



RECORDED

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MOUNTAIN RIDES TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
Wednesday, July 17, 2024, 1:00 p.m.
Ketchum City Hall, 191 5th St West, Ketchum, ID 83340**

The Mountain Rides Transportation Authority's Board of Directors met in a Regular Meeting in person and via conference call.

PRESENT: Chair Grady Burnett (Sun Valley), Vice-chair Tom Blanchard (Bellevue), Peter Hendricks (Sun Valley), Neil Bradshaw (Ketchum), Melody Mattson (at-large), Muffy Davis (Blaine County), Kristin Derrig (Ketchum), and Martha Burke (Hailey)

ALSO PRESENT: Mountain Rides Executive Director, Wally Morgus
Mountain Rides Director, Communications, Kim MacPherson
Mountain Rides Director, Maintenance, Carlos Tellez
Mountain Rides Manager of Finance, Jerry Garcia
Mountain Rides Finance & Administration Specialist, Liz Ruiz
City of Ketchum, Dawn Hofheimer
City of Ketchum, Trent Donat
City of Hailey, Lisa Horowitz

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Grady Burnett called to order the meeting of Wednesday, July 17, 2024, at 1:02 pm. Kristin Derrig took roll and determined that a quorum was present.

2. COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR, BOARD MEMBERS, and STAFF

Tom Blanchard commented on the battery-electric buses' minimal noise.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were none.

4. ACTION ITEM: Consent Agenda

- a. Approve/file: Minutes of Regular Board Meeting, June 20, 2024
- b. Approve/file: Minutes of Planning & Marketing Committee, July 3, 2024
- c. Approve/file: Minutes of Finance & Performance Committee, July 3, 2024
- d. Receive/file: May 2024 Operating Financial Statements and Bills Paid
- e. Receive/file: Report from Director, Fleet, Maintenance & Facilities; Director, Community Transportation; Director, Transit Operations; Manager, Finance & Administration; Executive Director

Neil Bradshaw moved to receive, approve, adopt, and file the Consent Agenda. Melody Mattson seconded. The motion passed.

5. ACTION ITEM: *Receive/file Performance Dashboard, May 2024*

Wally Morgus said that the dashboard had been cleaned up due to some adjustments that needed to be made.

Peter Hendricks said he looked at the dashboard and said it looked fine, thanking MRTA staff for fixing it.

Wally also said that they continue to run monthly deficits on the vanpool, and it is time for Kim MacPherson, Carlos Tellez, Jerry Garcia, and himself to examine the business model under which they are operating.

Neil Bradshaw moved to receive and file the Performance Dashboard for June 2024. Melody Mattson seconded. The motion passed.

6. ACTION ITEM: *Customer WiFi on Mountain Rides Buses*

Wally Morgus talked about the expense of \$6,000 a year for bus WiFi and recommended Mountain Rides stop offering WiFi on the buses.

Peter Hendricks asked if there is a contract for the WiFi.

Wally responded no.

Peter Hendricks moved to cancel customer WiFi on Mountain Rides buses. Melody Mattson seconded. The motion passed.

7. DISCUSSION ITEM: *Hailey Route Ramifications of City of Hailey's FY25 Funding on Service Levels*

Wally Morgus talked about Hailey not meeting Mountain Rides' funding requests for FY25 and talked about where adjustments could be made. Wally said he and Jamie Canfield looked at the efficiencies of the Hailey Route. Wally talked about truncating the Hailey service by an hour, running from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm as opposed to 5:00 pm. Wally also mentioned that much of the Hailey route is overlapped by the Valley route, giving them an opportunity to be more efficient on the overall route structure, which will make the Hailey route shift more manageable, and now they can have one driver do the route five days a week. Finding a silver lining on the reduction of Hailey's contribution for FY25.

Neil Bradshaw said that he thinks there are two separate things going on: 1- MRTA's job is to look for operational efficiencies. 2- Hailey has budget constraints, so they are looking for ways to manage their budget. As we move forward, Neil also asked if one jurisdiction says they can't pay, what are the consequences, and how do they best handle that? He struggles with Hailey not meeting their ask. What if another jurisdiction couldn't meet their ask? How do we deal with this in the future? This is a message we are sending to the Mountain Rides employees that there is an inequity in the way employees are being treated.

Martha Burke said they are competing in a market with Ketchum, Sun Valley and Blaine County salary schedules and we are not able to compete with that. They are still trying to catch up with other cities that were able to increase their employees' salaries during the financial setback a few years ago. Martha also said that when she read the highlight on the agenda, it felt very retaliatory. Martha suggested that the major source of the working population comes from the

south valley. This is part of an entire process that they have been working on to collaborate, to cover each other, and to build and strengthen this operation.

Peter Hendricks said he looks upon the joint powers or contribution to the overall financial viability of Mountain Rides as one holistic contribution, and when they okay their ask, it is not to protect their fiefdom. If they have to cut their ask, they don't expect a phone call from MRTA saying that they are cutting back on the red route (for example). Peter doesn't think that was MRTA's intent, but if you look at service levels and fiscal 25 funding, it looks, smells, and tastes like a punitive action. We have had this discussion a number of years before especially with the Red Route.

Peter said that he agrees that the way to do this if there is not enough funding, is to say, how can we save that money? Then, you look at the least efficient route. If it is happenstance and coincidental that the Hailey service model at this point is that, in fact, that is the route, it's unfortunate that it is coincidental, but he understands it, but it still smells bad. Peter also thinks it will be looked upon by people as a punitive action, and that is not a good idea right now. Peter Hendricks said, "It's a small amount of money. Perhaps rather than cut back on our \$3,500, we would agree to split it among the giving partners, and we'll up ours to take care of Hailey's shortfall." Peter also mentioned that if Hailey cannot come up with \$3,500, it is not a direct offense to MRTA employees.

Neil Bradshaw asked how do we best manage this for the future, "What are we setting ourselves up for, if anything, for the future?" This conversation is really important and when we build institutional memory around this and we revisit the budget next year, we have some context. Neil asked the city of Hailey in the event would you look to make a catch up with Mountain Rides in the future.

Martha Burke said the ask for all the contract for service partners stayed flat. We are hoping that will be made up in the increase in LOT projections and we would look to open our budget and pay the missing portions if we can afford to do it. This is very difficult to sit here with two partners that have more money than Hailey.

Peter Hendricks responded that they are a small organization and will be able to handle the future as the future presents the challenges. We have a holistic approach to Mountain Rides and if we don't have a budget number that can sustain the services that we have, then we have to look at the least efficient routes to make changes.

Wally Morgus said we will continue to persue making the Hailey route more efficient. Martha Burke is concerned about the impact of changing the Hailey Route and cutting back one hour.

Tom Blanchard said he did not like the message it sends to the Mountain Rides employees. He emphasized that we will take care of our employees.

Neil Bradshaw disagrees regarding salaries, if there is a cut to the funding then salaries will be two thirds of a cut to the budget.

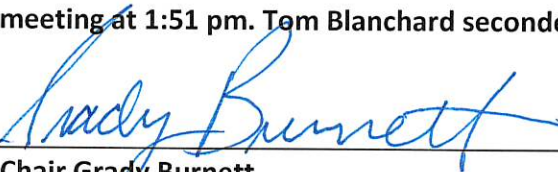
Lisa Horowitz said it was a tough budget year for the city of Hailey. The only revenue that was up was property tax which can only go up by 3% which is 25% of their budget. LOT was down and building permit revenues were down and flat. Department heads met and cut expenses internally in order to give a 3% raise. Lisa said she called Wally early on to let him know about the budget shortfall.

8. DISCUSSION ITEM:

Items of Interest to the Members

9. ADJOURNMENT

Melody Mattson moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:51 pm. Tom Blanchard seconded. The motion carried unanimously.


Chair Grady Burnett