

RTA Formation Committee – Meeting Recap

Location: Virtual – Zoom
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025
Time: 3:00 – 4:30 PM

Attendees: Michael Buccino (City of Steamboat Springs), Sonja Macys (Routt County), Randy Looper (City of Craig), Tom Leeson (City of Steamboat Springs), Sarah Jones (Steamboat Ski and Resort Corp), Jia Carroll (City of Steamboat Springs), Jonathan Flint (City of Steamboat Springs), Teegan Ebert (Town of Hayden), Peter Brixius (City of Craig), Ciara Bartholomew (South Routt School District), Bill Ray (WR Communications), Jason Miller (Fehr & Peers), Polly Jessen (Kaplan Kirsch), Kirsten Crawford (Kaplan Kirsch)

Quick recap

The meeting began with a review of the letter to Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) and the Department of Revenue (DOR) and approval of the letter being sent under Michael Buccino's signature. The meeting then focused on the Intergovernmental Agreement and reviewing decision points from a memo developed by the Kaplan Kirsch (KK) team. The discussion included membership in the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), board composition, voting requirements and officers. The meeting included a discussion about the work of the Technical Committee and direction from the Formation Committee on focus for the Technical Committee's research and recommendations. The attendees also discussed timing and content of public hearings, KK's assistance with resolutions, and planning for the next meeting.

Next steps

- Bill coordinating meeting with Jeff Comstock, Commissioner Villard, and Polly's team regarding the flagpole connection to Craig.
- Bill to include Formation Committee members on Technical Committee meeting invites.
- Bill to start preparing a 10-minute presentation for the public hearings on the RTA process and IGA.
- Polly and KK to make revisions to the IGA based on the meeting discussions and circulate a comparison showing changes.
- Bill to schedule the next Formation Committee meeting for the week of February 17th.
- Polly to provide an advance copy of the IGA to CDOT for review following initial decisions on transportation facilities and funding sources.

RTA Formation Committee Meeting Update

In the meeting, Bill and Polly discussed the schedule for the RTA formation committee meetings. They reviewed a draft letter to be sent to DOLA and the Department of Revenue, with no major changes or objections raised. Michael was appointed as the chair of the formation committee to sign the letter. The committee also discussed the need for public hearings and the process of outreach to CDOT. The next steps include finalizing the letter and preparing for public hearings.

RTA Agreement Boundaries and Signatories

Michael and Polly discussed the boundaries and parties expected to join the agreement. They identified six signatories, including Routt County, the City of Steamboat Springs, the City of Craig, the Town of Hayden, the Town of Yampa, and the Town of Oak Creek. They also discussed the possibility of including areas within municipalities or counties with the consent of the governing bodies. The critical questions for the group were which jurisdictions are required for RTA formation and whether committee members are comfortable with the overall boundaries. The committee discussed the mandatory inclusion of Steamboat Springs and Routt County. The committee discussed the possibility of jurisdictions not joining the RTA but still receiving service, with the caveat that they would have to contribute to the service cost. The committee agreed to include this flexibility in the IGA draft.

RTA Board Director Appointments

Polly explained the proposed structure for appointing directors to the RTA board. Each jurisdiction would appoint two elected officials, one primary and one alternate, to ensure representation and quorum. The voting requirements were then discussed, with three tiers proposed: simple majority for administrative decisions, two-thirds majority for significant policy and budget decisions, and unanimous minus one for amending the IGA. The issue of representation based on tax base was discussed but not acted upon because it was seen as undemocratic.

Authority Structure and Officer Roles

The committee then focused on the structure and processes for the board. The committee agreed on a 1-to-1 vote system. The roles of the authority's officers were clarified, with the chair having signatory authority, the vice chair stepping in when the chair is unavailable, the secretary responsible for keeping minutes and maintaining records, and the treasurer overseeing the custody of funds and coordinating tax returns. The executive director was identified as the chief executive officer overseeing policies and directives of the Board. The executive director would be a separate employee, hired by the board, and the only officer eligible to receive compensation from the RTA. The group also discussed the possibility of attendance and performance requirements for the officers, which would be established by the bylaws. The treasurer was recommended to be an elected official because of the importance for oversight and accountability.

Guiding Technical Committee with Board Priorities

Sonja expressed her concern about the Technical Committee potentially going down a path that the board hadn't discussed or agreed upon. She emphasized the importance of considering the priorities and projects that had already been discussed in the Fehr & Peers report and regional Transportation Planning Region (TPR). Members agreed that the technical committee should be guided by the Formation Committee's objectives and that the technical committee's recommendations should be informed by the board's priorities. The Formation Committee reiterated that flight subsidies will not be considered and that the primary focus should be regional bus service to support the workforce. The inclusion of a circulator route in the city of Craig and service to the south of Steamboat were discussed. The conversation ended with an agreement to be specific about the type of trails to be included in the RTA, with a focus on first-last mile connectivity.

CDOT and Neighboring Jurisdictions

The meeting also addressed outreach to neighboring jurisdictions and Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT). Bill reported that he is working with Jeff Comstock to set a meeting with Moffat County Commissioner Villard. Polly discussed the outreach already underway to CDOT, Eagle and CoreTransitto shorten the review period for the IGA. A meeting is being set with key CDOT officials. The group also discussed the importance of keeping the Governor's office and (Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT) informed about the RTA's progress. Michael and Sonja were going to connect about funding through Senate Bill 24-230.