



**SUMMARIZED MINUTES**

**CITY OF SCOTTSDALE  
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING**

**THURSDAY, JULY 17, 2014**

**KIVA – CITY HALL  
3939 N. DRINKWATER BOULEVARD  
SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA 85251**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Olmsted called the regular meeting of the Scottsdale Transportation Commission to order at 6:04 p.m.

1. **ROLL CALL**

**PRESENT:** Steven Olmsted, Chair  
Paul Holley, Vice Chair  
Gary Bretz, Commissioner  
Barry Graham, Commissioner  
Steven Rosenberg, Commissioner  
Robert Stickles, Commissioner  
Matthew Wright, Commissioner

**STAFF:** Rose Arballo, Transportation Commission Coordinator  
John Bartlett, Traffic Engineer  
Paul Basha, Transportation Director  
Madeline Clemann, Transportation Planning and Transit Operations Manager  
Susan Conklu, Senior Transportation Planner  
Phillip Kercher, Traffic Engineering and Operations Manager

**GUESTS:** Rachel Pearson, Scottsdale Convention and Visitor's Bureau  
Sean Wozny, Olsson Associates

**2. INTRODUCTION OF NEW TRANSPORTATION COMMISSIONER**

Chair Olmsted introduced Commissioner Steven Rosenberg and welcomed him to the Commission.

**3. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR**

**COMMISSIONER STICKLES NOMINATED COMMISSIONER HOLLEY AS VICE CHAIR OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION. COMMISSIONER BRETZ SECONDED THE NOMINATION, WHICH CARRIED BY A VOTE OF SIX (6) TO ZERO (0). COMMISSIONER HOLLEY ABSTAINED.**

**4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

- Study Session of the Transportation Commission – June 19, 2014
- Regular Meeting of the Transportation Commission – June 19, 2014

**VICE CHAIR HOLLEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE STUDY SESSION AND REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF JUNE 19, 2014 AS PRESENTED. COMMISSIONER STICKLES SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED BY A UNANIMOUS VOTE OF SEVEN (7) TO ZERO (0).**

**5. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no public comments.

**6. ARIZONA CANAL MULTI-USE PATH PROJECT**

Ms. Conklu presented the plans for this project. She noted that Mr. Wozny of Olsson Associates was in attendance to help answer any questions.

The Commission inquired about the bridge design. Mr. Wozny said both bridges will be flush with the bank and will be ADA accessible. Designers are working closely with the Salt River Project and Maricopa County Flood Control District to meet their requirements. The design will discourage people from jumping into the canal.

Chair Olmsted invited public comment.

- Jane Larson spoke in support of the project.
- Paul Nichols submitted a comment card in support of the project.
- Chair Olmsted read a letter (Attachment A) from Cecilia Marquis, a resident of the area. She did not support the project for aesthetic, need, and fiscal reasons.

Highlights of the discussion following the presentation included:

- The rationale for the path leading to the Silverado bridge is intended to keep path users separate from golf carts and vehicles using the overflow parking area at the golf club.
- Commissioners expressed how important this project is as part of the Transportation Master Plan, General Plan, and a good connection to Downtown.
- Commissioners discussed the difference between handrail height and guardrail height. Handrail height is determined by ADA requirements and guardrail height is addressed in the Building Code. Chair Olmsted directed staff to make sure these concerns are addressed going forward.
- Commissioners expressed concern about the connection to Camelback Road at the southern end of the path. The current configuration is convoluted and not pedestrian friendly. Ms. Conklu said that area is outside of this project. The segment between Chaparral and Camelback is being built through private development. Ms. Clemann said the City has been trying to make this area more pedestrian friendly, but this intersection is extremely challenging.
- A Commissioner commented on the immense public outreach that has occurred for this project and that the Federal Congestion Mitigation Air Quality funds help encourage people to walk and bike more.
- A Commissioner requested that the next presentation include more specifics about the color, texture and finish of the concrete, and weathering of the metal.

Chair Olmsted reminded everyone that citizens can make comments through the City website. The Transportation Master Plan embodies the City's commitment to Complete Streets. He encouraged everyone to contribute their opinions to the General Plan Update and the next iteration of the Transportation Master Plan.

## **7. NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT BEFORE AND AFTER RESULTS**

Traffic Engineer Mr. Bartlett presented the before and after study analysis for recent neighborhood traffic management program projects.

Comments are highlighted below:

- An extensive policy is in place to determine which roads are eligible for traffic calming projects. The initial step is always taken by residents.
- The main lesson learned is that vertical devices typically have a greater impact on vehicle speeds than horizontal devices. Among vertical devices, speed cushions are the preference of the Fire Department. Staff has learned that if there is no vertical curb next to the calming device, some drivers will drive around the calming devices. In these cases, landscaping or other treatment

may be needed to prevent vehicles from driving on the shoulder to avoid the calming device.

- Commissioners noted this report proves that traffic calming devices are effective.
- A Commissioner noted that traffic volume was reduced in all seven projects. He asked whether that is an indication of success, or whether the speeding drivers have chosen different routes. Mr. Bartlett said reduction in traffic volume alone is not an indicator of success. In fact, if speed drops and traffic volume does not, the project would be considered successful. Mr. Kercher added that the 124th and Mountain View project was different in that residents were concerned about cut-through traffic and traffic volumes. The eastbound left turn lane at 124th Street and Shea Boulevard was too short so cars were queuing out of the turn bay. The bay was lengthened and signal timing has been adjusted. This has likely moved traffic out of a neighborhood into a major arterial.
- The sampling method was discussed. Staff typically collects data for several days and reports either an average of the typical days, which are Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday; or select one typical day to review 24 hours worth of data.
- Staff expects to present a second semi-annual update in November.

#### **8. TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS/PROGRAMS UPDATE**

- Ms. Clemann reported a new traffic signal has been installed at Thompson Peak Parkway and Paradise Lane. This improves access for vehicles turning from Paradise Lane onto Thompson Peak Parkway and provides a controlled crossing of the Parkway for pedestrians and cyclists. It is a jointly funded project with funding from the McDowell Mountain Ranch Community Facilities District. Discussion between staff and the Commission ensued regarding timing of the signal lights at Thompson Peak Parkway and Paradise Lane which does not have a filter arrow. Mr. Kercher said the decision to use left-turn arrows is based on traffic volume and collision data. Staff can re-evaluate this.
- Ms. Clemann announced that the Transportation Department has been awarded a Highway Safety Improvement Program grant. This funded nine speed feedback signs that will be installed over the next few months.

#### **9. DAY TRIPPER (FORMERLY KNOWN AS THE HOSPITALITY TROLLEY)**

Transportation Director Mr. Paul Basha presented this as an action item. He reviewed data from the four years the Hospitality Trolley has been in operation. He shared that this is a very difficult matter and is the most difficult recommendation he has had to make in his 40-year career as a traffic engineer. It was mentioned that the recommendation to be presented is based on the perspective of Transportation Department employees of the City of Scottsdale.

Mr. Basha's presentation covered the following points:

- History of ten years trolley experience in Scottsdale.
- Cost per rider for FY 2012/2013 averaged \$4 for all transit routes in the city. The Downtown Trolley and the Neighborhood Trolley cost per rider were at the average. The Day Tripper had the highest cost per rider at almost \$12.
- A survey conducted by an outside consultant in January through March 2014 found that 58% of the riders on the Day Tripper were out of town tourists. With a ridership average of 200 per day and assuming that tourists used the route twice per day to leave and return to their hotels, 62 tourists were being served by the Day Tripper. Scottsdale has 7,000 hotel rooms, so the vast majority of visitors are not using the trolley.
- The trolleys were bought with bed tax funds and funding from other levels of government, yet the three trolleys used for the Day Tripper sit idle nine months of the year. Mr. Basha noted that the vehicles are rotated at intervals; however, from April through December three of them are not in use.
- Before the 2013/14 Day Tripper season, Mr. Basha, staff from Economic Development and representatives of the Scottsdale Convention and Visitors Bureau lobbied six Council Members to convince them to run the Day Tripper for one final season. Mr. Basha undertook that if ridership increased, they would then recommend that the service continue. If ridership did not improve, Transportation staff would recommend that service of the Day Tripper be discontinued.
- At this point Transportation Department staff cannot recommend continuing this service.
- The Tourism Development Commission voted unanimously to recommend running the service at 15-minute frequency and allocating \$300,000 in bed tax funds to pay for it. Last year the trolley ran on a 30-minute frequency at a cost of \$180,000.
- City Council will have to make a decision on the Day Tripper after the summer hiatus; however, this has not yet been agendaized.

Mr. Basha summarized that the Transportation Commission has four options:

- 1- Make the same recommendation as the Tourism Development Commission, i.e. to spend \$300,000 of bed tax monies to fund the Day Tripper at a 15-minute frequency service.
- 2- Recommend continuing the service at 30 minutes, spending \$180,000 of bed tax funds.
- 3- Recommend that the Day Tripper service be discontinued. This is the recommendation of Transportation Department staff.
- 4- Take no action.

Chair Olmsted noted that Ms. Rachel Pearson, Vice-President of Community and Government Affairs at the Scottsdale Convention and Visitors Bureau had requested to speak. Mr. Basha requested that she be allowed to speak for longer than the normal three-minute period allowed to the public.

Ms. Pearson shared the history and benefits of the Day Tripper from the perspective of the tourism community. Highlights of her remarks included:

- The Day Tripper was implemented to be a tourism and marketing vehicle for the City.
- Scottsdale has consistently been ranked low by tourists regarding local transportation.
- Millennials favor public transportation options.
- Bed tax dollars are set aside specifically for tourism-related projects and events that support the tourism industry.
- Initially, the route was dictated by sponsors and did not really meet visitors' needs.
- The 2014 season was the first time the service was fully funded by bed tax monies. The route was based on visitor needs, was shorter and could run at greater frequency.
- This enabled the Bureau to better market and promote the service, including educating the concierges.
- Total ridership increased by 16% in 2014.
- Surveys indicated that the majority of riders believe the service is valuable to visitors. Riders said they spent more money in Scottsdale because of the service. They also indicated they are more likely to return to Scottsdale.
- Phoenix is hosting the 2015 Super Bowl. Scottsdale will be in the national spotlight with ESPN broadcasting live from Fashion Square for seven days. Visitors will experience the utmost in hospitality; therefore, the ease of getting around will be critical. The 2014 Super Bowl experience in New York/New Jersey was marred for many fans by huge transportation issues, drawing negative media attention nationally. A solid transportation plan is critical for Scottsdale. This will alleviate traffic, parking, and pedestrian safety concerns.
- The Day Tripper has addressed north-south connectivity for visitors. It connects to the Waste Management Phoenix Open, which will be occurring the same week as the Super Bowl activities.
- The Scottsdale Convention and Visitor's Bureau respects and understands the Transportation Department's concerns about the service. Since no alternative has been provided, the tourism community has continued to bring forward the Day Tripper as a solution. They hope that following the 2015 season with Super Bowl, the Scottsdale Convention and Visitor's Bureau and the tourism community can work together with Transportation and other City departments to address concerns and look at other options for the future.

Highlights of the discussion included:

- A Commissioner inquired about the economic impact of trolley ridership. Mr. Basha referred to the survey results which had been sent to Commissioners. Sixty-six percent of riders agreed with the statement "I will spend more money in Scottsdale today or tonight as a result of this trolley than I otherwise would have." The Commissioner argued that since many local riders were using the trolley for shopping, recreation and dining, their spending should also be considered.
- Mr. Basha said they do not have information as to where the tourists were staying. Should the service continue next season, staff intends to have an automatic data collection device that would collect zip codes as riders board the trolley.
- Ms. Pearson said the Scottsdale Convention and Visitor's Bureau marketing promotes the ease of getting around Scottsdale. The trolley allowed visitors to connect to special events such as the Waste Management Phoenix Open and WestWorld for the Barrett-Jackson Collector Car Auction. The Bureau hosted a concierge event to promote the trolley.

- A Commissioner asked about the potential economic impact of increasing the frequency to 15-minute service. Mr. Basha said increased frequency generates increased ridership. They would anticipate a 15 to 30 percent increase in ridership. The Commissioner commented that it appears the Day Tripper is the only transit service that has increased its ridership consistently over the past four years.
- Mr. Basha clarified that the cost per rider does include fares paid by riders as an offset; however all trolley services are free to riders.
- Economic Development Department staff has chosen not to make a recommendation on this question.
- A Commissioner asked if staff is aware of any successful services comparable to the Day Tripper. Mr. Basha said the Day Tripper is unique in that it runs along one street and connects hotels directly to commercial areas. Staff is unaware of any highly successful operations anywhere in the country.
- A Commissioner noted that with Super Bowl 2015 they are approaching the largest season of events in Scottsdale's history. This seems like a compelling argument to continue Day Tripper service for just the next year. He noted that the Pro Bowl is a first time event. The days of highest ridership in the past coincided with events. However, those events pale in scope compared to the Waste Management Phoenix Open and the Barrett-Jackson Collector Car Auction. He felt there must be something that could be done to promote the service.
- Ms. Pearson said if the service were to continue, the Scottsdale Convention and Visitor's Bureau has set aside additional marketing dollars this year to help promote it. This was behind the Tourism Development Commission's recommendation to go to 15-minute service.
- A Commissioner urged the Commission to take a long, hard look at the potential the Day Tripper has for the 2015 season in spite of the challenges it has faced. He commented that the Scottsdale Convention and Visitor's Bureau, the Tourism Advisory Task Force, and the Tourism Development Commission, whose members are the leaders of the industry, all agree this is a valuable service.
- Another Commissioner suggested holding focus groups of tourists to find out why Scottsdale is ranked so low in terms of good local transportation. This would include more than just the trolley service.
- A Commissioner inquired about changing the route to encourage ridership. Ms. Pearson said the Scottsdale Convention and Visitor's Bureau has discussed this with Transportation staff over the years. If the trolley route went into the resorts, the route would take significantly longer. She feels good about the route as it stands. They have considered adding ambassadors and entertainment to the trolley. The Tourism Advisory Task Force will be considering other options for the future, although they cannot be implemented for the 2015 season. Mr. Basha outlined alternatives that have been considered.
- A Commissioner commented that the perimeter seating on the lower level of the trolley is uncomfortable; however, it accommodates more standing passengers.
- The revised Valley Metro standards for routes have recently been finalized, so staff has not yet analyzed how the Day Tripper measures up to them. The Transportation Department has had its own standards for years.
- A Commissioner suggested operating the Day Tripper during major events.
- A Commissioner inquired if cab service or car rentals have risen to account for the decline in ridership. Mr. Basha said they intend to investigate the declines in ridership.

- If the Day Tripper is discontinued, the vehicles would be used on other routes because they would be available year-round. Mr. Basha listed a number of possibilities.
- The trolley service is free because charging fares would result in slowing down service which would decrease frequency, and would be expensive to install the needed equipment. Also, trolley drivers are reluctant to deal with payment. Ridership is so low that having concierges sell passes would not be justified. Ms. Clemann added that if tourists had to pay while the other trolley routes continued as a free service, the City could be accused of discrimination which would be a concern of the federal government.
- The Tourism Development Commission and the Scottsdale Convention and Visitor's Bureau have a body of expertise. On the other hand, Transportation Department staff has made a careful analysis of the facts and has clearly wrestled with their recommendation. The cost of the program is incurred every year, and every year Commissioners ask the same questions and raise the same concerns.
- Increased wear and tear of the vehicles, if the service went to a 15-minute frequency, is not a concern because maintenance is included in the contract with the operator.
- Other transportation related programs suffered cutbacks in the recession and that should be remembered when considering what to spend money on. No one from the hotels has ever expressed any opinion to the Transportation Commission about the service of the Day Tripper.
- Staff confirmed that the service could be run at 15-minute frequency without adding vehicles.

**COMMISSIONER BRETZ MADE A MOTION TO RECOMMEND TO CITY COUNCIL THAT THE DAY TRIPPER SERVICE BE DISCONTINUED. COMMISSIONER STICKLES SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED BY A VOTE OF FOUR (4) TO THREE (3). VICE CHAIR HOLLEY AND COMMISSIONERS ROSENBERG AND WRIGHT DISSENTED.**

Vice Chair Holley commented that although there is concern on the effectiveness and costs for the Day Tripper, he believes that this year is not a good time to stop this service due to the upcoming Super Bowl and Pro Bowl.

Commissioner Bretz suggested adding service to cover the major events.

Chair Olmsted thanked staff for their hard work on this difficult topic.

#### **10. PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment was received.

#### **11. COMMISSION IDENTIFICATION OF FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- Transportation alternatives for seniors
- With regards to connectivity, review of the southeast corner at the intersection of Camelback and Scottsdale Road
- Hidden Hills Update
- Before and after results of rotaries



**12. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to conduct, Chair Olmsted adjourned the regular meeting at 8:24 p.m.

SUBMITTED BY:

A/V Tronics, Inc. DBA AVTranz.

**\*Note: These are summary action meeting minutes only. A complete copy of the audio/video recording is available at <http://www.scottsdaleaz.gov/boards/transp.asp>**

Cecilia A. Marquis  
5578 N. 76th Place  
Scottsdale, AZ 85250  
July 11, 2014

Transportation Commission  
Attn: Chair Steven Olmsted  
City of Scottsdale  
City Hall  
3939 N. Drinkwater Blvd.  
Scottsdale, AZ 85251

Dear Chair Olmsted and Commissioners:

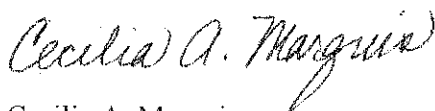
I am unable to attend the Thursday, July 17, meeting of the Transportation Commission as I will be out of the state, but I did want to share my concerns about the changes being proposed to the canal from Chaparral Road to Indian Bend Wash. My house backs up to the canal so I have a vested interest in what happens to the canal bank. Please note that I do not consider the proposed changes to be improvements. For those of us who use this section of the canal on a regular basis for running and walking, the path is fine as it is. The proposed changes would be a detriment to the canal.

There are numerous aesthetic reasons to oppose this project, but rather than appeal to your sense of beauty or naturalness, I will appeal to your fiscal responsibility. I fail to see how anyone in authority can justify spending nearly \$2 million in city money to add a concrete path to the canal bank. It is being done for a select group of people, namely cyclists who want to ride on narrow-tire bicycles at high speeds. This select group does not want to use the extensive system of bike paths that the city has on major streets. I don't understand how you can agree to add this concrete path to the canal bank when its addition will disturb the natural beauty of the path that exists now. In addition to disturbing the natural beauty, the concrete will not be a suitable surface to run on. It will be too hard. There are plenty of concrete paths nearby, specifically in the Indian Bend Wash, where people who want to cycle or run or walk on concrete can do so. The city is not creating a path on the canal bank from Chaparral Road to Indian Bend Wash. A path already exists. SRP does not need a concrete path. The dirt has worked fine for maintenance since the canal was constructed.

Please take this opportunity to withdraw your support for this project. It is an example of a waste of taxpayer money. The \$1.9 million in city money could be spent for other more worthy projects.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



Cecilia A. Marquis