



Mesa County Regional Transportation Planning Office

GVRTC Minutes for August 10, 2021

Attendees: Valdon Lewis, Dana Brosig, Kathy Young, Judi Derusha, Mark Rogers, Jason Smith, Dean Bressler, Rene Romero, Scott Beilfuss, Kathy Hall, Trent Prall, Scott Mai, Sarah Brooks, Kimberly Bullen, Andy Gingerich,

Roll Call: Scott McInnis, Chair – Mesa County, called the meeting to order. Greg Mikolai – Town of Palisade, Michael Bennett sitting in for Lori Buck – City of Fruita and Dennis Simpson – City of Grand Junction are present.

Call Meeting to Order: 10:02 a.m.

Changes to the Agenda: None

Representative Reports: None

Transportation Commissioner Report: Kathy Hall asked the committee to please pay close attention to the Green House Gas legislation and rule making coming up. Mesa County is in attainment so we are paying close attention to this. There will be five public meetings throughout the state regarding this new legislation.

Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Region 3 Update: None

Approval of Minutes

1. Adopt the minutes from the June 28, 2021 GVRTC Meeting.

Scott McInnis asked for a motion. Greg Mikolai so moved and Dennis Simpson submitted a request to 2nd the motion. Vote was 3-0 in favor. Lori Buck was absent.

Consent Item(s)

The Consent Agenda is intended to allow the Committee to spend its time on more complex items. These items are generally perceived as non-controversial and can be approved by a single motion. The public or Committee Members may ask that an item be removed from the Consent Agenda for individual consideration.

None

Individual Consideration Item(s)

Please limit public comment to a maximum of five (5) minutes per speaker (unless otherwise restricted by the Chair).

2. Approving Resolution 2021-007, a Resolution of the GVRTC concerning the support for the 2022 Grand Valley Transit (GVT) Local Funding Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) and authorizing the Chair to sign. – Dana Brosig, RTPO
 - Attachment

Discussion of GVT year in review regarding ridership including the student summer pass program and plan to extend this for this school year. Discussion of challenges with recruiting drivers and fleet challenges finding parts and delay of new buses. Have a new bench/shelter advertising contract. New bus stop maintenance position and much improved cleanliness of stops. Discussion of ridership by hour.

Transdev contract had a three-year base contract. On 2nd option year. Option year request for 2022 is to increase salaries, add a utility supervisor and full time Greyhound dispatcher. Discussion of modeling of funding and CARES act funds and increased fleet maintenance costs. Plan for 2022 CIP is to replace 6 buses that have reached their useful life. Replace with 2 lowfloor, 2 large cutaway and 2 small cutaways. Applied for Earmark funds for 4 of these buses and all six for CDOT's grant application. Reduction in farebox revenue due to COVID, down from \$500,000.

Discussion of historical IGA funding amounts. CARES Act funds reduced required local match and that local match relief will end mid-year 2022.

Transdev does have a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) with the union through 2023. Asking for \$15.50 in 2022 starting driver wages. Discussion of comparison of other driver starting wages around the state and turnover rate of drivers. How many open positions? Currently six driver short, and another leaving in 2 weeks. One in training now. At full staff, Transdev should have 39 full time drivers.

Comparable wages in the report are higher than \$15.50. Have had two negotiations cycles with CBA, and Transdev's ask for \$15.50 was a very conservative approach and expects this wage will improve things. Discussion of what other business in the area are paying for CDL and non-CDL driving positions.

Representative Simpson stated we should be solving the driver shortage now or we will be hearing in 2022 that we still do not have enough drivers. Transdev said they would be able to recruit more people but \$16 an hour would be able to recruit better. Discussion about whether wages in 2022 will be higher than the current 2021 number comparison.

Representative McInnis asked regarding the CBA, do you have a percentage increase that happens in January 2022? Yes 4%. Would that be added to the \$15.50? If so, would increase starting wage to \$16.12. The thought was to have a new CBA with a starting wage of \$15.50 in January 2022. Transdev believes negotiations will be clear and straightforward after the board makes a decision about the wages.

Representative Mikolai stated the Transdev should have had these discussions with the union first before bringing this to committee. Transdev stated they are trying to enhance the wages and cannot negotiate with the Union without knowing if the funding is available.

The City of Fruita representative, Michael Bennett clarified that the initial Transdev contract was for 4 years and now in the 2nd option year, GVRTC requested the 3rd option year and Transdev came back with a yes, with these additional requests. Discussion of at what point would the GVT contract need to go back out to bid.

Representative McInnis, clarified that the GVRTC doesn't have a contract with the drivers, we have a contract with Transdev. We need to ensure we do not interfere with negotiation between Union and Transdev.

Michael Bennett stated there needs to be more detail on comparable wages, for positions that are more similar to transit drivers.

Discussion of Transdev's hesitancy and providing a conservative starting wage to help with the situation. As a company bidding it for 10 years, there are many things that could change that were not known,

such as the pandemic and its negative affects to the economy. Transdev also has to take into consideration what could be the impacts on other Transdev locations? Is \$15.50 going to be enough? It will affect us positively but not sure if \$15.50 is the saving grace.

Representative McInnis is concerned about negotiating against ourselves. Transdev just went through CBA and all parties came to an agreement.

Transdev stated that at some point, the market drives the costs up, then at some point, funding may not be available.

Representative Simpson asked the GVRTC Legal Counsel if we volunteer to give more money would we have to go back out to bid? Representative McInnis said this should be discussed in an executive session. Representative Simpson withdrew the question.

Representative Simpson stated we do not have a shortage of money; we have a shortage of drivers. City of Grand Junction custodians start at \$15 an hour and the skill level that is needed for driving a bus is somewhat higher than a custodian is. First priority is getting drivers and disagrees that \$15.50 starting wage is enough.

Representative McInnis stated that Transdev says \$15.50 is enough, and we come back and offer \$17, that is negotiating against ourselves. We have to look at the whole system.

Representative Mikolai stated how all this is going to be paid for? Some of this is one time funding and what happens once this is gone? What is the financial impact down the road?

Representative McInnis acknowledged the local match break the GVRTC partners received from the CARES Act funds and that this decision was made because we all thought we would go into an economic disaster. The partners are going to have to come back to our normal local match.

Discussion of having more data for the next GVRTC meeting later this month.
Transdev thanked the committee for taking up this discussion.

Staff presented Scenario 2 at \$16.50 and Scenario 3 at \$17 an hour starting wage. Compared 2019-2023 expenses which included the new Utility Supervisor and fulltime Greyhound dispatcher. Compared 2024-2026 and IGA funds historical and projected. Relief vs Request comparison. FTA 5307 apportionment discussion and if have enough federal funds to cover increase costs through 2026. Staff met with the managers from all IGA partner agencies to discuss the 2022 IGA and they only considered the Transdev request of \$15.50 as they have not been directed by GVRTC to look at other starting wages.

Representative Simpson asked that the committee consider making this raise effective 9/1/21 if do not then will continue to have driver shortage. Asking that this committee recommend that the money (local match savings because of CARES Act funds) be given to the GVRTC to fund the \$17 starting wage and increments coming after that.

Michael Bennett stated Fruita is okay with the \$15.50 rate and option years. Is this a sound recommendation or not? What is the appropriate rate for this position? Are we acting on the option or are we creating options?

Representative Simpson is suggesting paying the drivers \$17 an hour and can afford it. We all have a lot more money than we thought we were going to have. Believes \$17 an hour is enough.

Representative Mikolai stated Transdev requested increase in salary starting in 2022 and at some point it went beyond that. Feels uncomfortable offering more and request did not come from the entire board first. Comfortable at \$15.50 on 1/1/22 but not anything starting 9/1/21 or the \$16 or \$17 an hour. Representative McInnis stated he agree with Representative Mikolai. Transdev has come to us for \$15.50 an hour and sounds reasonable. Should start in 1/1/22 but not prepared to go beyond that.

Representative Simpson asked if Transdev comes back and says they did not ask for enough could come back for additional request via a change order.

Representative McInnis said we have a proposal and should act on this.

Representative Mikolai said he is looking at 1/1/22 start, Transdev could come back and be very detailed on what they need to do and present in September.

Representative McInnis said the County is not going to get into a position to renegotiate this every couple of months. We understand things could change. What we have seen happen a new proposal came through from Representative Simpson.

Representative Mikolai said for the Town of Palisade the increase is not that great of an amount. Mesa County and City of Grand Junction will incur the greatest increase. Comfortable with \$15.50.

Public Comment:

Scott Beilfuss stated that on the budget, you have enjoyed \$2.3 million of COVID relief funding and this made up for the losses and this should have gone to the drivers for hazard pay. I know at union negotiations, they did not ask for \$14 an hour. They asked for more. Transdev is scared to go to the GVRTC. Bidding system is degrading to employees. Do not paint this as Transdev's fault. Government says \$15 is a livable wage. I think \$16 is a compromise. Right now is the problem and wage increases should go into place.

Judi Derusha stated she participates in a number of tasks for Transdev, including training drivers and they leave to higher paying jobs Transdev's proposal is derived by fear. You have admitted, Mr. McInnis that we have great drivers. We have had 8 drivers end up with COVID. How does that compare to other populations? Stop and think about the risks we are taking. You know the road rage that is out there. Multiply this by five and that the position us bus drivers are in. Is it right that that our supervisors and dispatchers are having to become drivers as we do not have enough drivers?

Scott McInnis asked for a motion. Greg Mikolai moved to approve Resolution 2021-007, a Resolution of the GVRTC concerning the support for the 2022 Grand Valley Transit (GVT) Local Funding Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) based on Transdev's requests. Michael Bennett submitted a request to 2nd the motion. Vote was 3-1 in favor. Representative Simpson voted no.

Briefing Item(s)

Briefing items are intended to allow the Committee to give Staff guidance in the day-to-day operations of the Regional Transportation Planning Office, or to hear general presentations from others.

3. Green House Gas Roadmap – Theresa Takushi, CDOT Division of Transportation Development
 - Attachment

This item has been continued to the August 23, 2021 GVRTC meeting.

Meeting Adjourned: 11:47a.m.: Minutes submitted by Kathy Young.