

SALT LAKE CITY

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD

Minutes of the February 2, 2009 Meeting

Present from the Transportation Advisory Board were Scott Atkinson, Joel Ban, Milton Braselton, Randy Dixon, Brian Doughty, Tim Harpst, Jim Jenkin, Keith Jensen, Sherry Repscher, Jonathan Springmeyer, Steve Sturzenegger, and Alama Ulu'ave.

Also present were Kevin Young and Jerry Benson.

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m. by Chairman Keith Jensen. Keith asked for approval of the minutes of the January 5, 2009 meeting.

Motion: Jim Jenkin moved to approve the minutes of the January 5, 2009 meeting. Sherry Repscher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Jerry Benson gave the Board a presentation on Free Transit on Red Alert Days. Jerry said UTA provides 150,000 trips a day on transit. The question of Free Transit on Red Alert Days has come up different times over the years. There are 25 – 75 air quality alert days each year. Regarding air quality, Jerry explained some of the things UTA is doing, which includes increased rail service, the rideshare program, reduced idling, the ECO Pass program for employers, and reduced emissions. UTA is phasing out older buses and replacing them with buses that run cleaner. Jerry said Free Transit on Red Alert Days would not dramatically increase ridership or fix the air quality problem. Providing Free Transit on Red Alert Days would result in reduced transit service due to lost revenue (\$50,000 per day), reduced service quality due to overcrowding at peak times, and reduced service quality due to transit loitering. Jerry said items that would help include expanding transit service, implementing smart land use, and making sure auto travel is less attractive. Joel Ban asked if UTA had tried allowing Free Transit on Red Alert Days. Jerry said UTA had, but it was a number of years ago, before TRAX was in operation. Joel suggested UTA try testing Free Transit on Red Alert Days again, now that light rail and commuter rail are operating. Jerry mentioned what other agencies are doing to help improve air quality and said a region-wide comprehensive program would include transit, congestion management, vehicle technologies, travel demand management, tax incentives, and pricing strategies. Jonathan Springmeyer asked what UTA was doing to improve the ability to bring bikes on the trains and buses. The issue is the limited number of bikes currently allowed on trains and buses. Jerry said bike use and the desire to bring bikes on trains and buses is increasing. Jerry said UTA knows there is a need to make it easier for those who use bikes to access transit. Keith Jensen asked if UTA was looking to base fare pricing on distance traveled. Jerry said that is an option UTA is considering and their new electronic fare system would make it easier to implement a distance-based fare system.

Tim Harpst gave the Board an update on the government economic stimulus package. The proposed economic stimulus package continues to evolve. The House of Representatives passed their version, but doesn't have support by the Senate. Both sides need to agree on a package. Under what is currently being proposed, there will be funding in ten different categories, including transportation and transit. UDOT will get a significant portion of the transportation funding that comes to Utah. Local MPO's would be involved in the distribution of the remaining portion. There continues to be meetings to discuss the options. Salt Lake City is looking at projects that are ready to go to bid so if funding becomes available they can quickly proceed with these projects. The City is also working with UTA on the Airport light rail line. Both agencies would like to see the North Temple viaduct rebuilt, but doing so is not part of the current approved project. Tim indicated the most likely scenario for funding the rebuilding of the North Temple viaduct would be some stimulus money, some state money, and some SID money. On the transit side, UTA may receive \$40 - \$50 million in economic stimulus package funding.

Copies of draft letters to Mayor Becker and the City Council regarding cell phone use and driving were reviewed by the Board. Some minor changes were suggested by the Board to the letters.

Motion: Jonathan Springmeyer moved to approve the letters as amended by the Board. Steve Sturzenegger seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

It was agreed that Jim Jenkin would modify the letters to reflect the changes. As Chair of the Board, Keith Jensen will sign the letters and they will be sent to Mayor Becker and Carlton Christensen, Chair of the City Council.

Under other business, Kevin Young passed out information about some upcoming events scheduled as part of a Sustainability "Conversations" series based upon the theme "Commuting Without Cars". Joel Ban readdressed the issue of Free Transit on Red Alert Days. Joel felt this issue needs to be pursued and continued discussions about this issue are warranted.

The next meeting of the board was set for Monday, March 2, 2009. Tentative agenda topics include an update on the process and progress of the 1300 East Road Safety Audit, the North Temple Grand Boulevard, and an economic stimulus package update.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:40 p.m.