

**MINUTES OF THE  
EAGLE VALLEY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
May 10, 2023**

A meeting of the Eagle Valley Transportation Authority (“Authority”) Board of Directors (“Board”) was held on May 10, 2023, at 12:30 p.m. The meeting was held in person at the Avon Council Chambers located at 100 Mikaela Way, Town of Avon, Colorado, 81620, and on Zoom. Notice of the meeting was posted on May 5, 2023, and included agenda items, location and time, as well as the teleconference information, needed to participate in the public portion of the meeting. The Notice of Board of Directors Meeting dated May 5, 2023, and the certification of posting are attached hereto.

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**ATTENDANCE**

**Directors in Attendance:**

Director Amy Phillips, Mayor and Councilor, Town of Avon

Director Dave Eickholt, Beaver Creek Metro District

Director Jeanne McQueeney, Commissioner, Eagle County

Director Barry Davis, Councilor, Town of Vail

Director Earle Bidez, Mayor, Town of Minturn

Director Nick Sunday, Councilor, Town of Eagle.

Director Cassie Macumber, Member of the Board of Trustees  
of the Town of Red Cliff

**Directors Absent:**

All Directors were present at this meeting.

**Also in Attendance:**

Tanya Allen, Regional Transportation Director, Eagle County,  
and EVTA Interim Executive Director

William “Bill” Ray, Transit Consultant, WR Communications

Sage Thornbrugh, Transit Planning Manager, ECO Transit

Jessie Cooper, Fleet Asset Supervisor, ECO Transit

Lance Trujillo, Technology Manager, ECO Transit

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Greg Barret, Security & Training Supervisor, ECO Transit

Dayana Herr, Administration Supervisor, ECO Transit

Joanna Kerwin, Eagle County Community Member and Board Member, Edwards Metropolitan District

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**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Director Phillips presented the agenda. Director Eickholt motioned to approve the Agenda. Director Sunday seconded this motion, which passed with a unanimous 7-0 vote.

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**APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

Director Phillips presented the Minutes and Financial Statements dated April 12, 2023, for approval, and asked if there were any requests for corrections from other Directors. Hearing none, Director Eickholt motioned to approve the minutes. Director Sunday seconded this motion, which passed with a unanimous 7-0 vote.

**3.1 Financial Statements**

Regarding the Financial Statements, Director Eickholt asked about the \$1 million dollars year to date debit item on the First Bank checking account and wanted to know why this item does not appear on the balance sheet. Ms. Allen answered that she was unsure of why the item was not showing on the general fund balance sheet but explained that it was an amount moved from checking to the savings and capital accounts. Director Eickholt suggested consulting with EVTA's accounting firm and First Bank to develop a plan regarding the distribution of money between various EVTA accounts to maximize investment potential while covering operational costs.

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**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Ms. Joanna Kerwin mentioned that she was there as a member of the Edwards Metro District Board to get updates on the EVTA to share with fellow Board members. She then proceeded to state that she was there as a member of the community as well, bringing her advice regarding crosswalks and bus shelters. She said that she wants the EVTA to be consistent in the community and have the same type of shelters, crosswalks, and other amenities at each bus stop.

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## AGENDA ITEMS

### **5. ECO Transit Quarterly Update**

Ms. Allen wanted to remind all present EVTA Directors that ECO Transit has had a sitting Advisory Board (ECRTA) and as ECO Transit is moving over to the EVTA both boards have been blended requiring quarterly meetings to provide the traditional ECO Transit update.

Ms. Allen said that for this update, she would like to highlight the ridership recovery showing that ECO Transit is well above 100% of Pre-COVID numbers. She also said that although ECO had less service on the road this winter season because of how difficult was to hire and retain drivers, utilization of the provided services was very high.

Ms. Allen also highlighted the implementation of SMS Text notifications for passengers. This will allow passengers who register to get updates on bus time arrivals when they are at a bus stop or receive service bulletins regarding their trip. Information regarding this service is being include in spring schedules and at transit stops.

### **6. ECO Transit – Summer 2023 Fare Free for Better Air Feasibility Study and Recommendation.**

Mr. Thornbrugh presented on the feasibility of implementing a Free-Fare pilot program during the Summer for ECO Transit. This would be part of a statewide “Fare-Free for Better Air Program” initiative for which funding was being made available by the Colorado Association of Transit Agencies (CASTA) to provide or expand fare-free transit service during the months of June, July and August.

Mr. Thornbrugh presented pros and cons regarding implementation of the program. Pros included removing the financial barrier of some community members to have access to transit and eliminating confusion between ECO Transit and other transit agencies since they will all be fare-free. In addition, this would serve as an opportunity to prepare passengers for the future EVTA transition and familiarize

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administrative staff with challenges that may need to be addressed prior to full fare-free implementation.

For the cons, Mr. Thornbrugh said that going to a fare-free system is not as simple as it sounds. Currently two of the ECO Transit routes (Highway 6 and Valley) experience capacity issues during both AM and PM peak times, resulting in passengers being left behind at bus stops. With the anticipated ridership increase for this program, this issue will be more prevalent. He also mentioned that due to driver shortages and fleet issues providing additional service could be a real challenge for ECO Transit at the moment. Other challenges he foresees are the passenger confusion of having a fare-free system for a short period of time only and the pass sales communication for Administrative Staff and bus operators.

Mr. Thornbrugh said that at the moment staff considered implementation a coin toss and could not confidently make a recommendation one way or another and asked for Board feedback and recommendations based on the information provided.

Director Sunday asked if there will be a way to track ridership in each specific jurisdiction. Mr. Thornbrugh said that yes, this is possible. Director Sunday also inquired about the ECO bus passes and how they are sold. Ms. Herr said that ECO has multiple pass options, including a 24-hour pass, a 10 Ride pass, and a 30-Day Pass.

Director Eickholt said that he believes the EVTA could take advantage of this opportunity to learn patterns of a fare-free service and its impact on the community. And while he recognizes the staff burden and community confusion, he believes this could be addressed by having the correct marketing for this campaign.

Director McQueeney suggested poor implementation could negatively impact the EVTA, for example, if all scheduled services could not be ultimately be provided due to staff and other capacity limitations and questioned the utility of rushing to do this now.

Director Macumber said she was also concerned about staffing issues since this has been a recurrent topic. Ms. Allen said that

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as of right now theoretically there will be enough drivers if all the new hires show up and there are no unanticipated departures, but noted that this was a risky assumption.

Director Bidez asked if the time frame for this program could be adjustable. Mr. Thornbrugh said that they could opt to do it for a minimum of 30 days within the 90-day range that the program is available.

Director Barry said that he would like ECO to execute the services that it provides right now and not put any more burden on staff or fleet.

Director Phillips said that she does not believe this program will be feasible at the moment.

#### **6.1 Approval of Resolution 2023-14 in Support of ECO Transit's Participation in the Ozone Season Transit Grant Program for 2023.**

Directors decided not to recommend the approval of joining this program during the Summer of 2023.

#### **7. EVTA Fare-Free Zone Implementation Study – Interim Update.**

Jason Miller and Annie Rice with Fehr & Peers joined the meeting and said that they have been working on supporting planning efforts around fare-free during the past year. Mr. Miller said that last summer they worked on the demand estimations of fare-free service levels and costs. He said that in addition to the ridership increase just from having more service, the demand related to fare-free could increase from 45-50%.

Ms. Rice said that they prepared a draft fare-free service scenario and phasing. According to the draft plan, the first phase will be to create a new Vail-Avon-Edwards express route, and phases two and three will be incorporating an express Vail-Avon local route. This will entail that the Valley and Highway 6 routes operate for 20 Hours a Day, running every half hour. The Vail-Beaver Creek Express and Minturn routes will operate every half hour as well during peak time. That combination will mean that users could catch a bus every 10 minutes. She said that under this scenario for hours, cost,

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and vehicles an additional 45,000 service hours and \$5.6 million will be required. However, the vehicle requirements are within the current ECO Transit's realm of capability. Required elements would increase with each phase.

They highlighted that this analysis does not include any assumptions regarding housing costs related to new or existing drivers.

Director Bidez asked if projected revenues would cover these costs. Ms. Allen said that the amounts are higher than the initial cost projections however, the projected revenue is approximately \$12 million dollars a year which means that this was within a feasible budgeting range.

Director Eickholt asked what is included in the current cost - just staff, or also capital cost? Mr. Miller said that this cost includes all operational costs but did not include capital cost.

## **8. Appointment of an Executive Director.**

### **8.1 Approval of Resolution 2023-13 Authorizing the Appointment of an Executive Director & Execution of Employment Agreement with the Executive Director.**

Director Phillips presented resolution 2023-13 Authorizing the Appointment of an Executive Director & Execution of Employment Agreement with the Executive Director. She asked the Directors if they have any questions or discussions regarding this topic. Hearing none, Director Eickholt motioned to approve the resolution. Director McQueeney seconded this motion, which passed with a unanimous 7-0 vote.

## **9. Communication and Outreach Update**

Mr. Ray said that it has been a quiet month, he mentioned he met with Studio Six and shared information with them about the scope of work that has been done. He mentioned he will do a press release and update the website regarding the new appointment of the EVTA Executive Director

## **10. Interim Director's Update/Future Topics**

Ms. Allen said that sales tax keeps coming in high, over \$1.6 million was collected in March. For upcoming topics, she said

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that Studio Six will be at the next meeting doing the first-round table discussion regarding branding and marketing.

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**NEXT MEETING**

June 14, 2022.

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**ADJOURNMENT**

At 2:02 PM, Director Eickholt made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Director Sunday seconded the motion, which passed with a unanimous 7-0 vote.