**Meeting Minutes**

Northern Pueblos Regional Transportation Planning Organization (NPRTPO)

Regular Meeting hosted on November 4, 2020

**NPRTPO Voting Members and Alternates**

Name Entity Title Present/Absent

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Eric Martinez | Los Alamos County | Voting Member | Absent |
| Eric Ulibarri | Los Alamos County | Alternate | Absent |
| Keith Wilson | Los Alamos County | Alternate | Present |
| Napoleon Garcia | Rio Arriba County | Voting Member | Absent |
| Cathy Martinez | Rio Arriba County | Alternate | Absent |
| Robert Griego | Santa Fe County | Voting Member | Absent |
| Gary “Brett” Clavio | Santa Fe County | Alternate | Present |
| Brent Jaramillo | Taos County | Voting Member | Absent |
| Candyce O’Donnell (Vice-Chair) | Taos County | Alternate | Present |
| Richard Hubler | City of Espanola | Voting Member | Absent |
| Alison Gillette | City of Espanola | Alternate | Absent |
| Patrick Nicholson | Village of Taos Ski Valley | Voting Member | Absent |
| Anthony Mtz/John Avila | Village of Taos Ski Valley | Alternate | Absent |
| Francisco Espinoza | Town of Taos | Voting Member | Absent |
|  | Town of Taos | Alternate | Absent |
| Russell Church | Town of Red River | Voting Member | Present |
|  | Town of Red River | Alternate | Absent |
| Maggie Valdez | Village of Chama | Voting Member | Present |
| Will Donohoe | Village of Chama | Alternate | Absent |
| Loretta Trujillo | Village of Questa | Voting Member | Absent |
|  | Village of Questa | Alternate | Absent |
| Duane Sandoval | Jicarilla Apache Nation | Voting Member | Absent |
| Prestin Duncan | Jicarilla Apache Nation | Alternate | Absent |
| Marcus Lopez | Pueblo of Nambe | Voting Member | Present |
| Sylvia Armijo | Picuris Pueblo | Voting Member | Present |
|  | Picuris Pueblo | Alternate | Absent |
| Stephen Martinez | Pueblo of San Ildefonso | Voting Member | Absent |
| Lillian Garcia | Pueblo of San Ildefonso | Alternate | Present |
| Christy Ladd (CHAIR) | Ohkay Owingeh | Voting Member | Present |
| Sybil Cota | Ohkay Owingeh | Alternate | Present |
| Suzette Shije | Pueblo of Santa Clara | Voting Member | Absent |
| Mary Lou Valerio | Pueblo of Santa Clara | Alternate | Present |
| Vernon Lujan | Pueblo of Taos | Voting Member | Absent |
| Reva Suazo | Pueblo of Taos | Alternate | Absent |
| Randy Vigil | Pueblo of Pojoaque | Voting Member | Absent |
| Janay Chavarria | Pueblo of Pojoaque | Alternate | Absent |
| Anthony Mortillaro | NCRTD | Voting Member | Present |
| Delilah Garcia | NCRTD | Alternate | Absent |
|  |  |  |  |

**NCNMEDD/NPRTPO Staff**

Lesah Sedillo NCNMEDD – Community Development Director

Steve Fischer NCNMEDD- Transportation Planner

**NMDOT Staff**

Vijay Ummadi NMDOT Rural Transit Program Manager

James Mexia NMDOT Technical Support Engineer

Ron Shutiva NMDOT Tribal Liaison

**Guests**

Annette Granillo Atomic City Transit – Transit Manager (Los Alamos)

Ginger Burgess Town of Red River Miner’s Transit

Marcie Davis Santa Fe Recovery

Natalie Rivera Santa Fe Recovery

Stephanie Green Life Circle Santa Fe

Delilah Garcia NCRTD – Transit Operations Director

**I. Call Meeting to Order**

Chairwoman Ladd, Ohkay Owingeh, called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM.

**II. Pledge of Allegiance**

Chairwoman Ladd, Ohkay Owingeh, called on Governor Ron Shutiva, NMDOT Tribal Liaison, to make the pledge of allegiance.

**III. Welcome and Introductions/Public Comments:**

Chairwoman Ladd, Ohkay Owingeh, asked if there were any members of the public and to announce themselves. No one stepped forward. The Chairwoman asked Steve Fischer, NCNMEDD, to conduct a roll call.

**IV. Approval of the Agenda:**

Chairwoman Ladd, Ohkay Owingeh, called for an approval of the agenda. Keith Wilson, Los Alamos County, moved to approve the agenda. Marcus Lopez, Pueblo of Nambe, seconded the motion to approve the agenda.

Roll Call Vote:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Entity** | **Voting Member** | **Vote** |
| Los Alamos County | Keith Wilson | Yes |
| Santa Fe County | Gary “Brett” Clavio | Yes |
| Taos County | Candyce O’Donnell | Yes |
| Town of Red River | Russell Church |  |
| Village of Chama | Maggie Valdez | Yes |
| Pueblo of San Ildefonso | Lillian Garcia | Yes |
| Pueblo of Nambe | Marcus Lopez | Yes |
| Picuris Pueblo | Sylvia Armijo | Yes |
| Ohkay Owingeh | Christy Ladd, Sybil Cota | Yes |
| Pueblo of Santa Clara | Mary Lou Valerio | Yes |
| NCRTD | Anthony Mortillaro | Yes |

**V. Approval of the Minutes:** October 14, 2020 - Special Zoom Meeting

Chairwoman Ladd, Ohkay Owingeh, suggested some changes on page 4 under “Ron Shutiva” saying instead of “that” work could be done, it should be “if” work could be done. On page 5, first paragraph, she didn’t understand the use of “stead”. Steve said he will change it to “in his place” to make it clearer. Under item number VIII should be James “pulled” up not “pulls” up and in that same paragraph, in the 5th line up, “we district five will accept PFFs at any time” instead of “are accepted”. On page 6, item C, Chairwoman Ladd pointed out that instead of “to Trump administration” it should be “the Trump administration” and a sentence under item 10 ended without a complete end.

After the Chairwoman made her final comments, Marcus Lopez, Pueblo of Nambe, made a motion to approve the minutes with the revisions made. Anthony Mortillaro, NCRTD, seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Entity** | **Voting Member** | **Vote** |
| Los Alamos County | Keith Wilson | Yes |
| Santa Fe County | Gary “Brett” Clavio | Yes |
| Taos County | Candyce O’Donnell | Yes |
| Town of Red River | Russell Church | Yes |
| Village of Chama | Maggie Valdez | Yes |
| Pueblo of San Ildefonso | Lillian Garcia | Yes |
| Pueblo of Nambe | Marcus Lopez | Yes |
| Picuris Pueblo | Sylvia Armijo | Yes |
| Ohkay Owingeh | Christy Ladd, Sybil Cota | Yes |
| Pueblo of Santa Clara | Mary Lou Valerio | Yes |
| NCRTD | Anthony Mortillaro | Yes |

**VI. Discussion:** RTP Updates (Goals, Priorities, and Strategies)

Steve Fischer, NCNMEDD, noted that since the transit rating and ranking is the priority of the meeting, this update would be brief. Chairwoman Ladd, Ohkay Owingeh, suggested that the Goals document be sent out to the members with a two-week comment period and then to be approved next meeting.

**VII. Action/Discussion:** Transit and Rail Division Rating and Ranking

Chairwoman Ladd, Ohkay Owingeh, introduced Vijay Ummadi, NMDOT, who thanked the RTPO for hosting the meeting. He began by stating: RTPO is a forum for eliciting input from rural local governments and their public regarding transportation matters in Rural New Mexico. Your community’s involvement in the process is crucial to the development and execution of the programs and policies set forth by NMDOT and federal legislation. Agenda topics include ADA, Environmental, Funding, Road Classification, Safety, Planning, and Training items meant to support local government transportation activities.

The RTPO process is helpful because it scores applications, fulfills NMDOT processes, and provides additional opportunities for local communities to receive updates on transit development in the region. NMDOT Rail division announced its fiscal year 2021 federal transit grant awards during the annual statewide transit budget award meetings. Sub grantees that were awarded over 26 million in federal transit grant funding in FFY 21 which included 19 million in federal funding through the CARES act. 5310 grants awarded agencies funds for enhanced mobility to seniors, were mostly consistent with the requested budget of over 2,470,000 in capital funds. Eligible applicants include private and nonprofit organizations, state, local and tribal government authorities.

5311 funds are used to assist administration and operating costs. There were 22 applicants in FFY 21, and all applicants were funded. 15 applicants were awarded section 5339 funds for FFY 21 which totaled over 3 million. All of this information is on the transit and rail website under the award packet for each year. For 5311 funds, performance indicators were taken into account such as: their previous year ridership, total admin and operating ratio based on previous award, cost for passenger trip based on ridership, cost per vehicle mile, RTPO prioritization (this meeting), and the percent ratio of the ridership and the previous 5311 award. Again, this information is in the award packet on the transit and rail website. Chairwoman Ladd, Ohkay Owingeh, clarified for the members that NMDOT will be collecting ridership data from the National Transit Database from the FTA. Chairwoman thanked Vijay for providing the information. She then asked Steve Fischer, NCNMEDD, to provide instructions for the rating and ranking process. Steve directed the members’ attention to a link he sent to the chat box which redirects to a webpage with all of the applicants’ materials. The files were zipped due to their size and the files will be downloaded as folders. He also sent a link of the google form to conduct the rating and ranking and asked the members to take good notes as the presentations go and then fill in the form at the end of the last presentation. He enabled screen share for presentations and also gave the option of putting up the presentations himself.

* Los Alamos – 5311

The presentation began by giving an overview of the service area which includes Los Alamos and White Rock in Los Alamos County. Current service provides transit to seven neighborhoods between 6am and 7pm. Different service times are provided for different routes ranging from every 15 minutes in downtown to twice an hour in the neighborhood routes. ADA complementary paratransit service is provided for individuals with disabilities during the same days and hours of the fixed route service. Dial a ride and seasonal services are also provided. Ridership summary showed annual trips staying consistently between 450,000 to 550,000 from FFY10 to FFY19 until COVID-19 in 2020 which had about 150,000 one-way trips. An updated 2020 service plan was delayed due to COVID-19. The mission statement of Atomic City Transit is to improve and strengthen mobility in Los Alamos County through an effective, efficient and dependable transit system.

Public Involvement involving service changes include focus groups, marketing survey, and public presentations. Ongoing public input sources include the transportation board which regularly meets, comment cards, feedback on the website, collecting input from riders in-person, and a citizen survey every 2 years. Performance measures for the 2018 Community Survey show that over half (53%) of residents have personally used the Atomic City Transit in the past year. Riders between the ages of 35 and 49 were more likely to have used the bus service with 64% within this age group. The vast majority (95%) of respondents who have used Atomic City Transit rate the quality of service as either good (28%) or excellent (67%). 2020 Community Survey has been performed and the results are still pending.

The Atomic City Transit Marketing Plan includes promoting the brand as clean, reliable, safe and friendly and including this information as well as service information on atomiccitytransit.com, in newspaper ads, social media, community events, and school trainings.

The employees include 1 manager, 1 management analyst, 1 senior office specialist, 2 operations supervisors, 2 CSR/Dispatchers, 3 lead operators, 23 transit operators, and 5 season transit operators. Trainings for new hires include: CDL written and skills test, 2-day DOT required training, 2 weeks TSI training, and route training. Employee refresher trainings include first aid and CPR, blood borne pathogens, defensive driving, customer service and sensitivity, crisis management and winter driving.

The Fleet includes 31 vehicles (20 fixed route buses, 4 paratransit/dial-a-ride vans, 5 afternoon express buses, and 2 downtown circulator trolleys. Maintenance utilizes assetworks software and operates Monday through Friday (7:30am – 4:30pm) with on call services. Coordination efforts include: Local businesses and organizations (LANL, University of New Mexico – Los Alamos, Los Alamos Medical Center, Bandelier National Monument (NPS), DWI Council of Los Alamos) and other transportation services (NCRTD – The Blue Bus, Park-and-Ride, and LAC Senior Center Transportation).

The Summary Request for 5311:

Table

Description automatically generated

The presenter then opened the floor up to questions. Vice Chairwoman O’Donnell, Taos County, asked if they had seen savings due to the reduction of ridership from COVID. They had used those savings to invest in protective equipment such as protective barriers, disinfectants, and maintenance costs. A bright side was that they were able to retain most of their workers despite high turnover being an issue prior the outbreak. Vice Chairwoman O’Donnell, Taos County, asked if there was any plan to phase in an electric fleet of vehicles. The presenter responded by saying that they have applied and was awarded a 1.8 million dollar grant to purchase 2 electric buses and have partnered with Proterra, with an estimated 16-20 months until delivery of those vehicles and are investing in the infrastructure for charging stations. Currently, the buses are a mix of diesel and gasoline.

* Ohkay Owingeh – 5311

Chairwoman Ladd, Ohkay Owingeh, presented on Ohkay Owingeh’s Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and stressed that the main priority of the transportation system is to provide mobility to tribal members who don’t have access to transportation and to increase access to economic opportunity and schooling.

The next slide went over Ohkay Owingeh’s partnership with other transit providers in the region such as NCRTD, which has 3 stops in Ohkay Owingeh. PoPay Messenger, Ohkay Owingeh’s primary transit provider, also provides access to Railrunner and NMDOT Park and Ride.

Ohkay Owingeh reports directly on the National Transit Database (NTD); and is a direct recipient of TTP formula funding. The Pueblo received $96,410 for FY2021 (Tribal Transit 5311c Funding). Without NMDOT 5311 Funding, the PoPay Messenger Program will not be able to continue operating. The Ohkay Owingeh Tribal Council has committed to the matching requirement in the amount of $75,761 for the FY2022 NMDOT 5311 Grant application, which is changing with COVID 100% federal funds.

The Ohkay Owingeh Planning/Transportation Department hosted transportation community meeting at the Ohkay Casino. 77 surveys were received by the transportation department and the results were included. Due to COVID-19, community meetings have not been held nor a community needs assessment conducted.

Chairwoman Ladd proceeded by going over the regional need. The Ohkay Owingeh PoPay Messenger Service operates a Demand Response Transit Service for the 2,902 enrolled Tribal Members; and the 11,500+ non-Indian Community Members living in the communities of Ohkay Owingeh, Chamita, El Duende, El Llano, and Hernandez. Services provide transportation to work, school, medical appointments, Veterans hospital, social services related issues. In FY2020, 7,728 trips were provided to 4,673 riders, an average of 34 trips per day to 20 riders. 80% of the trips were social services related activities. Without existing services, an average of 400 individuals per month would be without transportation to and from work, medical appointments, and schooling.

FFY19 vs FFY20 Ridership due to COVID shutdown:

FY2019 Ridership

13,618 Total Trips

8,089 Total Passengers

6,624 Total Hours

63,434 Total Miles Driven

FY2020 Ridership

7,728 Total Trips

4,673 Total Passengers

5,432 Total Hours

31,393 Total Miles Driven

Despite this decrease in ridership, the PoPay Messenger program delivers COVID-19 related relief including: 50 breakfasts and 50 lunches to school children in the Community (500 meals a week). The Program has also delivered food boxes to our elderly each week during the pandemic.

The PoPay Messenger Transit Program has a Marketing Plan, which has been incorporated into our Long-Range Transportation Plan and the PoPay Standard Operating Procedures. The target markets include low-income families, senior citizens, college students, employment, middle and high school students.

Objectives include building awareness to underprivileged families about services to work and connectivity to other transit services, improve customer experience for all PoPay Messenger users, conduct marketing efforts to build ridership to the greatest potential to benefit from the PoPay Messenger Usage, and to decrease unemployment rates and increase graduation rates.

Chairwoman Ladd, Ohkay Owingeh, ended the last slide by saying that PoPay Messenger has only been in operation since 2008 and is 100% grant funded and thus very dependent on 5311 funds. The Chairwoman than opened up the floor to any questions. Vice Chairwoman O’Donnell, Taos County, asked what the funding request was and to clarify when the ppt said: that there is no match due to COVID? The Chairwoman said that we don’t know what’s going to happen in FFY22, and the operating expenses is about 160,000, with 44,000 in administration. The tribal council has committed to the match but it’s unclear if the CARES Act funds, which grant 100% in federal funds, will continue past this year.

* Town of Red River – 5311

Ginger Burgess, Town of Red River, began her presentation tallying the ridership from FFY 2020 with totaled 38,792 rides serving both residents and tourists (down about 3,000 from the previous year). She compared the ridership from FFY 2019 to FFY 2020, COVID brought about a large decrease in rider, paired with the usual off season. Unlike FY19, however, ridership never fully rebounded from that season.

The Miner’s Transit also kicked off an advertising program. Town council approved the policy for an Advertising Program utilizing exterior and interior overhead space for advertising opportunities for local businesses last fall. The three larger buses are currently being rewrapped, making room for small ads rather than full-side wraps to better serve the community. The program will be announced later this month with press releases to the local newspaper, the visitor center, the Chamber of Commerce and Facebook.

Beyond trying to put new bus depots, Red River would also like to replace the 2 passenger vehicles with small electric buses with wheelchair lifts, perimeter seating, and more ease with loading on and off loading.

Miner’s Transit offers transportation anywhere in Red River with a simple phone call. The service connects to the North Central Regional Transit District morning and afternoon. Members of the workforce, seniors and people with disabilities can easily navigate snow and ice conditions with door-to-door service and lift assistance provided by Miners Transit. Miners Transit works with Der Markt, the local grocer, to offer grocery delivery to anyone self-quarantined.

Miners Transit is experiencing the effects of limited service due to COVID-19 regulations which hints to how difficult it would be without the service including: Longer wait times, more people needing to walk walking, and support of the local tourist economy would be severely compromised with limited service. Due to winter conditions, residents depend on the bus when their cars won’t start or are buried in the snow, or when it’s too cold to walk.

Current local support for the Miner’s Transit includes lodger’s tac for grant match, support from the business community, residents, and tourists. Currently, Miner’s Transit provides frequent updates regarding changes service and increased precautionary steps to protect riders from COVID. This information is shared through rider notices, local newspaper, Red River Visitor Center, Facebook, and Twitter which will be launched in the coming weeks (from when this presentation was given).

The hope moving forward is that new bus stops, will help inform people about Miner’s Transit and will gain more riders through exposure. Sharing the many ways Miner’s Transit can be helpful to individuals with disabilities and aging seniors on social media. A campaign is also underway to identify groups in Red River and connect with them.

* City of Santa Fe – 5310

Dave Chapman, city of Santa Fe, began the presentation by saying that he was tasked with some reporting responsibilities for Santa Fe Trails. SF Trails is part of a multimodal system providing access to rail, trails, and other modes of transportation. We utilize about 27-28 seating capacity transit buses on 10 routes covering about 42 square miles. Santa Fe Trails serves a population base of about 140,000. In addition to providing comprehensive service within city limits, SFT also provides access to housing developments and educational centers that are located outside the city limits but within SF County. These communities include Rancho Viejo, West Agua Fria, and the Santa Fe Community College. Prior to COVID, SFT was averaging about 9.27% Annum (inaudible), and because of COVID, the hardship in undeniable.

The SFT coordinates with agencies that provide services to the disabled, to inform them of transportation options. An organization that SFT partners with is the La Familia Medical Center as well as the city’s senior services division to minimize the duplication of services. This year, SFT increased the full-time driver positions from 16 to 18 to accommodate existing and projected demands. The replacement vehicles for which this application is for, will purchase higher capacity vehicles which will primarily replace Sudan cars that have exceeded their usefulness.

The project is included in the RPO/MPO Coordinated Public Service Transit Plan and SFT provides abut 40,000 trip per year. All maintenance is done in house by train mechanics on a scheduled basis for about 3,000 miles exceeding recommendations. Monthly trainings are held to keep drivers current in trainings. SFT also provides complimentary ADA service provided by the DOT and American disability act. This is an origin to destination service for individuals who cannot use fixed route transit. This is curb to curb service, but door to door service is provided upon request. This service is available during the service hours of the fixed route transit. The annual mileage exceeds 255,000.

This concluded the presentation, and Dave Chapman requests that if there are any questions, that you email the operations transit director [TAMartinez@santafe.gov](mailto:TAMartinez@santafe.gov). Chairwoman Ladd, Ohkay Owingeh, opened the floor for any questions. Mary Lou Valerio, Pueblo of Santa Clara, asked what the request total was. Dave did not have the figure in front of him. Lesah Sedillo, NCNMEDD, reminded members that all the applicants’ information/files can be found in the link provided by Steve in the chat box.

* Santa Fe Recovery – 5310

Marcie Davis and Natalie Rivera, represented Santa Fe Recovery Center. Steve Fischer, NCNMEDD, pulled up the presentation. The presentation began with an overview of substance abuse in NM. Since 2000, the rate of death from drug overdose in New Mexico has increased by 101% in a population dominated by Hispanics and Native American peoples. In 2014, more New Mexican’s died of drug overdose than motor vehicle crashed, firearms, or falls. SFRC was established in 2005 to respond to the long-existing problem of substance abuse plaguing Northern New Mexico and the Santa Fe population of persons of color.

Santa Fe Recovery Center (SFRC) is a non-profit, CARF-accredited substance use disorder (SUD) program based in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Our mission is to work with individuals to sustain lifelong recovery from substance use disorders and related mental health disorders, by providing culturally relevant, evidence-based treatment and education in partnership with other community organizations.

We operate one of the only CARF accredited residential SUD treatment programs within the state. We provide:

* Detoxification
* Men’s Residential Treatment
* Women and Children’s Residential Treatment
* Extended Residential Treatment
* Transportation
* Regular and Intensive Outpatient
* Medication-Assisted Treatment
* Bridge House Sober Living
* Recovery Housing

SFRC coordinates transportation services with partnering agencies such as:

* Santa Fe Mountain Center
* Friendship Club
* CHRISTUS St Vincent Regional Medical Center
* La Familia Medical Center
* Las Cumbres Community Services
* Las Cumbres Santa Fe Community Infant Program
* Solace Crisis Treatment Center
* Presbyterian Medical Services
* The Life Link
* Esperanza Shelter
* St. Elizabeth’s Shelter
* The Food Depot
* NM Children, Youth and Families Department
* NM Children’s Medical Services
* Los Alamos Medical Center
* Presbyterian Española Hospital
* Many Mothers
* Aging and Long-term Services
* Taos Pueblo
* Santa Clara Pueblo
* Rio Arriba County Health and Human Services Department
* San Felipe Pueblo
* Sandia Pueblo
* Santo Domingo Pueblo
* And many other local non-profit organizations and state agencies

Annually, SFRC serves over 1,400 clients, half of which are opiate addicted. Clients are approximately 60% Hispanic, 30% Caucasian, and 9% Native American. 100% of SFRC clients fall below the Low-Moderate Income Limit. 80% fall below the Very Low-Income Limit. 70% of our clients are seniors or have one or more physical or mental disabilities, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

In 2019, we expanded our services to include an extended residential program and a treatment program that serves women who are pregnant and postpartum and who have children 0-3. This more than doubled the number of people served from 2018. This expansion resulted in a 4,200% increase in ridership vehicle hours – a 8,395 vehicle hours increase from 200.5 vehicle hours in 2018.

In December 2020, SFRC will expand our detoxification services to Gallup to respond to the overwhelming need for substance use disorder treatment services after the devastating impacts resulting from COVID-19. SFRC programs currently provide 2 main types of transportation: 1 on 1 on-demand service to transport clients to medical appointments, court dates, coordination with community partners, etc. and Group trips to support community engagement and collective healing. We currently serve people throughout Northern New Mexico including Española, Taos, Rio Arriba County, and Santa Fe County.

SFRC is requesting FY 22 funds to purchase Two Braun passenger vans to each hold 4 passengers and 1 wheelchair. SFRC is requesting $87,445 in FY 22 5310 funding.

This concluded the presentation and Marcie opened the floor up to questions. The first question was: what is the contact number for this center? Marcie responded by giving her email: [mdavis@sfrecovery.org](mailto:mdavis@sfrecovery.org) which she also put in the chat box. Vice Chairwoman O’Donnell asked to clarify to requested amount after which Steve pulled up the previous slide with the amount listed. Ron Shutiva, NMDOT Tribal Liaison, asked about SFRC’s outreach to tribal communities. Marcie answered by saying that they received a grant to conduct an outreach strategy including prints, social media, and other media outlets to conduct more outreach and education. Outreach has also been conducted in Gallup ahead of a new detox facility opening there.

Chairwoman Ladd, Ohkay Owingeh, progressed the meeting to the next presentation.

* Life Circle New Mexico – 5310

Stephanie Green represented the board of Life Circle New Mexico. Life Circle is a 501c3 based in Santa Fe to provide improved senior services. The goals of the non-profit is to provide an adult day care facility in Santa Fe for elderly/disabled, to provide stimulating activities and nutritious meals, and educational programs for seniors’ caregivers.

The program is justified by the growing senior population in the region, the need for healthy stimulation, socialization and safety/stability for the elderly, to provide relief for caretakers and the fact that this is one of its kind in Santa Fe. The transportation justification is a 5310 grant for one 12-person van + 2 wheelchair positions, free, door to door transportation and pick up, drop off, and field trips. The transportation barrier that currently exists for this population is age, disabilities, unavailable personal vehicle, unavailable alternative driver, no affordable transportation, and does not live close enough to available public transportation.

Pre-hiring protocols include criminal background check, motor vehicle record check, and drug and alcohol testing. Post-hire trainings include first aid/basic life support, passenger safety (including operation of a wheelchair lift), fire extinguisher and automatic defibrillator, random drug testing, and needs and appropriate care for the elderly and disabled. Vehicle safety inspection checklist includes: tires, leaks, gauges, lighting, safety equipment, and other equipment. Preventative maintenance will also be employed. Strict rules will be used such as seatbelt wearing, timely boarding, and following driver’s instructions including no eating/drinking from an open container, smoking, excessive noise, unwelcome verbal or physical contact, and extending anything out of the windows.

Support is coming from local government transit and senior services directors, non-profit providers of senior services, the mayor of Santa Fe, and the Santa Fe MPO. The request for the van is about 56,000 with a little more than an 11,000-dollar match. This concluded the presentation, and the presenter opened the floor for questions. Chairwoman Ladd asked if there was any intention to coordinate with other transit systems. Stephanie said that was not currently any coordination with other providers. Vice Chairwoman O’Donnell asked where the facility is located. In November, a space was rented on Espinacitas Street and was undergoing renovation when COVID hit and unfortunately put an end to the rental so currently, there is no facility. The hope is that the facility will open by next summer or fall as well as the van.

* NCRTD (5310, 5311)

Delilah Garcia, NCRTD, began the presentation by speaking on the background/milestones of NCRTD. In September 2004, the North Central Regional Transit District (NCRTD) was certified by the New Mexico Transportation Commission. Federal Fiscal year 2006/2007 the NCRTD received its first 5311 and 5310 grant awards. In October 2007, NCRTD began transportation services in the region. In November of 2008, NCRTD was successfully passing the County Regional Transit Gross Receipts Tax to establish a reliable and sustainable source of financing. So far, NCRTD has developed 26 fixed routes throughout North Central New Mexico with several demand response routes.

Acquisition and remodel of a 12,500 square foot building in Española through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding named the Jim West Regional Transit Center. Our first rider survey in which customers gave the district a 4.7 average rating out of 5 for overall satisfaction with the services provided. In July 2012, NCRTD moved into the new headquarters in Española which consolidated operations. Currently, they are in the final stage of conducting a systemwide route analysis resulting in a seven-year service plan update. Beginning in 2021, NCRTD will start the construction of the Española Maintenance Facility.

Highest monthly ridership to date is March 2019, with a total of 27,839 passengers on all NCRTD operated routes. Over the last 3 years, ridership on NCRTD operated routes had increased steadily. However due to the pandemic, we saw a significant decrease in ridership FY 2020: FY 2018: 286,441, FY 2019: 294,313, and FY 2020: 225,083.

The role of NCRTD includes coordination of transit systems in the member area (development a single seamless transit system for member area residents, coordinate transit with other existing modes, development of a coordinated tribal transit system between the 6 tribal entities that make up NCRTD membership) and directly operating transit services (operate 28 routes throughout the region, develop additional transit services as need demonstrates).

Service area/members includes four counties: Rio Arriba, Los Alamos, Santa Fe, Taos and seven municipalities: Santa Fe, Española, Edgewood, Taos, Chama, Questa, Village of Taos Ski Valley, Pueblos and Nations: Tesuque, Pojoaque, Santa Clara, San Ildefonso, Ohkay Owingeh, Nambe, and Jicarilla Apache.

Delilah Garcia moved on to Evaluation measures/criteria. The NCRTD is in the process of completing a seven-year transit service plan written by KFH group. Additionally, the NCRTD completed a long-range transit strategic plan that is expected to address the next 20 years of public transit in North Central New Mexico. The transit service plan specifically indicates that the role of the NCRTD is coordination with other systems, members and nonmember, as well as other modes. Six of the 17 members of the NCRTD are tribal entities. Specific focus has been placed on the development and continuation of tribal transit as well as connectivity within our system, park and ride, and rail runner connections. Ongoing funding and financial responsibilities are key points in the transit service plan. In November 2008, the County Regional Transit Gross Receipts Tac was passed in all four member counties ensuring sustainable funding. This was 1/8 of 1% and will not provide 100% of the financial need this region requires. In November 2018, the sunset clause on the Gross Receipts Tax was removed. The public input process is through the monthly board meetings as well as the NPRTPO process. As part of the Service Plan Update, we held numerous community meetings and will continue to hold several community meetings throughout the region.

Regional Need and Justification for the system. The service plan adopted by the NCRTD board includes the coordination of existing services in the service area, as well as tribal initiatives. We are also included in the NPRTPO Human Services Plan. It has been demonstrated that coordination of independent transit systems is needed to properly serve the residents of a regional area. Eliminating duplication of service results in cost effectiveness, as well as being able to serve a broader client base. Ridership increases have proven the need in our 10,083 square mile service area especially in a time when most transit agencies are losing riders. Age, income, lack of availability of a personal automobile, and the present of mobility limitations are all important indicators that affect the continued need for our coordinated mobility system. Feedback about the “blue buses” has been tremendously favorable as well as the demonstrated increase in ridership.

The NCRTD Public Information Officer concentrated on further development of a marketing plan as well as its implementation. Staff in the past years has developed branding with a logo and high-profile identification of the “blue buses” in the service area. Regular newspaper ads, community meetings, radio and cable tv spots as well as a regularly updated website are all promotional tools. Furthermore, a published Route Map, bus advertising wraps and “Blue Bus” promotional items have been part of our marketing strategy. Coordination in the first direction to increase ridership. Demand response, fixed route, flex or deviated route development ensures accessibility in the service area. Centralized dispatch makes it easier for riders to inform themselves of transit options through a one-call toll free number, which in turn assures increased ridership and accessibility. We routinely refer riders to other agencies/modes, their schedules, and contact information as well as frequently plan connective trips for callers. The marketing of ADA compliant vehicles, as well as working with local groups to focus on the 16% of mobility impaired riders in the service area is a step towards increasing para-transit ridership. Current fleet consists of 37 vehicles, with all vehicles ADA accessible.

The NCRTD Fleet manager ensures that maintenance is provided on all transit and support vehicles on a regular preventative maintenance schedule. Currently over 90% of our vehicle maintenance is performed by maintenance shops in Española, Chama and Santa Fe. The NCRTD currently employs 1 fleet technician and 1 transit vehicle electronics technician to assist with vehicle maintenance diagnosis and trouble shooting. The fleet manager and transit supervisors can also assist with trouble shooting and address maintenance concerns as they arise. All operations staff are trained in passenger safety and sensitivity as part of the onboarding and refresher training every 3 years.

The 5310/5311 budget request summary is $10,765,987 net project cost, $6,978,600 FTA Portion of Net Project Cost and $3,787,386 Minimum required local match.

Delilah Garcia provided contact information at the end of the presentation and then opened the floor up to any questions. None were asked and so the Chairwoman request that Steve Fischer send the rating and ranking form once again to the chat for members to fill out.

After 10 minutes, all votes had been cast and Chairwoman Ladd, Ohkay Owingeh, passed the meeting on to the Vice Chairwoman O’Donnell, Taos County, due to a meeting conflict. Vice Chairwoman O’Donnell asked Steve if all the 9 votes had finalized, and after checking the responses, all 9 votes were accounted for.

The Vice Chairwoman called on a motion to postpone the remaining items for the following meeting. Lesah Sedillo, NCNMEDD, said that she can briefly go over item 9 which related to previous discussions with the Chairwoman regarding a special meeting in December for making a new rating and ranking document for the RTIPR and State projects. Vice Chairwoman asked James Mexia, District 5, if he had any updates. He said that no updates come to mind but will answer any questions regarding the certifications that were sent out the previous week.

Vice Chairwoman entertained a motion to postpone items 8, 10, 11, 12 for the January meeting. Keith Wilson, Los Alamos County, made the motion. Mary Lou Valerio, Pueblo of Santa Clara, seconded the motion. Ron Shutiva, NMDOT, said that January 6th conflicts with King’s Day where Pueblo groups celebrate the new tribal officials. Vice Chairwoman O’Donnell, Taos County, modified the motion with the correct date (second Wednesday, January 13th).

Roll Call Vote:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Entity** | **Voting Member** | **Vote** |
| Los Alamos County | Keith Wilson | Yes |
| Santa Fe County | Gary “Brett” Clavio | Yes |
| Taos County | Candyce O’Donnell | Yes |
| Town of Red River | Russell Church | Yes |
| Village of Chama | Maggie Valdez | Yes |
| Pueblo of San Ildefonso | Lillian Garcia | Yes |
| Pueblo of Nambe | Marcus Lopez | Yes |
| Picuris Pueblo | Sylvia Armijo | Yes |
| Ohkay Owingeh | Christy Ladd, Sybil Cota | Yes |
| Pueblo of Santa Clara | Mary Lou Valerio | Yes |
| NCRTD | Anthony Mortillaro | Yes |

**VIII. Discussion:** Updated project lists for the State-Transportation Project Fund and RTIPR

\*postponed

**IX.** NMDOT Updates

1. District 5: \*postponed
2. Planning: \*postponed
3. Tribal Liaison: Ron Shutiva, NMDOT Tribal Liaison, gave a brief update at the end of the meeting. The State Tribal Leadership on November 17th will continue as scheduled. Attendance is limited so contact your tribal leadership if you wish to attend.
4. LTAP Board: \*postponed

**X.** Member Input on Training and Presentations for NPRTPO

\*postponed

**XI.**  NPRTPO Planning/Program Manager Updates (announcements, next meetings)

\*postponed

**XII.**  Adjourn

Vice Chairwoman O’Donnell, Taos County, announced the adjournment of the meeting at 12:50 PM.