

**MINUTES OF THE  
CITY OF SANTA FE / SANTA FE COUNTY  
REGIONAL PLANNING AUTHORITY**

**Tuesday, January 18, 2011  
3:00 PM  
Santa Fe, New Mexico**

This Regular Meeting of the City of Santa Fe / Santa Fe County Regional Planning Authority (RPA) was called to order by Vice-Chair Chris Calvert at approximately 3:18 PM on the above-cited date in the Santa Fe County Commission Chambers in the County Administration Building.

**ROLL CALL**

**County Commissioners Present:**

Robert Anaya  
Kathy Holian, Chair *[arrived after roll call]*  
Daniel Mayfield  
Virginia Vigil

**City Councilors Present:**

Chris Calvert, Vice Chair  
Rosemary Romero

**City Councilor Excused:**

Patti Bushee  
Rebecca Wurzbarger

**Santa Fe County Staff Members:**

Colleen Baker, Open Space & Trails  
Robert Griego, Planning Manager  
Teresa Martinez, Finance  
Steve Ross, Attorney

**Santa Fe City Staff Members:**

Mike Kelly, Santa Fe Trails  
Reed Liming, Long Range Planning Dir.

**Others Present:**

Josette Lucero, NCRTD  
Mariel Nanasi, New Energy Economy  
Mark Tibbetts, MPO

Vice Chair Calvert welcomed new RPA members Commissioners Anaya and Mayfield.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mr. Griego requested that Item VIII B be tabled to the next meeting. Vice Chair Calvert suggested that Item VI C be moved up to before Item VI B.

**Councilor Romero moved to approve the agenda, as amended, seconded by  
Commissioner Vigil, voted on and approved unanimously.**

*[All items in the Board packet for all agenda items are incorporated herewith to these minutes by reference. The original Board packet is on file in the Regional Planning Authority office.]*

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## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **Minutes from November 16, 2010, Regular Meeting**

**Commissioner Vigil moved to approve the minutes of the November 16, 2010, Regular Meeting, seconded by Councilor Romero.**

Councilor Romero pointed out an edit that needed to be made to the second sentence in the paragraph following the election of the 2011 RPA Chair and Vice Chair: delete the words “that that” and insert the word “that.”

**The motion was voted on, as amended, and approved unanimously.**

Commissioners Anaya and Mayfield abstained from voting since they were not in attendance at the meeting.

## COMMUNICATION FROM THE PUBLIC

There was no communication from the public.

## DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS

- **Resolution Rescinding Previous RPA Open Meetings Resolutions**

Mr. Ross confirmed that this resolution is being rescinded because it conflicts with the JPA and the County’s Open Meetings Act governs the RPA meetings.

**Councilor Romero moved to approve the Resolution Rescinding the Previous RPA Open Meetings Resolution, seconded by Commissioner Vigil, voted upon, and approved unanimously.**

- **Letter of recommendation from Energy Task Force**

*(Chair Holian arrived at the meeting.)*

Chair Holian, as Vice Chair of the task force, referred to the letter in the packet from the Energy Task Force (ETF) to the RPA requesting an allocation of \$20,000 for an economic feasibility study for a locally controlled municipal electric utility.

As background, Chair Holian explained that several years ago, when he was an RPA member, former Commissioner Paul Campos had discussed whether a locally controlled municipal electric grid utility (muni-grid) would be a viable alternative for Santa Fe County. The County allocated \$100,000 to perform a technical feasibility study that was performed by Buck Monday, who was the utility director of Los Alamos County. The study determined that a muni-grid would be feasible only if the City and County were to work together because the grid runs in and out of the incorporated areas of the city.

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Realizing that energy was an important regional topic, the ETF was officially created under the auspices of the RPA about 18 months ago. Among the many regional topics it has addressed is a muni-grid, for which some advantages are: One, it could be a boost to the local economy because at present money spent on electric bills leaves the community, as PNM does not employ many people who live and work in Santa Fe County. Two, if it is managed correctly, rate stabilization can be had by deciding on sources for electrical power that will not go up in price in the future, such as solar that may be expensive to install but will be there for a long time.

Chair Holian said that the ETF is not naïve and knows there are many challenges in creating a muni-grid, which is why it would be crucial to perform an economic feasibility study before proceeding any further. A nonprofit in the community, New Energy Economy, is willing to contribute \$10,000 towards such a study, which combined with an RPA contribution of \$20,000 would give a total of \$30,000.

Chair Holian reviewed the Scope of Work that was given to the members in their packets. She added that the ETF has been working for a year and a half and includes members from the outside community who have given this serious recommendation a great deal of thought before bringing it to the RPA.

Councilor Calvert, Chair of the ETF, said that he participated in the ad hoc committee with Commissioner Campos. The feasibility analysis done at that time determined that technically and legally a muni-grid is feasible and allowable. The next step is to determine if it makes economic sense, which requires a more in-depth analysis. The discussion about a muni-grid is part of a larger strategic plan being developed by the ETF that will be brought forward to the RPA once it is finalized regarding the overall strategy for energy in the region.

Ms. Mariel Nanasi, of New Energy Economy, said that her group believes the muni-grid is an economically viable route to take for Santa Fe. She pointed to one of the most progressive utilities in Austin, Texas, and gave important statistics from them. As of March 2010, Austin Energy supported more than 1,050 customer owned solar energy systems, 70 commercial projects, 24 municipal projects, 28 school installations and 6 libraries. Together, these produced more than 4 megawatts of generation capacity. In addition, more than 35 new solar installation companies have developed in Austin, creating 300 green jobs. She said that they look to Austin as a model in terms of budget considerations, energy considerations, and a transition to a clean energy economy. The McCune Foundation and Oppenheimer Brothers Foundation have each agreed to put in \$5,000 towards the proposed study. New Energy Economy went to them and asked them to contribute to help make a statement that this is coming from the community, as well as the official bodies of the City and the County. A study would confirm this idea is economically viable before proceeding further. A muni-grid would create economic stability, job growth and energy independence.

Councilor Calvert confirmed that a muni-grid fits into the objectives of the strategic plan, which are to reduce greenhouse gases, benefit the local economy, control prices, and reliability of service. A privately run utility has profit for its motive or goals. Whereas when the public sector

provides those services it is looking to break even in terms of paying for itself and to benefit the economy as well.

Commissioner Vigil said that she has always supported a muni-grid as an alternative to creating the autonomy for moving forward in renewable and alternative energy. She was tangentially part of the original task force and noted that such a proposal tends to be political and there may be candidates running for and against the issue. It also creates the opportunity for a utility to lobby heavily. It is important that the strongest message from all the previous studies that have been done is that this can only happen if the City and the County work together on it.

Councilor Romero said that she is also supportive of looking into a muni-grid. She referred to #3 in the Scope of Work and suggested that the language include a worst case scenario should energy prices go through the ceiling. She asked what the policy was for issuing a \$20,000 contract without going through an rfp.

Councilor Calvert replied that the first step was to authorize the funding for the study and then go out for rfp.

Mr. Ross added that the County's purchasing rules have developed in that they do not necessarily go out for rfp for low amounts, but that they solicit quotes.

Commissioner Mayfield asked if local utility cooperatives in Santa Fe County would be a part of the study.

Chair Holian replied that right now just an economic study is being focused on for a possible muni-grid utility in what is the present PNM area. Coops will be looked at further down the road.

Councilor Calvert added that the overall strategic plan will consider options such as energy boards, cooperatives, public utility districts, and any other mechanisms that might better serve the residents of the City and the County than the current situation.

Commissioner Mayfield asked if PNM has been given an opportunity to participate in the ETF. Chair Holian replied that the decision was made early on it would not be appropriate for PNM to sit on the ETF, which was formed for the health, safety and welfare of the people of Santa Fe County and was not meant to be a forum for lobbying from a private company. She said the ETF is willing to bring PNM in on various topics and have them be witnesses or give input, but that making decisions would be a conflict of interest. If someone on the ETF were representing a private company, it could be a conflict of interest, especially in making recommendations to the RPA about energy issues.

During his campaign, Commissioner Anaya remarked that he was asked at a forum if he would support creating a muni-grid. His answer was that, given the current economic climate, he would not support creating anything new at all, but that he would be willing to analyze any effort that would potentially save taxpayers resources and provide an opportunity to do things in a progressive way. He added he still feels the same. On behalf of himself and Commissioner

Mayfield, he asked for an historical summary from staff to bring them up to speed on what has been done. He also asked if the RPA has taken formal action as a body relative to creating a muni-grid.

Chair Holian replied that the RPA formed the ETF to investigate those questions, as well as other regional energy issues and to bring forward recommendations to the RPA.

Commissioner Anaya asked if the City or the County has had independent discussions and taken action to compliment what the ETF has done. Chair Holian explained that the BCC allocated \$100,000 to the technical feasibility study, so there would have been questions and discussion at the time.

In reply to another question from Commissioner Anaya, Mr. Ross explained that the geographical boundary of the RPA was originally the 5-mile extraterritorial planning jurisdiction, which has not been changed or amended.

Commissioner Anaya concluded that, as it relates to capital expenditures, determinations that the RPA has made affect the area outside the 5-mile radius, while the function and structure as an RPA is to provide coordinated regional planning within the 5-mile radius. The RPA is a body that provides for planning initiatives, which essentially provide background information as a building block on top of the previous study. He asked if there was a dropping off point of that initial study and if this is a logical next step to continue that planning process. Chair Holian replied that was correct.

To be clear for the RPA, Councilor Romero stated its mandate is within the 5-mile radius, and it has not expanded beyond that. The proposed economic analysis is being requested to see if economic relief can be had by creating jobs or utilizing energy in a different way. She wanted to be clear that the ETF is looking at the 5-mile radius, which is what is mandated in the JPA.

Mr. Ross referred to paragraph D in the JPA that identifies that the RPA was formed initially to do essentially land planning within the EZA. He said it is not all that clear whether there is a geographical boundary.

Chair Holian suggested that a future discussion of the geographical boundary for the RPA should occur before any future amendments to the RPA JPA are made.

Commissioner Vigil stated that the RPA has taken action on expanding its responsibilities and scope, and that official action has been taken in creating subcommittees to pursue combined County and City efforts on regional issues. Whether or not it is identified in the language, the RPA has become regionalized in its thinking. She asked if the economic feasibility study limits itself to the 5-mile radius, and would that do justice to the benefit that a muni-grid would provide.

Chair Holian replied that the study is relatively general in scope and limiting it to the 5-mile area would not change the study in any way. Questions such as, what does it mean to have a muni-

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grid, how many jobs might be created in the area, and what might rates be, would apply essentially to the whole county.

Councilor Calvert added that some of those answers are included in the previous technical feasibility study. That is why in certain rural areas there are other arrangements like coops, and PNM did not go there because it was not profitable. Even if the economic feasibility study has a positive result, that does not necessarily mean the approach will be to immediately take on the whole infrastructure system, which would probably cause a legal battle. There may be interim steps.

**Councilor Calvert moved for approval of the recommendation from the Energy Task Force, seconded by Councilor Romero.**

Councilor Romero said she would like to add her suggested amendment to the Scope of Work. Councilor Calvert accepted that as a friendly amendment.

Mr. Ross stated that there is only \$18,000 in the RPA's budget for contractual services.

Chair Holian said that the ETF wanted the funding for the study to come out of the "Other" category in the capital outlay GRT because it is planning for something that could be a capital outlay, as was included in the list previously provided by Mr. Ross to the RPA.

Councilor Romero suggested another friendly amendment to the motion: Upon review of available funds that could be used to support this effort, including the \$18,000 under contractual and other areas, the CIP could be accessed. Councilor Calvert accepted that as a friendly amendment.

**The motion was voted on and approved 5 to 1, with one no vote cast by Commissioner Mayfield.**

Commissioner Mayfield said that he would like to first see the RPA budget.

- **Draft RPA JPA Amendments**

**Chair Holian moved to table Item VI B, Draft RPA JPA Amendments, seconded by Councilor Romero.**

Chair Holian stated that she would like to bring the County Manager to the next meeting to discuss this issue, following the County Manager's discussions with City Manager Robert Romero about funding that the City and the County share.

Commissioner Vigil suggested that the issue that surfaced with regard to jurisdictional boundaries be reviewed because actions have been taken by the RPA that are more regional.

Commissioner Holian said that she will also bring the boundary issue to the County Manager.

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Councilor Calvert noted that the 5-mile issue is something that was part of the initial intent for the RPA. As stated in the draft of the JPA amendments, much of the original intent has been met, and the RPA is looking to make meaningful contributions to areas that are responsibilities of both the City and the County.

**The motion was voted on and approved unanimously.**

- **County Capital Outlay GRT Open Space and Trails Funding and Projects**

Chair Holian stated that this item stemmed from a request by Commissioner Stefanics and Councilor Wurzbarger to get a picture of the funding and the projects for the open space and trails for both the City and the County: what kind of expenditures to date, where has funding come from, have there been state monies involved and if so were any reverted, if there are available funds left, and what are the recommendations of the staff for projects.

Ms. Colleen Baker stated that she has been working on the County side on a comprehensive accounting of the projects. This is an enormous amount of work and is not complete. The report presented goes back to 1998 when the program was started and includes general obligation bonds, GRT, state appropriations, grants and donations. She welcomed feedback to be sure this is the appropriate direction. She explained that Mr. Leroy Pacheco could not be at the meeting today and so the City side is not included. She will meet with him in a week to determine fiscal responsibilities.

Given that some of the RPA members that had the most questions were not at the meeting today and there was a lot of information presented, Councilor Calvert recommended this be brought back to the March RPA meeting.

## **COMMUNICATIONS FROM AGENCIES**

Chair Holian said she would like to move the NCRTD presentation to before the MPO in consideration of Ms. Lucero's time.

- **NCRTD**

Ms. Josette Lucero reported on the renovation of the transit center in Española and said there was a pre-bid on January 7 attended by 12 contractors. The bid submission deadline is January 20 at 2 PM. The Evaluation Committee will meet to go over the bids and make a recommendation for the regular meeting of the board on February 4.

The GRT for Santa Fe County for the last quarter have come in about 3.65 over the budget projected and the numbers are looking good.

Ridership continues to increase and is expected to increase more, with gas prices going up. There were 11,515 riders in December.

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Following a request by Chair Holian for an overview of the NCRTD, Councilor Romero explained that the February 4 RTD board meeting will include a complete orientation for its members. Given the previous discussion around the boundaries of the RPA and how that overlaps with other issues, including transit, Councilor Romero felt that might be addressed during Mr. Tibbetts' presentation on the MPO. If a more in-depth RTD presentation is needed, perhaps time could be allowed at the March RPA meeting.

Chair Holian agreed that the March meeting could include a 10-minute presentation to give an overall picture of the NCRTD's past, present and future. Ms. Lucero confirmed she would prepare that.

Commissioner Anaya expressed his disappointment with the cancellation of the route that went to southern Santa Fe County. He said he would be interested in working to get the route back.

Commissioner Anaya pointed to the GRT that was passed by the public relative to commuter rail service and connections. He said that the City and the County both passed an ordinance that said the RPA would deal with the recommendations associated with the tax, for which the parameters definitely go beyond the 5-mile radius. Mr. Ross confirmed that was correct and that the GRT is a countywide tax.

Commissioner Anaya asked if the town of Edgewood or the city of Española, as two incorporated areas within the County of Santa Fe, were ever consulted or asked to come to the table when determinations were made associated with the tax. Councilor Romero said that the resolutions passed by the City and the County gave the authority to the RPA to develop the service plan, which was approved by the RPA, approved by the City and the County, and then by the RTD in that order.

Commissioner Anaya agreed that the RPA has an obligation and responsibility to think and act regionally, which is well beyond the five miles and the borders of Santa Fe County. He felt there is opportunity to make sure that deliberations and decisions made are inclusive of jurisdiction radius, including Edgewood and Española, and are in the best interest of the community. He felt that other elected officials and other community leaders and members should be engaged before the RPA makes determinations on projects, resources and resource expenditures.

Chair Holian added that the agenda item at the March meeting should include regional transit planning because there are different entities that do planning. Ms. Lucero confirmed that those questions can be addressed during the presentation.

- **MPO**

Chair Holian stated that at the November RPA meeting there was a request from Commissioners Vigil and Stefanics to have a presentation on the different entities that do transit planning, including information about the MPO, what does NMDOT do with RPO recommendations, where funding comes from, what is actually funded, and what rural areas are included.

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As a quick history, Mr. Mark Tibbetts said that, as a result of a federal action in the 1970s, an MPO is designated once an urban area reaches a population of 50,000, which in New Mexico are Las Cruces, Albuquerque, Farmington and Santa Fe. Around this they created economic development districts in the State of New Mexico, as well as the Council of Governments (COG). The MPO is created to fairly distribute federal transit and federal highway monies in a more inclusionary process with local government and representation by the users from that area.

RPOs were created in the early 1990s and are a mirror creation from the state that covers all of New Mexico, other than those areas designated as MPOs. Whereas an MPO has specific federal requirements, an RPO is responsible to the district engineers from NMDOT. The RPO for District 5, Santa Fe's area, deals with four counties, but the district also includes San Juan and Torrance counties. District 5 gets a certain amount of funding for transportation projects and has to allocate between two MPOs and three RPOs.

Southern Santa Fe County is problematic for transit service because it is a far extension and there is a problem in getting economically efficient transit service to that point. Years ago, there was a proposal to move southern Santa Fe County to the Mid-Region COG (MR COG) for planning purposes, but it was killed because the county did not want to lose that extension. For all intents and purposes, 80% of the people in southern Santa Fe County commute to Albuquerque and perhaps 20% commute to Santa Fe. The RTD in the Rio Metro area still has some planning they do in Edgewood into Albuquerque.

An MPO has a specific boundary that is agreed to by the Governor of the state, and that boundary has changed from being just the City of Santa Fe to the 5-mile EZA. Now it is extended and includes the Pueblo of Tesuque and goes to the central core area of the county where most of the population is. In terms of transportation planning, an MPO is confined to its boundary and does not do transportation planning outside of its defined boundary. The MPO cooperates and facilitates between any transit provider within its boundary, which includes Santa Fe Trails, RTD services, Santa Fe Pickup, and Taos Express. Any federal funding for these providers goes through the MPO.

The MPO deals with regionally significant projects in its programmed money, but for the most part it is only responsible for federal funding and does not have much authority outside its own boundary and over state generated funds.

The MPO has a Transportation Coordinating Committee (TCC), with representatives from the City and County, RTD, Tesuque Pueblo, and Santa Fe Trails.

Mr. Tibbetts stated it is difficult to develop a service plan at the RPA level when it needs to be worked out amongst the various service providers. The MPO holds these discussions at the TCC level. He said there needs to be more coordinated staff between the different entities involved at that level, to where the RTD staff talks to County and City staff.

MR COG is involved in dealing with the Rail Runner and also with potential partnering for southern Santa Fe County. He suggested there might be an arrangement of shared funding,

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where those residents in southern Santa Fe County could use two carriers to get to the City of Santa Fe by being brought first to Eldorado and then move on to the City.

As previous chair of the RPA and currently chair of the RTD, Councilor Romero stated that the RTD level is working on creative ways to address the southern county areas that were not part of the service plan development. She said the intention of bringing the MPO to the discussion was so that the RPA members could all be clear about the various perspectives and overlaps – and to see if the MPO might be the more appropriate entity to look at transit issues for the whole area. This would require cooperation from the City and the County, but as Mr. Tibbetts noted, it is clear that the MPO deals with issues that spill over.

Councilor Calvert noted that the thrust of the GRT to begin with was train related transportation issues focused around the Rail Runner, which is why some of the GRT is not being spent on certain areas. An overall discussion of transit is needed that includes all the players, their jurisdiction, their limitations, and their funding.

Chair Holian suggested that there might be other models in the state that have a more streamlined planning process, rather than having six different entities.

Chair Romero suggested holding a study session in February that is just focused on transit.

Chair Holian said that she will work with staff to find a date in February for a study session.

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

- **County Capital Outlay GRT Financial Report**

Ms. Teresa Martinez reviewed the County Capital Outlay GRT spreadsheet, and said that the GRT income is right on budget. There is \$304,537 available in the “Other” category and \$512,697 available in “Open Space.” The other two categories are completely earmarked, obligated or expended.

Councilor Calvert asked what falls under “Open Space” in terms of legitimate expenditures. Ms. Martinez replied if it adds to the value of the open space, then it is considered capital and goes through, but maintenance is not allowed.

Chair Holian recommended that the remaining Information Items be postponed until the March meeting.

- **Santa Fe County Sustainable Growth Management Plan Presentation**
- **RPA Task Force Process Discussion**
- **Energy Task Force Update**
- **Economic Development Task Force Update**
- **Affordable Housing Task Force Update**

## **MATTERS FROM STAFF**

Mr. Griego asked if the RPA's three task forces have established dates for meetings and how they are noticed.

Chair Holian explained that ETF has noticed open meetings on the second Thursday of the month. She asked that the new RPA members consider which task force they would like to be part of. She explained that Economic Development and Affordable Housing consist of RPA members. The ETF has two RPA members, herself and Councilor Calvert, and five members of the public. Any RPA member who wishes can attend the meetings.

Commissioner Anaya said that, because of his background, he might be interested in Affordable Housing, but would like to visit with Chair Vigil first.

Commissioner Mayfield requested that information on each task force be emailed to him. He plans to attend each one and from there will pick his track.

Commissioner Vigil said that currently the two active members of the Affordable Housing Task Force are herself and Councilor Bushee, but there has not yet been a meeting. She has met with and received proposals from staff and the County Manager, and she would like Commissioner Anaya to be a part of the task force.

The task force was created to share resources between the City and the County by joining forces towards promoting inclusionary zoning for affordable housing. She suggested that, rather than looking at a specific project that would stimulate the economy, efforts are being directed toward a foreclosure prevention program. She said that Councilor Wurzbarger also wanted to be a part of the task force.

Mr. Griego also included in the packets the list of times and dates for the 2011 RPA meetings, along with deadlines for the packet material.

Councilor Calvert said he received neither an ecopy nor a hard copy of the packet prior to the meeting.

## **MATTERS FROM THE REGIONAL PLANNING AUTHORITY**

Chair Holian encouraged members to look through the information from the retreat RPA held last summer that talks about future directions.

Commissioner Mayfield requested that the March RPA meeting agenda include a full budget review of dollars afforded to RPA, so they he can make decisions for how to allocate things such as ETF amount requested.

Chair Holian stated that one of the members of the ETF cannot attend any more, and so the ETF will bring forward another name for approval on the March meeting agenda.

**DATE AND TIME FOR NEXT RPA MEETING**

The next Regular Meeting of the Regional Planning Authority will be held at 4 PM, Tuesday, March 15, 2011, in the County Commission Chambers.

Chair Holian will work with staff to determine the date for the proposed transit and transportation study session in February.

**ADJOURNMENT**

This Regular Meeting of the RPA was adjourned at approximately 5:05 PM.

Approved by:

Kathy Holian  
Chair, Regional Planning Authority  
Kathy Holian, Santa Fe County Commissioner

Minutes transcribed and drafted by Kay Carlson

Attest:  
Valerie Espinoza  
Valerie Espinoza  
County Clerk



COUNTY OF SANTA FE ) RPA MINUTES  
STATE OF NEW MEXICO ) ss PAGES: 12  
I Hereby Certify That This Instrument Was Filed for  
Record On The 25TH Day Of March, 2011 at 12:48:46 PM  
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Deputy Maureen )  
Witness My Hand And Seal Of Office  
Valerie Espinoza  
County Clerk, Santa Fe, NM