



Utah Transit Authority

Local Advisory Council

MEETING MINUTES - Draft

669 West 200 South
Salt Lake City, UT 84101

Wednesday, May 31, 2023

1:00 PM

FrontLines Headquarters

- Present:** Chair Mark Johnson
Vice Chair Troy Walker
2nd Vice-Chair Bob Stevenson
Council Member Neal Berube
Council Member Karen Cronin
Council Member Julie Fullmer
Council Member Erin Mendenhall
Council Member Trent Staggs
Alternate Council Member Ellen Birrell
Alternate Council Member Brandon Gordon
- Excused:** Council Member Dan Peay
Alternate Council Member Jon Larsen

Alternate Council Member Birrell sat at the table representing Council Member Dan Peay, who was excused. Alternate Council Member Gordon attended as part of the audience following completion of his oath of office.

Also attending were UTA staff and interested community members.

1. Call to Order & Opening Remarks

Chair Mark Johnson welcomed attendees and called the meeting order at 1:04 p.m.

Chair Johnson thanked Council Member Julie Fullmer for her service as a past chair of the Local Advisory Council and presented her with a commemorative gift.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Safety First Minute

Alisha Garrett, Chief Enterprise Strategy Officer, delivered a brief safety message.

4. Public Comment**In Person/Virtual Comment**

Public comment was given by Andrew Gruber, Executive Director of the Wasatch Front Regional Council (WFRC), and Brandon Gordon, Utah County Commissioner.

Mr. Gruber announced that last week the WFRC council approved the latest iteration of the Regional Transportation Plan (RPT) 2023-2050 by a unanimous vote. He said the plan includes over 1,000 projects for roads, transit, and trails, and is a balanced, multi-modal approach that addresses transportation needs into the future. He thanked local partners, and particularly UTA staff, for their partnership.

Mr. Gordon mentioned the Utah County Commission recently passed the “5th 5th” sales and use tax increment for transportation by a unanimous vote.

Online Comment

No online comment was received.

Council Member Erin Mendenhall joined the meeting at 1:13 p.m.

5. Oath of Office

- a. **Oath of Office: UTA Local Advisory Council Member - Neal Berube**
- b. **Oath of Office: UTA Local Advisory Council Alternate Member - Brandon Gordon**

Oaths of office were administered to Neal Berube and Brandon Gordon.

6. Consent

- a. **Approval of February 15, 2023 Local Advisory Council Meeting Minutes**

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

7. Reports

- a. **Executive Director Report**
 - **Impact of 2023 Legislation for UTA**
 - **Collective Bargaining Agreement Highlights**

Impact of 2023 Legislation for UTA

Jay Fox, UTA Executive Director, was joined by Shule Bishop, UTA Government Relations Director, and Mr. Gruber.

Mr. Fox summarized legislation addressed during the state’s 2023 session that had impacts for UTA, specifically:

- HB044 (passed): Allows the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) to purchase land for corridor preservation to be used 40 years into the future instead of 30 years
- HB051 (passed): Allows a government entity to assess railroad companies for right of way (ROW) infrastructure improvement costs that also benefit those companies
- HB439 (failed): Allows unmanned aircraft (drones) to examine public transit facilities for safety purposes.
- SB027 (passed): Amends the agency Transit Transportation Investment Fund (TTIF) match to 30% (down from 40%)
- SB125 (passed): Designates ASPIRE (at Utah State University) as the lead center for transportation electrification planning; the steering committee includes UDOT and UTA
- SB260 (passed): Amends the 5th 5th sales and use tax provisions
- HR003 (failed): House Resolution urging UTA to take action to resolve ski traffic in the Cottonwood canyons
- HJR26 (passed): Joint Resolution on Transit Operator Safety Awareness states that transit is “a community-connector lifeline and is an essential part of Utah’s critical infrastructure”
- Appropriations: \$200 million for commuter rail improvements and \$108 million for the Point of the Mountain development

During the course of his report, Mr. Fox yielded the floor to Mr. Gruber for an explanation of the 5th 5th.

Collective Bargaining Agreement Highlights

Mr. Fox recognized Kim Shanklin, UTA Chief People Officer, and her team for their efforts in the bargaining process and provided highlights from the collective bargaining agreement with the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU), which include:

- Immediate increase in wages
- Increases to UTA’s contribution to the Joint Insurance Health Care Trust
- Increases to paid leave to better reflect market conditions
- A focus on operator safety, including emotional well-being

8. Capital Projects

a. Mid-Valley Connector and Ogden Express (OGX) Updates

David Hancock, UTA Chief Capital Development Officer, was joined by Andrea Pullos, UTA Project Manager III. Ms. Pullos provided an overview of the Mid-Valley Connector project, which is a seven-mile Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route that will run from West Valley City, through Taylorsville City, and into Murray City. The route will have 1.4 miles of exclusive bus lanes, 15 station locations, and 25 individual stations. The service will operate at 15-minute intervals during peak times and will carry an estimated 1,900 riders per day. Ms. Pullos also reviewed the project milestones, ROW acquisition

activity, and project funding.

Discussion ensued. Questions on Mid-Valley ridership demographics and electric bus supply chain concerns were posed by the council and answered by staff.

Ms. Pullos continued, providing information on the Ogden Express BRT project (OGX). This project has a 5.3-mile corridor with 1.8 miles of exclusive bus lanes, 13 station locations, and 22 individual stations. The service includes a shuttle on the Weber State University (WSU) campus. The OGX will operate at 10-minute intervals during peak times, at 5-minute intervals during peak times on the WSU campus, and will carry an estimated 2,600 riders per day, plus an additional 2,600 riders on the WSU shuttle. Ms. Pullos went on to review the project funding and testing and startup timeline. She mentioned the grand opening for OGX is scheduled on Wednesday, August 2, 2023.

b. AR2023-05-01 - Resolution Approving the Davis-Salt Lake City Community Connector Locally Preferred Alternative and Recommending Approval by the Authority's Board of Trustees

Patti Garver, UTA Manager of Environmental & Grant Services, was joined by Alex Beim, UTA Manager of Long-Range Strategic Planning. Ms. Garver outlined the chronological history of the Davis-Salt Lake City Community Connector project, then described the project itself, which is a 26-mile corridor-based, mixed flow BRT project connecting the following:

- FrontRunner Farmington Station
- Centerville
- Bountiful
- Woods Cross
- North Salt Lake
- Downtown Salt Lake City
- University of Utah/Research Park

Ms. Garver indicated the project team is currently completing the federal National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) document and preliminary design work. The project includes 12 new stations, 6 new stops, and will utilize approximately 17 existing stops. The service will operate at 15-minute intervals from 6:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m., with 30-minute service in early mornings and late evenings, and will carry approximately 5,800 riders per day. The estimated capital cost of the project is \$75 million.

Ms. Garver reviewed the project funding, status of the locally preferred alternative (LPA), and next steps in the process. She requested the council approve the LPA and recommend approval by the UTA Board of Trustees.

Discussion ensued. Questions on ridership demographics, e-bike rider use, and federal support for BRT projects were posed by the council and answered by staff.

- A motion was made by Council Member Mendenhall, and seconded by 2nd Vice-Chair Stevenson, that this resolution be approved. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.
- c. **AR2023-05-02 - Resolution Approving the Proposed Second Amendment to the 2023-2027 Capital Plan and Recommending Approval by the Authority's Board of Trustees**

Bill Greene, acting Chief Financial Officer, was joined by Mary DeLoretto, Chief Capital Services Officer (remote); Ms. Garrett; Cheryl Beveridge, UTA Chief Operating Officer; and Daniel Hofer, UTA Director of Capital Assets & Project Controls. Mr. Hofer outlined requested modifications to the 2023-2027 Capital Plan, which include:

- Adding two new projects for workforce/enterprise asset management and operator restrooms throughout the system
- Modifying several project budgets over the course of the plan to absorb new project additions
- Moving the planned 2024 expenditure for the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) program of projects into the 2023 budget to align the project budget with the federal grant performance timeframe

Mr. Hofer indicated the net impact of all the modifications would be an additional \$1 million in revenue-backed funds. He went on to describe the two new projects in greater detail and review budget impacts.

He requested the council approve the amendment to the 2023-2027 Capital Plan and recommend approval by the UTA Board of Trustees.

A motion was made by 2nd Vice-Chair Stevenson, and seconded by Council Member Mendenhall, that this resolution be approved. The motion carried by a majority vote, with eight aye votes and one nay vote.

Council Member Trent Staggs voted nay, stating the funding and services in the budget for southwest portion of Salt Lake County are inadequate. Alternate Council Member Birrell voted yea, but opined on services she feels are needed in the southeast portion of Salt Lake County.

9. Budget and Investments

a. Proposed 2023 Operating and Capital Budget Amendments

Mr. Greene was joined by Brad Armstrong, UTA Director of Budget & Financial Strategy, and Mr. Hofer. Mr. Armstrong outlined a draft operating budget amendment that will:

- Adjust the budget for additional wage and benefit expenses associated with the ratified collective bargaining agreement with the ATU
- Adjust the budget for the impact of compensation changes to select administrative positions to reflect current labor market conditions

- Record changes to budget categories reflecting position moves between departments (no associated net increase)

Mr. Armstrong described each of the budget changes and provided more detail on impacts to the agency.

Discussion ensued. Questions on administrative wage adjustment percentages were posed by the council and answered by Mr. Armstrong.

Mr. Hofer summarized a capital budget amendment that will increase the 2023 budget authority by \$6.663 million to accommodate changes to the 2023-2027 Capital Plan discussed under agenda item 8.c.

Chair Johnson called for a break at 2:30 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 2:39 p.m.

b. Proposed Escrow Substitution for the 2019 and 2021 Defeased Bond Escrows

Troy Bingham, UTA Comptroller, was joined by Brian Baker with Zions Public Finance. Mr. Baker briefed the council on an opportunity to utilize an escrow substitution to produce savings for the agency between \$400,000-\$500,000 and described the steps required to complete the substitution.

Discussion ensued. A question on securities market conditions was posed by the council and answered by staff.

c. Proposed Bond Tender of Certain Taxable and Tax-Exempt Debt to Produce Debt Service Savings

Mr. Bingham was again joined by Mr. Baker. Mr. Baker explained the mechanics of a bond tender on UTA's subordinated 2016, senior 2019B, and senior 2020B bonds. He explained that UTA has approximately \$270 million in bonds that could be viable to refinance, which, if tendered, could allow for a present value savings between \$8 million and up to \$30 million, depending on the rate at which the tender is accepted. He also outlined the steps necessary for transaction completion and reviewed indicative tender results.

10. Service Planning

a. August 2023 Change Day Update

Nichol Bourdeaux, UTA Chief Planning & Engagement Officer, was joined by Russ Fox, UTA Director of Planning. Mr. Fox highlighted service adjustments that will be made as part of the 2023 August change day, including:

- Initiating OGX service

- Increasing TRAX service
- Discontinuing Park City service
- Improving flex routes
- Adjusting the FrontRunner schedule

Mr. Fox then reviewed the proposed changes in greater detail and described public engagement efforts and feedback related to change day.

Discussion ensued. Questions on the number of riders impacted by service reductions and plans for ski service were posed by the council and answered by staff. Alternate Council Member Birrell urged UTA to consult with cities impacted by canyon congestion as part of efforts to address canyon transportation solutions.

b. Sandy City and South Jordan City Small Area Transit Study

Ms. Bourdeaux was again joined by Mr. Russ Fox. Mr. Fox reported on the Sandy City and South Jordan City Small Area Transit Study. The study will revisit the potential for a Sandy-South Jordan circulator, develop new recommendations for short-term transit service in the study area, establish a long-term vision for service, and identify an incremental path forward for transit implementation. Mr. Fox described the study area, scope of work, and timeline, then reviewed the process that will be followed to bring the study recommendations to fruition.

Council Member Staggs left the meeting at 3:12 p.m.

11. Discussion

a. Annual Safety and Security Update

Cherryl Beveridge, UTA Chief Operating Officer, was joined by Dalan Taylor, UTA Chief of Police & Public Safety Manager. Chief Taylor provided an overview of the UTA police function, including staffing and crime-related statistics, cross-agency collaboration, training, arrest diversion efforts, and emergency management activities.

Discussion ensued. Questions on responding to health issues, text options for reporting incidents, policing onboard UTA vehicles, and staffing were posed by the council and answered by staff.

b. Federal Railroad Administration Corridor Identification and Development Program Update

Due to time constraints, this item was deferred to a future meeting.

c. Open Dialogue with the Board of Trustees

Chair Johnson was joined Carlton Christensen, UTA Board of Trustees Chair; Beth Holbrook, UTA Board Member; and Jeff Acerson, UTA Board Member.

A brief discussion ensued, during which Alternate Council Member Birrell commended the board on the Depot District facility grand opening.

12. Reports and Other Business

a. Audit Committee Report

Chair Johnson reported the UTA Audit Committee met on March 6, 2023. The committee reviewed and approved proposed changes to the Audit Committee Charter and the Internal Audit Charter. The changes were minimal and mostly included additional responsibilities for the internal audit department. The committee received information regarding the 2022 risk assessment, which helped identify the top perceived risks to the agency, and reports on the status of the 2022 and 2023 internal audit plans and progress on findings for past audits. In addition, the committee was provided information on the limited scope assessment of COVID stimulus funding, which was performed by the UTA internal auditors to examine UTA's use of COVID stimulus funds.

b. Next Meeting: Wednesday, September 27, 2023 at 1:00 p.m.

13. Adjourn

A motion was made by Council Member Cronin, and seconded 1st Vice Chair Walker, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried by a unanimous vote and the meeting adjourned at 3:32 p.m.

Transcribed by Cathie Griffiths
Executive Assistant to the Board Chair
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, audio, or video located at <https://www.utah.gov/pmnsitemap/notice/835493.html> for entire content. Meeting materials, along with a time-stamped video recording, are also accessible at https://rideuta.granicus.com/player/clip/232?view_id=1&redirect=true&h=c7f4153116a1ba514109b44a956bae20.

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

Approved Date:

Mark Johnson

Chair, UTA Local Advisory Council