

City of Glenwood Springs, Transportation Commission Final Minutes, regular meeting – June 1, 2021

The meeting convened at 7:30am and adjourned at 10am.

Participants included:

Commission members: Rob Gavrell, Sandy Lowell, Steve Smith, John Stephens, Ralph Trapani

City council members: Shelley Kaup, Charlie Willman, Ingrid Wussow

City staff: Linda DuPriest, Debra Figueroa, Jenn Ooton, Sara Weigel

RFTA staff: David Johnson, Kurt Ravenschlag

Minutes

Proposed minutes for May 4, 2021 meeting were approved unanimously.

Meetings schedule

At Jenn's request, August commission meeting will be August 10. (Bicycle-Pedestrian Subcommittee, normally on that day, will move to August 3.)

July (and possibly August) meetings will be via internet. City council chambers are being equipped to accommodate hybrid in-person/internet attendance at meetings, including commission meetings (anticipated August).

Parking

Jenn and Debra reported that city staff have postponed business outreach on enhanced managed parking (paid parking), pending further settling of post-virus conditions (shortage of employees, financial situations, *etc.*). Correspondingly, managed-parking report to city council will be postponed (tentatively July 15).

Meanwhile, staff are researching budget needs for current parking management, hiring replacement for parking patroller and planning to hire second.

Ralph commented that the delay in managed-parking outreach is fine, better to be sure businesses and neighbors can participate and concentrate. Other commissioners agreed.

Rob recommended keeping attention on commission's memo of parking recommendations meanwhile, using interim as opportunity to refine concepts and proposals.

Rob also highlighted one of those recommendations, identifying a single parking manager within the city staff. Jenn responded that parking management is currently handled with combination of staff from police department, engineering, and transportation; she sees this an effective and efficient team approach for now.

(continued later in the meeting)

Rob and Ralph reported the Parking Subcommittee has prepared specific report and recommendations, including:

- hire/specify lead parking program coordinator on city staff
- implement global parking budget
- implement additional enforcement; include north Glenwood
- add technology for collections and enforcement

Ralph noted that the recommendations are consistent with parking recommendations in MOVE study's initial report.

Jenn noted that expanded managed parking is likely to include neighborhood permits and business permits, to ensure adequate parking for local needs.

Linda reported need for volunteers to undertake systematic parking counts as part of her research in the enhanced parking management. Several commissioners volunteered to help.

Action: The commission voted unanimously to approve sending to city council *Managed Parking Program Recommendations*, as prepared by the Parking Subcommittee.

Conclusions/next steps

- Monitor city's redesign of staffing for current parking management
- Continue discussion of TC managed-parking memo and proposals
- Anticipate and prepare for business/public outreach concerning enhanced/expanded parking management
- Parking-count volunteers follow Linda direction

Transportation demand management (TDM)

Jenn reported that Linda and city public affairs officer Bryana Starbuck are currently designing a **questionnaire** to determine businesses' knowledge of and interest in TDM. Questionnaire will be pre-tested on city's human resources department for phrasing and clarity.

Jenn also suggested a **group bus ride to Aspen** (city council, TC, others) to experience the ride, to interview other passengers, and then to meet with Aspen city government representatives about the Aspen parking management program.

Rob and others expressed commission's enthusiastic interest in reviewing the questionnaire, participating in the Aspen ride, and otherwise engaging in outreach and discussion of potential TDM measures.

Sandy noted recent increase in wrecks on I-70 east and west of Glenwood Springs, and corresponding effects on commuter traffic. He recommended conferring with CDOT about how they manage such wrecks and delays.

Ralph responded that I-70, especially west of Glenwood Springs, is over capacity, and wreck/delay frequency is likely to increase.

Shelley responded that TDM can help reduce traffic volumes in general and correspondingly reduce complications from I-70 wrecks. She also recommended deliberate **consultation with CDOT**.

Conclusions/next steps

- Anticipate and review draft questionnaire on TDM
- Plan and schedule bus trip/tour to Aspen
- Discuss and design TDM consultation with CDOT

Transit

City staff and commission members have received **written responses to TC questions about MOVE study**, primarily focused on transit components of the study. Initial discussion of the responses ensued, including participation from RFTA staff in attendance.

Particular discussion focused on **bus service along Highway 6&24** between downtown and West Glenwood—primary question whether RFTA or *Ride Glenwood Springs* will serve that corridor.

Ralph and John highlighted (from the responses) RFTA interest in discussing West Glenwood service, but noticed caveats included regarding budget and BRT scheduling.

Specific comments from commissioners included:

- Avoid redundant bus runs on same route
- Extend 6&24 service earlier and later each day
- Increase frequency of 6&24 service
- Coordinate and integrate RFTA regional service with local route

service and with north-side tourist shuttle (proposed).

Discussion included reminder that RFTA memo notes difficulty of keeping reliable local schedule for regional buses, especially near end of weekdays.

RFTA staff David Johnson acknowledged that RFTA's Destination 2040 (adopted in 2018) anticipated a two-years' delay in (possibly) taking over 6&24 service. That schedule was interrupted by virus complications, but he expects RFTA management board to consider the proposal soon.

Separately, David reported that RFTA hopes to increase **bus ridership to and from western Garfield County**, particularly commuters. He noted the need for improved local circulator connections to make that commute option more convenient for more potential riders.

RFTA's Kurt Ravenschlag confirmed that west-end bus rapid transit can be increased in frequency, to appeal to more potential riders, also noting that improved local transit connections will be important to making that viable.

John questioned recently circulated population and commuter patterns data; he asked for more clarification/confirmation on origins and destinations for commuters.

Rob summarized **particular recommendations** posed by the commission's Transit Subcommittee (for integration into MOVE report or for other contexts), including:

- Improve appearance, comfort, and safe access at bus stops, especially along 6&24 (busy stops)
- Expand local transit early, as part of implementing MOVE results
- RFTA actively integrate regional transit planning with city staff's local transit planning

Sandy concurred, saying that final MOVE report should include details of integrating regional and local transit.

Related, Linda intends to schedule transit-integration meeting with RFTA staff and MOVE consultants (had been planned for May 6, still pending).

Kurt reported that the draft MOVE report has been completed and will be presented to city council and to RFTA board soon (exact timing not specified). He

also asserted that he expects RFTA's primary focus will continue to be on main-line service along Highway 82. Correspondingly, he said, improved local service should be provided using *Ride Glenwood Springs*, not regional buses.

Rob asked if RFTA would support adjustments to Grand Avenue traffic signals to enhance transit. Kurt responded that that would help, but only with dedicated bus lane for BRT. Related, he asserted that extending BRT to West Glenwood would be viable only with "protected" BRT route through town.

Ralph suggested postponing formal delivery of Transit Subcommittee recommendations (to city council) until MOVE report is presented and reviewed. Commissioners concurred.

Conclusions/next steps

- Review and discuss MOVE report, when published
- Monitor and discuss results from transit-integration meeting, city and RFTA/MOVE staff

Transportation capital projects, annual ranking recommendations

Based on review of current-year capital projects rankings (small and large projects), references in *Long Range Transportation Plan*, and input from subcommittees and individual commissioners, Rob presented a comprehensive spreadsheet listing preliminary rankings. (Commission recommendations are due to city council in June, in anticipation of council annual budgeting process.)

Extensive discussion ensued, incorporating additional comments from commissioners. Steve highlighted suggestions from Bicycle-Pedestrian, including individual rankings and format adjustments; format suggestions include:

- list estimated cost for each project on ranked lists (for perspective and to inform potential funding opportunities)
- list only ranked projects on chart (perhaps also list only a few next-tier projects for possible attention in subsequent year)
- distinguish between projects that need preliminary design and those that are ready for construction (and funding)
- move some items, previously listed as capital projects, maintenance/repair recommendations for integration into city crews' work plans.

Discussion revealed need to incorporate some **projects that appear to have either construction momentum or funding momentum**. Examples include:

- 6th Street renovation/reconstruction – DDA has received proposals for design; hope for funding through Colorado Main Streets program and other sources
- Devereux to Centennial, improved pedestrian access
- Two Rivers Park overpass/6&24 path, complete connection with combination city and private installations
- 27th/Glen bicycle-pedestrian underpasses

Commissioners and staff agreed to recommend keeping these active projects on priority rankings lists, both to maintain momentum and to anticipate cost-related delays.

Other specific discussion compared options for safety improvements along **8th Street**. Jenn noted that city council-approved carry-over funding that includes

construction of three-foot-wide pedestrian path on north side. Steve and John highlighted Bicycle-Pedestrian Subc recommendation to delay north-side path until it can be funded and built to full width (eight or ten feet).

Ralph highlighted need to move 8th/7th crosswalk to west side of intersection, adding flashing beacon. Commissioners agreed.

Debra noted that additional grant opportunities are opening, through CDOT, with funding from *Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity* program (RAISE).

Tentative capital project ranking recommendations to city council (pending refinement and final review by commissioners):

large projects

#1 – south bridge

#2 – 6th Street renovation/reconstruction

#3 – 27th/Glen bicycle-pedestrian underpasses

#4 – 6&24 path reconstruction

small projects

#1 – 8th Street bicycle-pedestrian safety improvements

#2 – Devereux/6&24 path, complete connection

#3 – 8th/Midland safety improvements

#4 – rapid flashing beacons installation (*specified locations*)

The commission considered recommending a third category of capital projects to include smaller items costing significantly less than \$1 million upper threshold for small project; commissioners decided instead to recommend listing estimated cost for each ranked project, to highlight cost differences and opportunities.

Separately, the commission recommended updating city's *Long Range Transportation Plan* to include **program direction** for transportation demand management (including specific preliminary components).

Conclusions/next steps

- Rob incorporate details from discussion and present revised outline of capital projects ranking recommendations
- Commissioners respond and approve a timely final version of recommendations to city council (following distribution and discussion protocols, Jenn reminded).

Next meeting topics, planned and potential

- Recruit Transportation Commission applicants
- RFTA MOVE responses to questions, continued discussion
- Census predictions, population and traffic
- Managed parking program, next steps
- RFTA first-last mile mobility study
- TC as referral or review agency, development proposals