

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

**Tuesday, July 21, 2009  
4:00 PM  
Santa Fe, New Mexico**

The Regular Meeting of the City of Santa Fe / Santa Fe County Regional Planning Authority (RPA) was called to order by Co-Chair Kathy Holian at approximately 4:10 PM on the above-cited date in the Santa Fe County Commission Chambers in the County Administration Building.

**ROLL CALL**

**County Commissioners Present:**

Kathy Holian  
Liz Stefanics  
Virginia Vigil

**County Commissioners Excused:**

Harry Montoya

**City Councilors Present:**

Rosemary Romero  
Rebecca Wurzburger

**City Councilors Absent:**

Patti Bushee, Chair  
Matthew Ortiz

**Santa Fe RPA Staff:**

Mary Helen Follingstad, Executive Director

**Santa Fe County Staff Members:**

Duncan Sill, Economic Dev. Planner  
Rachel Brown, Deputy County Attorney

**Others Present:**

Ken Smithson, KNS Resources, LLC  
Jeanette \_\_\_\_\_ PNM  
Josette Lucero, NCRTD  
Keith Wilson, Santa Fe MPO  
Jon Bulthuis, Santa Fe Trails

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Councilor Wurzburger moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Commissioner Vigil and approved unanimously.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JUNE 29, 2009, SPECIAL MEETING**

**Commissioner Stefanics moved to approve the minutes of the June 29, 2009, Special Meeting, seconded by Councilor Romero and approved unanimously.**

**INFORMATION ITEMS**

- **Transit**

- **Status Report on Transit Service Plan**

Ms. Follingstad referred to a memorandum in the meeting package that contained material for this item and also for agenda item VIII.A., Presentation and possible acceptance of the FY 2010 Transit Service Plan, which explains actions since June 29, 2009. She recommended that this subject be discussed along with the presentation on the Transit Service Plan. There was consensus from the Authority to move the discussion to later in the meeting.

- **NCRTD member report**

Commissioner Stefanics reported that the NCRTD received a federal stimulus grant specifically for capital outlay purposes, and following special meetings, the NCRTD Board (Board) approved using the grant funds to acquire land and renovate a building. The Board did not have a July meeting, it will meet next on August 7. In the meantime, the Tribal Subcommittee, the Coordination and Consolidation Subcommittee, the Finance and the Personnel Subcommittees are continuing to meet, but they cannot take action, since only the Board can take action.

Councilor Romero asked Ms. Josette Lucero from the NCRTD to speak about the process followed to acquire a property for the NCRTD.

Ms. Lucero explained that the Board looked at 10 sites and decided on property in the City of Española where there is an existing building with seven acres in the back for future build out. The NCRTD received \$2 million in stimulus money to purchase the property and renovate the building. They are about to hire an architect and are going through the environmental phase. The 12,000 square foot building will house the administrative offices and maintenance facility, and the vehicles will be kept in back.

- **Energy Task Force**

- **Report from the Chair of the first meeting of the Energy Task Force**

Commissioner Holian reported that the task force met for first time on July 8. The group spent time getting to know each other and talking about ground rules and priorities. They did discuss possible projects, and came to the consensus to move forward on renewable energy, energy efficiency, and green grid projects. At the next meeting they will begin to prioritize specific projects. To get moving quickly, at first they will meet every other week.

Councilor Romero asked how the work of the task force might be coordinated with the sustainable commission that has implemented a strategic plan that includes energy and a variety of other tasks.

Commissioner Holian explained that the members of Sustainable Santa Fe will be invited to the meetings of the task force for their input, especially Ms. Katherine Mortimer. She said that the task force will include projects that are pertinent to both the city and the county.

Councilor Romero added that she and Commissioners Holian and Vigil are on the solid waste authority (SWAMA). A strategy that SWAMA is pursuing from a regional perspective is the

reuse of materials going into the landfill that would create countywide economic development and green projects. She expressed her hope for connectivity with the Energy Task Force and the sustainable commission.

- **Implementation of Solar and Renewable Energy Financing**

Mr. Duncan Sill gave an update on the current efforts to create renewable energy in support of the legislative bills that were passed in the 2009 New Mexico legislative session, SB 647 and HB 572. On June 19, the BCC held a study session to look at some of the potential applications and related issues that would allow the deployment of renewable energy improvements throughout the county. He anticipated that a resolution will be brought to the BCC at the end of July. This will be followed by a 30-day public comment period, followed by consideration of the adoption of an ordinance establishing the district or establishing the mechanism to apply HB 572. County staff has been working closely with the City of Santa Fe, Nick Schiavo, personnel on the state level, the NMSU minerals department, and the New Mexico Association of Counties (NMAC). He added that everyone in the state is interested in looking to the Santa Fe area to set the tone to develop this type of initiative.

Councilor Wurzbarger thanked Mr. Sill for his work in this area and asked if they were still considering both bills.

Mr. Duncan replied that the current action is consideration of how to best utilize the two bills and the implementation stages of the respective bills. He understands that the intent is for two resolutions recognizing the respective bills and moving ahead to find ways to apply them.

Commissioner Holian said the intention at this point is to look at implementing both bills, because they give different choices for financing the projects. Even though the senate bill is more complicated, it seems to be more straightforward to implement and in less time. The senate bill creates financing districts, which are very similar to public improvement districts. A consultant from a renewable fund mentioned that the banking community feels more comfortable with a structure that is similar to something else that they already understand.

Councilor Wurzbarger said that one of the two bills may need an amendment for it to be implemented that would affect the timeline.

Mr. Sill commented that an amendment to HB 572 might be necessary, and the issue at hand is an actual determination from the regulations and licensing department about qualified financing institutions. He added that Representative Brian Egolf has been working on the issue. Mr. Sill said he would update the Authority once a clarifying response is received.

Commissioner Vigil noted that the resolutions do not bind the county to any particular bill. She said that the more she learns about this, the more she realizes how complicated and immense the responsibility will be. Because the county is capable to administer assessment districts, it has been charged with moving forward. Edgewood and Española, as a portion of Santa Fe County, can opt into this, and the City of Santa Fe will also have the opportunity to determine what it means and if it wants to opt in.

Commissioner Holian felt it important that city staff be kept involved in the meetings so that they can keep the elected officials informed.

Following discussion about city or county constraints about certain renewable energy devices, Commissioner Stefanics suggested a fact sheet be developed so that residents know what the restrictions are where they live.

After Commissioner Holian recommended the information be included on the website, Councilor Romero said she felt that a faster method would be to supply a telephone number to contact city staff directly. Commissioner Stefanics added that bringing the information to the RPA meetings becomes part of the public record.

Commissioner Holian thanked Mr. Sill for the work he has done in addition to his other full time jobs.

- **Review of 2010 RPA Budget**

Ms. Follingstad presented documents that were prepared in March 2009 by county budgeting, also a memorandum reflecting RPA's budget history for the last ten years and that includes 2010 challenges, most of which have to do with transit and the energy task force. There is also a list of projects that the RPA is authorized to do based on the JPA between the City and the County. She said that the RPA budget is subject to the amount the city puts into its budget for the RPA because the county matches that number. Ms. Follingstad said she worked with Ms. Katherine McCormick with City Housing and Community Development Department on funding the RPA budget at a level that reflects the overall 15% cut to the City FY 2010 budget. The RPA budget was then submitted to the County. The recommended amount was \$85,000 from the City to be matched by the County for a total of \$170,000. The FY 2009 RPA budget was \$200,000.

Ms. Follingstad stated that the RPA budget will be on the August agenda for approval.

Councilor Wurzbarger expressed her misgivings about several line items and said that a lean budget should be developed that is tied to a work plan. She said she would not approve the budget as it is written now.

Commissioner Stefanics said that she could appreciate what the city has been through and is aware of the budget constraints that the county is also experiencing. She asked if Councilor Wurzbarger would feel comfortable with a flat budget, or if she would want it cut even lower.

Councilor Wurzbarger said that she prefers to evaluate a budget on the basis of what is being proposed according to the work. She said she would like to see the budget cut at least to where it was last year and determine what would be lost if that is done.

Councilor Romero added that she would prefer to keep the budget as presented at \$170,000, which is in alignment with the listing of proposed expenses.

Councilor Wurzbarger pointed to the cuts in the city travel budget and said she would like to have an understanding of why there is an increase in travel for the RPA and reiterated that she felt the budget being presented should tie into the work plan.

Ms. Follingstad stated that she might need more direction on the need for professional services related to the work the RPA is doing with transit, whether or not that can be done by the director or if there is a need to bring someone in from the outside to help with it. She added that the travel listed for the RPA director is related to continuing professional credentials. Ms. Follingstad said that she would work with someone at the city to review the budget, and it is based on certain things the RPA has done in the past.

Councilor Romero recommended speaking with Dave Millican and Kathy McCormick to help align the budget.

Commissioner Stefanics noted that Andrew Jandáček is a county planner working on transit responsibilities and may be used as a resource for the budget.

Councilor Romero suggested that Jon Bulthuis, who has taken an incredible leadership position on transportation issues, may be available as a resource. In dealing with the tight budget times, the city is reviewing all of its contracts, but there are occasionally services that can only be provided by an outside consultant because it would cost the entity too much money to have someone on staff do the work. As the RPA takes on the transportation responsibilities, it is not yet known what all of the issues are it will be dealing with. That is an evaluation that will need to be undertaken to make sure that consultants are used appropriately or that staff might be increased that could not be sustained in the long run.

Councilor Wurzbarger suggested this is the opportunity for Ms. Follingstad to work with city and county staff, more specifically Mr. Bulthuis and Mr. Jandáček, to look at activities that will be done this year with transit, recognizing that the RPA is Ms. Follingstad's full time position. She expressed her hope that the RPA director would be able to support the RPA's primary objective of transit and to develop more annotation on the work plan and how the relationship with the NCRTD will fit.

Commissioner Stefanics pointed to the narrative in the chart regarding fiscal year 2009 accomplishments that reads, "A policy was put into place regarding process for submittal of requests. Staff developed criteria for future requests for awards."

Ms. Follingstad explained that the proposed budget was put together the beginning of March, and the statement reflected the policy that had been under consideration, but had not been put into place. She added that subject is on the agenda for today's meeting.

Commissioner Holian asked Ms. Follingstad if she will be able to get all this information together for the next meeting.

Ms. Follingstad replied that she should be able to do so, once she meets with Dave Millican at the city.

## **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS**

- **Presentation and possible acceptance of the FY2010 Transit Service Plan**

Ms. Follingstad pointed to memorandums in the meeting packet, one from her as a cover memo, a memorandum from Councilor Romero, and the memorandum from the consultants, Jacob Riger and Ken Smithson. She noted that Mr. Smithson was in attendance to speak to the plan. Meetings were held last week with all the project stakeholders; Mr. Smithson met individually with Tesuque, Pojoaque and San Ildefonso pueblos; and there was a collective tribal meeting at which NCRTD was also present. The outcome of those meetings was the sense that criteria needs to be put into place, not dissimilar from other criteria for allocating Transit GRT funds, especially for prioritizing the longer term use of the transit GRT investments. She reviewed the key points:

The money has started to accrue, and the RPA took action at its meeting on June 29 to extend the existing services through September 30, 2009. The NCRTD has requested direction from the RPA that they would like a decision on allocation of the tax funds for the remainder of fiscal 2010, which is October 1, 2009, through June 30, 2010, so the NCRTD can turn in a belated budget to the DFA by July 31, 2009. The downside of this is that the decision is ahead of when the RPA will have its service plan. The transit study has become more complex than could have been foreseen, so if the RPA decides to move forward with a decision right now, it will be based on what is currently in place and would be just for the short term and not the long term.

Commissioner Holian summarized that, as far as action is concerned, the RPA needs to decide whether to provide guidance to the NCRTD on its FY10 budget and if so, what that guidance would be.

Ms. Follingstad agreed that is the main decision. She reviewed the bullet points listed and noted that the cumulative cost of all the desired services is likely to absorb most of the funds that will be available. There are tradeoffs between expanding services and maintaining certain current services. Each of the project stakeholders has an interest, and the NCRTD and Santa Fe Trails have existing routes they would like to keep going. While the pueblos have funding this year, it is unknown if they will have funding next year. She added that none of the technical side has been put together for presentation to the RPA as yet, so any decision would not be made on technical data. Adding to the complexity is the several transit operators and kinds of services that are provided: urban, rural, Rail Runner, NCRTD, Santa Fe Trails, and Santa Fe Pickup.

Councilor Wurzbarger expressed her concern that the RPA does not have its plan in place and questioned what happened to the process whereby this direction is being requested and the RPA is not prepared to respond.

Commissioner Stefanics said that the process to hire the consultant took longer than expected, which put the RPA behind at least two months. She added that the budget and the strategic plan the NCRTD puts forward can be amended at a later date. However, the NCRTD needs something now to give both the state and the federal governments in order to let them know that all parties are participating and are represented in their strategic plan and their budget.

Councilor Romero added that Mr. Roman Abeyta, the county manager, and his staff has been meeting regularly with the NCRTD board and staff to iron out some of the issues the county has brought forward. As a parallel track, there have also been meetings with county staff that occurred in between RPA meetings to be cohesive in moving forward and continue to give the current services.

Ms. Josette Lucero confirmed that the NCRTD has been providing transit service for Santa Fe County, and Mr. Roman Abeyta worked with them to continue services for the July to September term. The deadline for that was July 1, and they negotiated with the contractor at the end of July to provide services after October 1, otherwise if they wished to continue to provide service to Eldorado, they would have to go out for an RFP. There are also considerations to be given to continuing service in northern Santa Fe County. The NCRTD also needs to have a service plan from the RPA because they will be applying for matching funds through federal grants for rural transportation, and that budget will need to be submitted.

Councilor Wurzbarger said that she would like to ask Jon Bulthuis to advise whether he has any concerns about the priorities that have been proposed.

Jon Bulthuis noted that the proposed budget in terms of the priorities has \$375,000 set aside for the NCRTD. Of the three options, deciding not to provide formal guidance would be a mistake. Until the results of the service plan are known, he felt that the present level of service to the rural parts of the county being provided by the NCRTD should be continued. That will help the NCRTD Board decide how to spend the funds that it has available to it. From what Ms. Lucero is saying, the NCRTD is looking for some certainty about a budget for the near term, but how those budget monies are spent can be amended over time. He suggested that the third priority is a possibility to select and then there will be the opportunity to amend it when the plan comes in.

Commissioner Stefanics said that the way she perceives routes is to determine the difference between work-related transportation and other needs, such as for people who might need to get to the grocery store or to the doctor. She noted that the NCRTD and the City of Santa Fe apply for funds based upon the purposes of the transportation, and it might help when Charlier finishes the report to separate out work routes versus midday routes that are not related to going to and returning home from work. She suggested that the consultant include in the service plan separation of work routes from midday routes because the county has identified many needs and not everything can be funded. The County has received a letter of request from the Secretary of Corrections asking for transportation down Highway 14 to the State Penitentiary, and the county's facility is just across the road. But the residents up and down Highway 14 have requests for other types of transportation as well.

The other issue is that the new GRT was for expansion of services. And the new services that just got started can still be considered new and expanding services, including other new routes that are proposed. Routes that have been going on in the County for a while are not really new and not really expansion. Commissioner Stefanics said that she did not know if they would be meeting the letter of the law with the new GRT by funding existing routes.

Mr. Bulthuis stated that the city does not break down routes by purpose of the trip taken because it has a comprehensive network. He added there are some funding sources for different trip purposes that the City and the NCRTD take advantage of, for example the Job Axis and Reverse Commute (JARC) funds. He suggested it may make sense to look at whether that breakdown would assist in making application for federal funds beyond the local match funds that are included in the memo.

Councilor Romero said that she wanted to reaffirm that Charlier's job is to evaluate the different routes and that part of their role might be to look at other types of opportunities that could provide the transit. For example, a Highway 14 route that serviced the corrections facilities might be better provided by a taxi service funded from another source. She would encourage giving Charlier greater direction without holding them down to specific routes based on the needs. There are very limited things that are going to be done with the 86% GRT. Also there may be some routes that may no longer be efficient.

Mr. Smithson stated it is important to clarify that the decision revolving around July 31 is simply about the NCRTD component, and the RPA needs to give them an answer so they can proceed with the existing Santa Fe and the Eldorado routes noted on the chart on page 4. The other services that are listed - and perhaps things that have not been identified - are things the consultant would like more time and more direction to present to the Authority.

Councilor Wurzburger suggested that priority number 2 be selected because she has no basis from which to direct the NCRTD to change its existing service until she can understand where to go with the plan. She would rather tell the NCRTD to go ahead with the plan for the year and then in three months when the RPA has a clearer definition of a service plan, to come back to the NCRTD with that plan.

**Councilor Wurzburger moved to accept the FY2010 Transit Service Plan with the understanding that the RPA has the option to amend the service plan with the NCRTD in three months, seconded by Commissioner Stefanics and unanimously approved.**

Commissioner Holian asked for a discussion of the selection criteria for providing service.

Commissioner Stefanics said she agreed with Councilor Romero and the comment in her memorandum about completing a more in depth plan for the priority areas. If the contractor cannot do the needs analysis for the new areas, perhaps that is where the negotiation between Ms. Follingstad, Mr. Jandácek for the County, and Mr. Bulthuis for the City would come in. She felt that the amount of ridership in the projected county routes should be analyzed, for example, Highway 14, and the communities of La Cienega, Eldorado, and Edgewood.

Ms. Smithson commented that, when considering ridership, it is important to remember there are very different characteristics between an urban service and a rural service, which has to be accounted for with a metric of some kind, which will help during this particular process and also down the road when making future service decisions.

Commissioner Vigil said she liked the idea of a survey and felt one should include rural residents.

Councilor Wurzburger said that the primary criteria for her is who would want or need to ride the service, how many people and how often, and the location of the routes, which is the answer to the efficiency. Answering those questions would give her the information from which she could give the policy direction for which routes to choose. She asked the consultant how they determine the areas on their chart.



Mr. Smithson replied that the chart was developed from interviews with the operators who identified the prioritized service provisions. He agreed that addressing the criteria that Councilor Wurzburger suggested would help to come up with the plan for the logical way to invest the GRT.

Councilor Romero said she felt they were on the right track with the criteria that has been put forward to develop the most economical use of the GRT dollars. It is Charlier's job to help the RPA figure out the efficiency of all the suggestions that are coming forward.

**Councilor Romero moved to give Charlier the direction of the funding process and criteria as noted on page five, numbers 1 through 3 in their memorandum, and to include the additional criteria and direction listed in Councilor Romero's memorandum, which is attached as an integral part of these minutes, seconded by Councilor Wurzburger.**

As a friendly amendment to the motion, Councilor Wurzburger said that she wanted to be certain that the operation and definition of providing efficient and cost effective connections includes determination of ridership as suggested by Commissioner Stefanics with respect to numbers of riders, when they need the service, and why they are riding.

Councilor Romero agreed to the amendment to the motion.

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

- **Appointment of David Griscom to the Energy Task Force**

**Councilor Wurzburger moved to approve the appointment of David Griscom to the Energy Task Force, seconded by Councilor Romero and approved unanimously.**

- **Presentation and possible adoption of the 2009 RPA Work Plan**

Ms. Follingstad stated that the work plan has not changed except for adjustments of dates. She included a resolution that was proposed by Commissioner Vigil and Councilor Romero regarding efforts to align affordable housing policies between the city and the county.

Commissioner Vigil said this is a joint resolution that will go before city committees and is scheduled for action at the next BCC meeting. She brought the resolution forward to the RPA to acquaint them with it as an informational item that is a part of the RPA work plan.

Ms. Follingstad reviewed the work plan and said that many of the items on the plan have been derived from the RPA's JPA. She noted that no new joint city and county interest has been selected and so it is blank as a placeholder for any additional project.

**Commissioner Vigil moved to adopt the 2009 RPA Work Plan, with the caveat that there is no prioritization of the projects and that it can be amended if necessary, seconded by Councilor Romero and approved unanimously.**

- **Presentation and possible adoption of the proposed process and criteria for consideration of awards of Regional GRT Funds**

Ms. Follingstad presented a spreadsheet showing GRT funds available through the end of FY 2009. In reply to a question from Councilor Bushee whether any funds are encumbered, Ms. Follingstad explained that she met recently with the finance director who said that the funds committed for the trails will be encumbered.

She said that she reviewed prior RPA minutes regarding the funds for South Meadows Road, and the contingency from the RPA was that the Siler Road extension receive all the funds it needed before South Meadows received any. The MOAs for South Meadows Road and also for the Rail Yard Park are in place, and encumbering of the funds will occur at the August 28 BCC meeting. Funds awarded to the Farmers Market have been expended. The "Other" category has \$539,405 available. Ms. Follingstad reported that Mr. Steve Ross has said he would provide a memorandum to the RPA delineating the legal entities eligible to receive the funds in the "Other" category because the Authority members have questioned whether the funds could be awarded to nonprofits.

Commissioner Vigil pointed out that there are no funds available to maintain the trails that already exist and noted that the River Trail could use a stewardship program. She stated for the record that she appreciates all the benefits that nonprofits create, but she felt that the RPA should start funding joint projects specifically related to maintaining things such as trails.

Councilor Wurzbarger reinforced the suggestion and agreed trail maintenance was a joint city-county issue that should be given priority.

Commissioner Stefanics totally agreed with the issue around maintenance of trails, improvements and upgrades and pointed to available funds listed on the chart as presented. If the RPA decides to identify that it will focus on necessary city-county projects, the nonprofits should receive a clear message that the RPA will not entertain nonprofit requests.

Councilor Romero referred to the criteria for joint projects, and suggested eliminating criteria #6, which reads, "will the project fill an identified and pressing need in the community." She stated that criteria is a mixed message to nonprofits because they are filling needs in the community that municipalities are not filling.

**Councilor Romero moved to approve the proposed process and criteria for consideration of awards of Regional GRT Funds, and to eliminate criteria #6 to be clear in the RPA's direction that it will not allocate funds to nonprofits, seconded by Commissioner Stefanics, voted upon and approved unanimously.**

In response to a previous request from Commissioner Stefanics, Ms. Follingstad presented a chart for weighting projects so that, if there is limited funding and multiple projects, the decision could be made through scoring.

Councilor Romero stated that eliminating the words "project fills a pressing need in the community" will meet with the intent of her earlier motion.

Ms. Rachel Brown asked if the RPA would still need a memorandum regarding the legal use of the GRT funds.

Councilor Romero replied that a letter should be drafted to nonprofits informing them of the RPA's decision to focus on criteria #1.

Following discussion and consensus by all Authority members, it was decided to give RPA staff direction to work with both city and county staffs to determine their highest priorities for trails and parks maintenance and develop preliminary ideas for how to make the allocation decision. The Authority requested that staff bring this information to the next meeting so that action could be taken to allocate funds to the maintenance of trails and parks at that meeting.

Commissioner Vigil suggested that the Dale Ball Trails be considered as a priority since they are used by both city and county residents.

### **DATE AND TIME FOR NEXT RPA MEETING**

The next regular meeting of the Regional Planning Authority will be held at 4 PM, Tuesday, August 18, 2009, in the County Commission Chambers.

Since Councilor Romero and Commissioner Holian knew that they would not be in attendance at an August 18 meeting, Commissioner Stefanics suggested that Ms. Follingstad query the RPA members to make sure there will be a quorum.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the RPA, this Regular Meeting was adjourned at approximately 6 PM.

Approved by:

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Co-Chair, Regional Planning Authority  
Kathy Holian, Commissioner, County of Santa Fe

Minutes transcribed and drafted by: Kay Carlson