



Agenda

November 3, 2020

**Valley Metro RPTA
And
Valley Metro Rail
Executive Committee Meeting
Wednesday, November 4, 2020
Via Webex/Phone
1:30 p.m.**

	<u>Action Recommended</u>
1. <u>Minutes</u> Minutes from the September 16, 2020 Valley Metro Board Executive Committee meetings are presented for approval.	1. For action
2. <u>COVID-19 Update</u> Staff will provide an update on transit operation impacts related to the COVID-19 pandemic.	2. For information
3. <u>CARES Act Funding Review</u> Staff will review CARES Act formula funding allocations to the MAG region for transit and how Valley Metro programmed funds for use by member cities for FY21.	3. For information
4. <u>Possible Executive Session</u> The Boards of Directors may vote to enter Executive Session for discussion or consultation and for legal advice with the attorney or attorneys of the public body and to consider its position and instruct its attorneys regarding the public body's position concerning matters listed on the agenda, personnel matters and contracts that are the subject of negotiations, in pending or contemplated litigation or in settlement discussions conducted in order to avoid or resolve litigation; all as authorized by A.R.S. Sections 38-431.03 A.1, A.3., and A.4.	4. For action



The agenda for Executive Session involves discussion and consultation regarding contractual compliance related to the COVID-19 pandemic and potential impacts on transit operations and transportation-related workforce. The Executive session agenda also involves consultation, review and evaluation of Valley Metro's performance review and facilitation process for the Chief Executive Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Auditor and General Counsel.

5. Executive Session Action Items

5. For action

The Board Executive Committee may take action related to items discussed as part of Agenda Item 4.

6. Next Meeting

6. For information

The next meeting is to be determined.

Qualified sign language interpreters are available with 72 hours notice. Materials in alternative formats (large print or flash drive) are available upon request. For further information, please call Valley Metro at 602-262-7433 or TTY at 602-251-2039. To attend this meeting via teleconference, contact the receptionist at 602-262-7433 for the dial-in-information. The supporting information for this agenda can be found on our web site at www.valleymetro.org.



Executive Committee Minutes

November 3, 2020

AGENDA ITEM 1

Valley Metro Board Executive Committee

Wednesday, September 16, 2020

Via Webex/Phone

1:30 p.m.

Members Present

Mayor Kate Gallego, City of Phoenix

Councilmember Robin Arredondo-Savage, City of Tempe

Councilmember Francisco Heredia, City of Mesa

The meeting was called to order at 1:34 p.m.

1. Minutes

Minutes from the September 16, 2020 Executive Committee were presented for approval.

IT WAS MOVED BY MAYOR GALLEGO, SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER ARREDONDO-SAVAGE AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 16, 2020 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING.

2. COVID-19 Update

Mr. Smith said historically, this COVID-19 update has given you updates on specific operational issues that we've undertaken, data related to ridership and costs, and things like that. During this time, we've also been really looking at what our overall plan is and what it will be as we deal with the COVID going forward and as we look to a transition, at the appropriate time, out of a COVID world into whatever the new normal is.

As part of that, we've surveyed riders and employees and all sorts of other people to find out, to really understand where we are. And we have -- we wanted to present to you a report on all those activities that we call the response plan on more of a macro basis than to give you just specific details as far as ridership and those kind of things which continue on about like it was the last time we talked to you.

This is a report that we wanted to give to you the Executive Committee because it's a more broad-based type of report. It's open for discussion and information as opposed



to any kind of specific types of actions so this is an information item. And I'm going to turn it over as Pat said to Susan Tierney in our communications area and to Moriah Bedient who was recently promoted to our Manager of Marketing.

This report was previous presented to RTAG your staff and so they have seen this.

Susan Tierney and Moriah Bedient provided a presentation which included the following:

- ✓ Plan Objective
- ✓ Spring-Summer 2020 (March – April)
- ✓ Spring-Summer 2020 (May – July)
- ✓ Ridership Recovery Results
- ✓ Research Objectives
- ✓ Research Methodology (2 slides)
- ✓ Current Usage of Public Transit
- ✓ Reasons for Using Public Transit
- ✓ Requirements to Return to Pre-COVID Transit Use Frequency
- ✓ Satisfaction with Bus Service Elements Past 30 days
- ✓ Satisfaction with Light Rail Service Elements in Past 30 days
- ✓ Former Usage of Public Transit
- ✓ Primary Reasons for Not Currently Using Public Transit
- ✓ Requirements to Return to Using Public Transit
- ✓ Likelihood to Use Public Transit in Future
- ✓ Importance of Efforts to Make Riders Feel Comfortable – Top 4
- ✓ Importance of Efforts to Make Riders Feel Comfortable
- ✓ Safety and Security Ratings Amid COVID-19
- ✓ Ways Valley Metro can Make Passengers Feel Safe Amid COVID-19
- ✓ Suggested Improvements for Valley Metro
- ✓ Phase II
- ✓ Purpose
- ✓ 1. Storytelling
- ✓ 2. Public Outreach
- ✓ 3. Enhanced Rider Communications
- ✓ 4. Service Restoration
- ✓ 5. Add Cleaning Personnel
- ✓ 6. Refresh COVID-related Signage
- ✓ 7. Measure Effectiveness
- ✓ Phase II Budget

Mayor Gallego said we are already doing the three times a week fogging and then the regular sanitizing, but this is added service on top of what we are already doing with enhanced cleaning?



Ms. Bedient said yes, Mayor and Chair and Members of the Executive Committee. This would be a little more visual in that we would be doing additional cleaning along the alignment, adding more full time employees along the alignment, adding full time employees that would be cleaning at the ends of lines so at 19th Avenue and Dunlap as well as Gilbert main. They would be doing some very stringent disinfecting on the trains. And then we really don't have cleaners out on the bus system right now because they usually clean the buses in the yard so this is a very visual way to show that we're out cleaning. So, they would rotate and then our transit centers walk inside, wipe down a bus, and then the bus would be on its way.

Mr. Smith said and -- Mayor, if I could, also add. You know, the results of our surveys are really, consistent with the overall surveys that APTA's doing with other transit agencies are doing. And that is the number one, the number one factor that seems to be driving the public's willingness to go back to not only I think public transportation, but restaurants and concerts and movie theaters and whatever, is their perception that they're going into a safe environment. And for us safety and cleanliness go hand-in-hand. Even though there seems to be a, I don't want to say a reduction in emphasis, but we're not talking about some of the contact transmission as much as we were in past, there's still the perception that a clean environment is a safer environment and we're very much aware of that.

Even though we are doing some deep cleans and very consistent cleanings a lot of those, as Susan mentioned, are in the yard or after hours or at times when the public really doesn't see or they're not -- they don't come face-to-face with some of our activities. And we believe that if we are out there, we get a twofer. We're not only do we have cleaner more consistent really clean equipment, but we also are more visible as she said. And this plays right into the fact that if we're more visible, we hope that the perception of cleanliness will be more widespread. And if the perception of cleanliness is more widespread, perhaps, people will feel more willing to come back to public transportation. And, of course, that has not only ridership, but financial considerations for us too. So, we see this as both a public health system safety and also a financial investment because we want people to ride public transportation. This is their system and we want them to ride and we also want them to pay to ride which is very, important to our financial sustainability. Long term sustainability. So, this is where this program is coming from.

Mayor Gallego said wonderful. Thank you. Yes, we absolutely want our riders to feel safe and to be safe so. Thank you.

It's funny to look at the data since it was such a snapshot in time. I assume, if we ask today, we would see very strong numbers of, for example, drivers wearing masks. If we



do ask some of the same questions -- are we going to ask the same questions again? Or are we -- when we -- if we were to do research again?

Ms. Bedient said thank you for that question, Mayor. I would go back to WestGroup and I'm sure we would ask most of the same so we could have a gauge, but I hope there would be additional questions as well. I'm sure things will change in the future environment so.

Mayor Gallego said so we might ask, have you seen cleaning on the buses?

Ms. Bedient said correct. Yes. Just to make sure some of the ideas that we are implementing are actually being noticed and working.

Mr. Smith said we are under no illusion that this recovery is going to be a one-week or one-month or even two-month endeavor. It's going to be, I think, most of us have resigned ourselves with the fact this is going to be a multi-month even perhaps multi-year to really get people back to feeling comfortable with the environment that they're in. So, this first one was a bit was, as Moriah said, was a baseline. We will have follow up questions to see how we're doing and to tweak our approach and make sure that we're hitting all the effective sweet spots to maximize both the cleanliness, but also the public's perception of our cleanliness and their willingness to come back. So, yeah, we'll work with WestGroup to have follow up surveys so we can judge that against this baseline.

Mayor Gallego said I would be very, supportive of having a third party perhaps Arizona State University Health Innovations also look at our cleaning. And if they could testify to the public and assess how we are doing and if we are using best practices. I think that would have value.

Mr. Smith said great idea. We'll absolutely do that. ASU has been a good partner on a lot of things for us and I'm sure it's something that they would look at helping us out with.

Mayor Gallego said and I'd be -- we could do -- we have the Health Innovations master students do capstone projects so we could do it that way or just have someone come in and do a quicker assessment, but I think ASU has been a very trusted voice on COVID particularly their health professionals. It occurs to me that there are some Wildcats on this conversation as well and the medical school has also been wonderful and trusted so maybe I'll let you all deal with university politics. But I do think an academic -- a trusted academic partner would be a good place to start. Absolutely.

Mayor Gallego said fabulous. Thank you.



Pat said are there any other questions or comments about this information that's been presented? I believe this will come up to the full Board in October so that the entire Board will receive this presentation. We wanted to give you a preview and see if there was any other information that should be included. Or any questions this you may have before we move forward to the Board in October.

Councilmember Heredia said Scott, the timeline on these activities as far as the more visual sanitizing, will we get the presentation in October, you thinking by right after that meeting if approved or?

Mr. Smith said Hillary, Susan, Moriah, you want to answer that?

Ms. Tierney said we are looking at November, December, and January for implementing this plan. So, once it is approved, we will kick it into full gear.

3. Possible Executive Session

No Executive Session was held.

4. Executive Session Action Items

None.

5. Next Meeting

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for next Wednesday.

Ms. Tameron Kinsey said I did want to add because we did receive a couple of questions from member cities with regard to front-door boarding. And, in terms of the timeline of when this is implemented and when we return to front-door boarding, we have had and been in conversation with the City of Phoenix. We really want to do this in concert with the Transit Department at City of Phoenix so that it is across the board, across the region consistent in what and when we return to front-door boarding. So, I just wanted to make certain that we mention that since that was a question from a couple of Board members as to when we return and start collecting fares on buses.

Mr. Smith said and Mayor, just to follow up, our understanding is that because that was enacted by council action that that would require council action to go back so just so you -- it's on your radar. It's something that you'll have to work with the Transit Department to figure out when that would be most beneficial to bring back in and then we will work with them accordingly.



Mayor Gallego said makes perfect sense. Thank you.

With no further discussion the meeting adjourned at 2:06 p.m.