director of Capital Development, and Daniel Hofer, UTA Director of Capital Assets & Project Controls.

Mr. Hofer provided a summary of the proposed five-year capital plan including goals, budgets by year (2023 - 2027), major projects, state of good repair detail, and next steps. Mr. Hofer also referenced projects with unsecured or pending funding.

Discussion ensued. Questions regarding unsecured or pending funding, the approval process for budget proposals and movement of funds, and clarification on projects that fall under UDOT's responsibility, were posed by the Council, and answered by staff.

Following the presentation, Alternate Council Member Birrell read a prepared statement from Council Member Staggs, outlining his concerns regarding inequity of service in his community. Council Member Mendenhall provided a response to Council Member Staggs' concerns and addressed inaccuracies contained in his prepared statement. Council Member Mendenhall further outlined actions taken by Salt Lake City and UTA to promote transit in the region.

A motion was made by Council Member Peay, and seconded by Council Member

Mendenhall, that this resolution be approved. The motion carried with six aye votes and one nay vote by Alternate Member Birrell.

## **8. Budget and Investments**

### **a. Consultation on Agency's Tentative 2023 Budget**

Mr. Greene presented the agency's tentative 2023 budget adopted by the UTA Board of Trustees on October 26, 2022. Mr. Greene mentioned the budget was submitted to various state and government agencies, including local municipalities, for review and comment. Mr. Greene noted the budget will be presented during a UTA public hearing on November 10, 2022, with a 30 day public comment period open until December 10, 2022.

Mr. Greene pointed out the opportunities and challenges impacting the budget. These include labor and economic factors, state and federal funding, unemployment rates, and sales taxes.

Mr. Greene proceeded to summarize the budget by category, sources, office, and number of full-time employees, in addition to key budget assumptions.

Mr. Greene concluded his presentation by outlining next steps between now and December 21, 2022, including the public hearing on November 10, 2022, the open comment period, and Board of Trustees' final review and consideration to adopt the budget at the December 21, 2022, Board of Trustees meeting. He noted minor adjustments may be made prior to adoption of the final budget.

Questions pertaining to the gap analysis and labor negotiations, which may impact the budget, were posed by the Council, and answered by Mr. Greene.

## **9. Strategic Planning**

### **a. Strategic Plan Consultation**

Carlton Christensen, UTA Board of Trustees Chair, reported on the process and work involved in drafting the the agency's strategic plan for 2023-2030. The plan includes a new mission and vision statement: "We Move You", and "Leading Utah's mobility solutions and improving quality of life."

Chair Christensen referenced the five key priorities and success outcomes for the plan which include:

- Customer Experience
- Community Value
- Community Advocacy
- Economic Value
- Organizational Excellence

Chair Christensen summarized next steps for garnering feedback on the plan, including consultation with various entities and public comment, with the goal of adopting the plan during the December 21, 2022, Board of Trustees meeting.

Alternate Council Member Birrell inquired as to the groups referenced in the Community Advocacy success outcome. UTA Trustee Acerson explained that advocacy efforts would include legislative and public officials, planning organizations, and other stakeholders, in addition to UTA customers and employees.

## **10. Service Planning**

### **a. UTA Five-Year Service Plan**

Nichole Bourdeaux, UTA Chief Planning & Engagement Officer, was joined by Megan Waters, UTA Community Engagement Director, and Eric Callison, UTA Service Planning Manager, to present the Agency's Five-Year Service Plan.

Ms. Bourdeaux provided a brief overview of UTA's service planning process which includes a comprehensive review of services, routes, ridership, and gap analysis, which assists UTA in putting together a framework for service over the next five years. She mentioned the plan will be reviewed every two years to include community engagement and public comment.

Ms. Bourdeaux turned the time over to Mr. Callison to discuss operations planning and service.

Mr. Callison referenced UTA's four major planning phases with associated timelines.

Phase 1 - Long Range Planning spanning 30 years - reviewed every four years.

Phase 2 - Five-Year Service Plan spanning five years - reviewed every two years.

Phase 3 - Annual Operations Planning.

Phase 4 - Annual Service Implementation (change day). Quarterly service change days.

Mr. Callison noted five-year service planning and long-range planning include non-funded and non-phased future projects over a longer time span. These are part of UTA's overall long-range vision and transit plans which are contingent on resources, budgets, and service needs.

Mr. Callison proceeded to review plans for August 2023 change day and future year plans, including new services, and changes or discontinuation of services or routes. Lastly, a summary of long-term vision projects was presented by Mr. Callison.

Questions relating to bus stops in the south west part of the valley, and clarification of projects in the five-year plan versus the long-term vision plan, were posed by the Council and answered by staff.

Mr. Callison concluded his presentation by referencing the process for rolling out the draft plan to the public and local stakeholders through various means, including presentations and a public comment period. He noted a final draft of the plan will be presented to the UTA Local Advisory Council and Board of Trustees for approval in February 2023 meetings.

Ms. Waters outlined community engagement efforts including an official open public comment period between November 2022, and mid-January 2023.

Council Member Cronin posed a question regarding modes of communication for public engagement which was addressed by Ms. Waters.

Alternate Council Member Birrell referenced the proposed reduction and discontinuation of ski bus service, and urged UTA to include organizations such as Save our Canyons and Back County Alliance as part of the engagement process. Ms. Waters noted this suggestion.

**b. UTA Long Range Transit Plan (LRTP)**

Ms. Bourdeaux introduced Alex Beim, UTA Acting Manager - Long Range Strategy Planner, to present UTA's first long range transit plan (LRTP).

Mr. Beim explained how the plan integrates into UTA's overall planning process and operations, with the LRTP complimenting the agency's long-range vision to include future projects including some unplanned and unfunded. Moving forward, funding and projects identified in the five-year service plan, will be integrated into the LRTP.

Mr. Beim mentioned the LRTP aligns with the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), although the LRTP focuses solely on long term community transit needs over a 30-year life span.

Mr. Beim shared goals, next steps, and timelines for the plan and noted a final draft will be presented to the Board of Trustees for approval at a future meeting and will be reviewed and updated on a four-year basis.

A question relating to combining efforts and metrics with the MPOs was posed by Chair Fullmer and answered by Mr. Beim.

**11. Discussion**

**a. Open Dialogue with the Board of Trustees**

Chair Fulmer yielded the floor to the Board of Trustees and Council for open dialogue.

Trustee Holbrook shared her attendance at a recent housing summit which included a conversation on how transit can be integrated within the housing market.

A discussion ensued regarding Utah being a potential host for the 2030 or 2034 Olympic Games. Council Member Mendenhall asked how this would affect UTA's LRTP and if more rail services would be included. Chair Christensen stated this would provide an opportunity to seek priority federal funding with the agency working collaboratively with UDOT in addition to seeking assistance from other transit agencies to meet the high transit demand.

Council Member Mendenhall asked for an update on plans and collaboration in preparation for the outdoor retail event in January 2023, and the NBA All Star game in February 2023, including way finding at the airport to TRAX services.

Mr. Fox indicated a working group has been created to assist with transit planning needs for these events which include city representatives and UTA staff to create a robust plan.

Alternative Council Member Birrell commented on the way finding efforts of Salt Lake City in relation to active transportation, including reduced speed signage and other actions to make mobility safe. She liked the idea of connecting with the airport on way finding to help travelers be more aware of TRAX connections and other transit services.

## 12. Reports

### a. Executive Director Report

- Ridership Report
- Southwest Salt Lake County Service

#### **Ridership Report**

Mr. Jay Fox, UTA Executive Director, reported on ridership through October 2022. He stated ridership is increasing and is currently at 75%, system-wide with fixed route bus service at 85% of pre-pandemic levels. He noted this figure is higher than similar transit agencies across the country who are averaging around 50%. Mr. Fox referenced Free Fare February which saw increased ridership on FrontRunner services, in particular on Saturdays, which is now trending above pre-pandemic numbers.

Mr. Fox shared information on the launch of a pilot transit connections program which will provide dedicated UTA staff on TRAX services to assist operators and customers.

Mr. Fox highlighted the increase in ridership for UTA's On Demand service which provides a much needed service, particularly in areas under served by other transit modes. He referenced figures for the Salt Lake County Westside area which has seen exponential growth from 1,086 riders in January 2022, to 11,181.

#### **South Salt Lake County Service**

Mr. Fox invited Jaron Robertson, UTA Acting Planning Director, to provide an update on the Southwest Salt Lake County service.

Mr. Robertson shared the agency's desire to provide transit options to communities where a fixed route service is an ineffective option. He said introducing On Demand services in these areas has provided a much needed service in addition to attracting new transit customers.

Mr. Fox spoke to accessibility and connectivity in addressing Council Member Staggs' concern over equity of service in South Salt Lake County and referenced historical data where several fixed route bus services were operating with low boarding numbers creating high costs and inefficiencies in the use of this transit option. The agency reviewed how service can operate in high growth areas to provide the necessary connectivity to other transit options and final destinations, and it was determined the On Demand service was the best solution in providing the necessary coverage in this area.

Mr. Robertson referred to service maps highlighting travel demand patterns within the area and how the On Demand service is providing not only connectivity options to other transit modes, but connectivity to other areas within the community, including grocery stores, entertainment venues and other locations.

Mr. Fox provided ridership numbers for On Demand services in the Southwest Salt Lake County which has seen ridership almost double between January to July 2022 with ridership numbers exceeding expectations. Mr. Robertson added there is a high level of interest from other transit agencies and cities across the country who are looking at a similar model as a way of meeting transit needs within their communities.

Chair Christensen made mention of the high number of customers using wheelchair accessible vehicles within this service which is a very rewarding, and important statistic.

**b. Audit Committee Report**

Chair Christensen provided a brief summary of the UTA Audit Committee meeting held on October 17, 2022. Topics of discussion included an internal audit report on utility costs, a preliminary assessment report on light rail, and new data analytics software.

**13. Other Business**

- a. Next Meeting: Wednesday, February 15, 2023 at 1:00 p.m.

**14. Adjourn**

A motion was made by Council Member Cronin, and seconded by 2nd Vice-Chair Walker to adjourn. The motion carried by unanimous vote and the meeting adjourned at 3:23 p.m.

Transcribed by Hayley Mitchell  
Executive Assistant to the Board  
Utah Transit Authority

This document is not intended to serve as a full transcript as additional discussion may have taken place; please refer to the meeting materials and audio located at <https://www.utah.gov/pmn/sitemap/notice/790457.html> for entire content.

This document along with the digital recording constitute the official minutes of this meeting.

Approved Date:

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Julie Fullmer  
Chair, UTA Advisory Council

**APPENDIX A**

**Online Public Comment  
to the  
Local Advisory Council of the Utah Transit Authority (UTA)  
November 2, 2022**

**From: George Chapman**

Salaries for bus drivers must be much higher. The fact that UTA is unable to provide promised and appropriate service should not be due to management's inability to fund salaries. Instead of capital projects, UTA should focus on bus service and respectful salaries first.

Experienced and pleasant (satisfied) bus drivers are the number one reason riders use buses according to surveys.

UTA has been unable to provide adequate ski bus service for years (riders have waited for hours). UTA's inability to provide service is disrespectfully giving a questionable white elephant gondola project a lift.

Bus service deserves more attention from UTA and I urge the Advisory Board to insist on adequate driver compensation to keep turnover at less than 10%.