



Minutes City of Tempe Transportation Commission April 12, 2011

Minutes of the City of Tempe Transportation Commission held on Tuesday, April 12, 2011, 7:30 a.m., at the Transportation Center Don Cassano Community Room, Tempe, Arizona.

(MEMBERS) Present:

Ben Goren, Pam Goronkin, Charles Huellmantel, Marcellus Lisotta, Phillip Luna, Gary Roberts, Steven Saiz, David Strang, Bryan Young

(MEMBERS) Absent:

Catherine Mayorga, Peter Schelstraete, Augustus H. Shaw IV

City Staff Present:

Tanya Chavez, Joe Clement, Molly Enright, Greg Jordan, Shelly Seyler, Jennifer Svetichan, Sue Taaffe

Guests Present:

Rebecca Clark, Aaron Golub (TBAG), Ryan Guzy (TBAG), Dani Moore, Jack Pisano (Veolia), Tom Sands

David Strang called the meeting to order at 7:35 a.m.

Agenda Item 1 – Consideration of Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Strang asked to amend the March 8, 2011 Transportation Commission minutes by correcting the spelling error of the word “in turn”. Commissioner Charles Huellmantel made a motion to approve the Transportation Commission minutes with amendments. Commissioner Pam Goronkin seconded the motion. The following minutes were approved:

- Transportation Commission Meeting Minutes – March 8, 2011

Agenda Item 2 – Public Appearances

Aaron Golub representing Tempe Bicycle Action Group (TBAG) spoke in support of the public information campaign that is proposed to elevate the awareness of the three foot law. He expressed his hopefulness of increased enforcement of the law or accounting of calls placed to alert officials of dangerous driving.

Rebecca Clark included her support of the public information campaign.

Dani Moore, a citizen cyclist, stated her support of the public information campaign due to her experiences with driver’s current perceptions on the passing law, which have mostly been negative.

Agenda Item 3 – Commission Business

Commissioner Strang announced that there were 35 applications for the 3 openings on the Transportation Commission.

Commissioner Saiz asked about the media involvement that may have increased the applicant's response. Sue responded that there has been activity on Twitter and Facebook through the Community Relations Office as well as multiple press releases.

Commissioner Huellmantel commented on the general attendance record of the currently appointed Commissioners when there are 35 applicants available. Commissioner Strang stated that he is monitoring the attendance of each of the Commissioners and will be addressing it.

Commissioner Roberts asked about the total Commissioners on the Transportation Commission. Commissioner Strang replied that there are fifteen total spots with twelve currently being occupied.

Commissioner Goronkin suggested that Commissioner Strang call Mayor Hallman to expedite the appointment process to fill the open positions.

Agenda Item 4 – Transit Service Changes: FY2011-2012

Greg Jordan presented the following information:

Transit system has essentially reached maturity and moving forward we should continuously reevaluate the system to ensure it is performing at the highest level possible both service and budget wise. The plan is for a short range transit plan, which is driven by a transit performance report, to help navigate staff through the process.

Two approach strategies were presented for consideration for the recommendation from the Commission in regards to the service changes. In both strategies, , option #15 would not be implemented.

Commissioner Roberts asked about Valley Metro's indication on the availability of Prop 400 funds in the near future because of increased revenues. Greg responded that because of the decline in previous years, Tempe had to cut \$40 million, which is figured into the models. There has been a recent uptick in sales tax receipts so ADOT's 2011 update to the revenue forecast should show at least static or increasing revenue.

Commissioner Roberts asked about the lifecycle of the Orbit vehicles. Greg explained that the current vehicles will be reaching the end of their lifecycle within 1-2 years and plans are in place to get new vehicles within this time frame. Commissioner Roberts continued by asking if new vehicles are in place will an evaluation then be in place to determine if Orbit should a be fare revenue generator. Greg explained that an evaluation will be fully explored in the Fall.

Commissioner Saiz asked how conservative staff was with their forecasts. Greg explained that there is still a cushion in the model so he would consider the approach to be conservative.

Commissioner Lisotta asked about the course of action if the different scenarios of Strategy B do not pan out as expected. Greg responded that at that time the Commission would have to recommend reducing more bus service, which could include what remains on the list in Strategy B along with new options. Commissioner Lisotta continued by asking what would Greg's recommendation be. Greg recommended Strategy B due to its phased approach and recognition that there are near-term cost and revenue variables that may track in our favor.

Commissioner Huellmantel expressed concern for higher operating costs should gas continue to rise. Greg responded that higher unleaded fuel prices associated with the Orbit fleet are factored into the models. Also, the local and express bus fleet is powered by Liquid/Compressed Natural Gas (L/CNG) through a regional cooperative procurement and is at a fixed price through June 2012 and the L/CNG is simply a cheaper fuel.

Commissioner Ben Goren made a motion to approved Strategy B in regards to the service changes recommendations from the Commission. Commissioner Phillip Luna seconded.

Motion passed 9-0

Agenda Item 5 – Marketing of ARS 28-735 (Overtaking Bicycles)

Sue Taaffe presented the following information:

The proposed plan is a “share the road” message where motorists are educated to provide a three foot safe distance between their vehicle and the bicyclist as well as educate the bicyclists to move as far right in the bike lane as possible to provide enough room for the car to pass safely.

There is no specific budget for this campaign so all communication will have to be tagged on existing programs or on free media outlets.

Commissioner Goren emphasized that it is the responsibility of the driver to keep the three foot law and not the bicyclist. He also recommended having some photographs available of what the three foot or a safe passing distance looks like, including mirrors etc., so it will help drivers’ better estimate distance. Sue agreed to explore the options to include photos in the communication materials.

Commissioner Strang highlighted the need to educate bicyclists along with motorist to keep everyone safe on the road.

Agenda Item 6 – 2011/12 Paid Media Plan

Sue Taaffe presented the following information:

Sue stated that there is no longer a budget for a professional advertising firm which provides services like professional media planning and accessing larger databases for public communications. Staff produces all communication with the public.

The plan is similar to last years. The two messages highlighted in the plan that was presented are to continue to market Tempe’s program as a green program and also to market the program as a cost savings benefit to the residents.

The proposal is a bit more web heavy than last year since it is easier to switch messages quickly and more often to stay fresh. Also, online components allow us to get some feedback statistics that allow us to gage how often are marketing efforts are viewed. The banners are still the most popular message medium.

Commissioner Lisotta asked what the largest loss was to the marketing campaign due to the budget cuts. Sue responded that it was the professional advertising firm helping with media planning.

Commissioner Huellmantel asked if there was any way to track the feedback from the banners. Sue answered that there is simply no way to track that other than a possible “how did you hear about us” on a public survey. Over the years, the success of the banners has been determined by word of mouth and

the phone surveys that are conducted every other year. There is the possibility to specifically ask in the next survey if the advertising has made the residents think or act positively or change their behavior in regards to the transit system. Commissioner Huellmantel also asked if the banners are an opportunity to target the three foot law. Sue answered that there are challenges that exist because of the limited wording on the pole banners for reading purposes. There may be an option with the Mill Ave banner, but at the current time there is no budget to produce additional banners. She offered to explore the options to find the funds in the budget to produce the additional banner.

Commissioner Roberts suggested the branding banners "bus, bike, walk, rail" are a creative and effective way of branding. Sue agreed however, mentioned there are challenges with the vendor hanging them in the correct order.

Commissioner Young asked about the option of bus wraps as part of the marketing campaign. Sue explained that we are unable to do bus wraps due to city code.

Commissioner Strang stated that the banners, although there is no way to measure direct feedback, are effective in reinforcing the message.

Commissioner Ben Goren made a motion to approve the proposed 2011/12 Paid Media Plan. Commissioner Marcellus Lisotta seconded.

Motion passed 8-1. Commissioner Huellmantel voted against the 2011/12 media plan.

Agenda Item 7 – Bicycle Helmet Law

Shelly Seyler presented the following information:

There is a correction on the memorandum presented on the Bicycle Helmet Laws. In the memo, it was stated that there currently is a law related to the requirement of bicycle helmets, so in the provided memo the word "not" should be included when referring to the City Code and Arizona Revised Statute that refers to the requirement of bicycle helmets.

Commissioner Goronkin inquired about the data in regards to the traffic fatalities of bicyclists in where no helmet was worn.

Molly Enright provided general information on the number of fatalities over the last few years, but was unable to specify if helmets were being worn at the time of the accident. She offered to return with that information.

Commissioner Goronkin stated that if there were an ordinance, which there currently is not, it would be easier to enforce than the three foot law. In terms of a recommendation to City Council about the possible ordinance, it is thought that having that information would be helpful.

Commissioner Luna stated that Lieutenant Rapp identified at a previous Commission meeting that there is no historical data on the use of bicycle helmets during traffic accidents.

Commissioner Goronkin included that maybe the Police Department may consider including that information when recording an accident with a bicyclist to help better guide the Commission should they consider an ordinance in the future.

Commissioner Goren stated that there are national statistics that are available on the effectiveness of bicycle helmets and also, although he does not want to speak directly for the bike advocacy organizations, but he is confident that they would support a bike helmet law.

Commissioner Huellmantel respectfully added that requiring bicyclists to wear helmets concerns him because there is no requirement for even motorcyclists to wear helmets. He asked the Commission to consider and recognize that there are different kinds of cyclists and it is his belief that it is not governments place to enforce it. He suggested leaving it more as a ride with or without a helmet at your own risk.

Commissioner Young concurred with Commissioner Huellmantel in regards to the requirements of a helmet for bicyclists. He recommended possibly including the recommendation to wear a helmet to the marketing team to include that in their communication.

Commissioner Strang stated to keep this issue under advisement with the Multi Modal and Planning Committee including reviewing the Tuscon ordinance on bike helmets

Future Agenda Items

- Capital Improvement Project Update
- Veolia Update

Meeting adjourned at 9:06am

The Commission's next regular meeting will be held Tuesday, May 10, 2011 at 7:30 a.m. in the Don Cassano Community Room, 200 E. Fifth Street, Tempe, Arizona.

Prepared by:
Jennifer Svetichan

Reviewed by:
Greg Jordan
Shelly Seyler