

**MINUTES OF THE
TRANSPORTATION INTERIM COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, May 21, 2008 – 9:00 a.m. – Room W025 House Building

Members Present:

Sen. Carlene M. Walker, Senate Chair
Sen. Scott K. Jenkins
Sen. Karen Mayne
Rep. Stephen D. Clark
Rep. Bradley M. Daw
Rep. Ben C. Ferry
Rep. Richard A. Greenwood
Rep. Lynn N. Hemingway
Rep. Kory M. Holdaway
Rep. Brad King
Rep. Bradley G. Last
Rep. Ronda Rudd Menlove
Rep. Paul A. Neuenschwander

Rep. LaWanna Lou Shurtliff
Rep. Mark W. Walker

Members Excused:

Rep. Todd E. Kiser, House Chair
Sen. Sheldon L. Killpack
Sen. Kevin T. VanTassell

Staff Present:

Mr. Leif G. Elder, Policy Analyst
Ms. Shannon C. Halverson, Associate General Counsel
Ms. Tracey Fredman, Legislative Secretary

Note: A list of others present, a copy of related materials, and an audio recording of the meeting can be found at www.le.utah.gov.

1. Committee Business

Chair Walker called the meeting to order at 9:16 a.m. Rep. Kiser was excused from the meeting.

MOTION: Rep. Neuenschwander moved to approve the minutes of the April 16, 2008 meeting. The motion passed unanimously. Sen. Jenkins, Rep. Clark, Rep. Daw, Rep. Ferry, Rep. Menlove, and Rep. Shurtliff were absent for the vote.

2. Open and Public Meetings Training

Mr. Elder reviewed "Open and Public Meetings Act," as distributed in the mailing packet and responded to questions from the Committee.

3. Transit Issues

Representative Wayne A. Harper reviewed the background of 2008 General Session 1st Sub. H.B. 298, "Public Transit Study," which requires the Transportation Interim Committee to study public transit ridership, air quality, and transit fare policies during the 2009 Interim.

Mr. Bruce Jones, General Counsel, Utah Transit Authority (UTA), discussed the issues of air quality improvement and increased ridership, and offered suggestions that would impact both; including, car pooling, staggered work schedules, and shuttles to rail stations. Mr. Jones also brought up a possible fuel surcharge which would be added to the cost of bus fares to compensate for increasing fuel costs, and asked assistance of the state to initiate a program which would identify low income riders for the purpose of allowing them to be excluded from the surcharge.

Mr. Jerry Benson, Chief Operating Officer, UTA, commented on the planned upgrades of buses that will positively impact air quality.

Committee discussion followed and Chair Walker asked UTA to come back to the Legislature with proposals to address some of the issues discussed.

Mr. Bill Crim, Executive Director, United Ways of Utah, distributed "Transportation Issues Summary and Recommendations," and said that transportation is one of the most significant challenges facing our community.

Mr. Michael Packard, citizen, distributed "America's Worst Light Rails are at UTA," and said that UTA is spending money on unneeded light rail expansions.

Ms. Tammi Diaz, Co-Chair, Transit Rider Union, said the construction of the FrontRunner and the expansion of light rail seems to have negatively impacted the bus system.

Mr. Lopeti Penima'ani, Disabled Rights Action Committee (DRAC), expressed concern over rising bus fares which affect mostly low income users of the public transit system.

Mr. Ron Faerber, DRAC, suggested competition as a way to put pressure on UTA to increase the number and frequency of bus routes.

Mr. Lee Robinson, Utah Council of the Blind, distributed "Survey of Transportation Needs of Blind and Visually Impaired Persons in Utah." Mr. Robinson said that UTA has discontinued service in many areas and because paratransit services are limited to specific areas this results in many blind people having few transportation options.

Ms. Cindy Stephens, Associate Executive Director, DRAC, suggested appointing a new member to the UTA Board of Trustees who is low income and dependent on UTA.

Ms. Leslie Gertsch, Utah Council of the Blind, said the blind are not eligible to use paratransit.

Mr. Franklin Wulle, DRAC, suggested a tiered fare system which would keep the low income rider fares lower than the fares of those who could afford to pay the higher costs. Mr. Wulle also distributed "The Anti-Hunger Action Committee: Your Appointees to the UTA Board."

Mr. Troy Roper, Legislative Coalition for People with Disabilities, said that every time a bus route is changed paratransit availability changes too. He also commented that the certification of blindness or other disability, which is required every three years by UTA, is insulting and needs to be addressed.

Ms. Karen Silver, Advocate, Salt Lake Community Action Program, spoke about public transit needs in Tooele County.

4. Peak Traffic Congestion Pricing

Ms. Linda Hull, Director of Legislative Affairs, Utah Department of Transportation, described four methods of congestion pricing and shared examples of entities that have implemented one or more of the methods.

Mr. Chuck Chappell, Executive Director, Wasatch Front Regional Council, and Mr. Michael Brown, Transportation Engineer and Planner, Wilbur Smith Associates, distributed and presented "A Case for Congestion Pricing."

Senator Howard A. Stephenson spoke in favor of congestion pricing, and said that he would like to see the current HOV lane on I-15 expanded to two lanes from Ogden to Provo during the upcoming legislative session.

5. Traffic in Construction Areas

This item was not discussed.

6. REAL ID

This item was not discussed.

7. Other Items / Adjourn

MOTION: Sen. Jenkins moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. Rep. Ferry, Rep. Greenwood, and Rep. King were absent for the vote.

Chair Walker adjourned the meeting at 11:55 a.m.