

**CAPITAL METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY  
JOINT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
WITH AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL  
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~ MINUTES ~

Board Liaison Ed Easton  
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**Friday, December 18, 2020  
1:00 PM**

**01:10 PM Meeting Called to Order  
03:58 PM Meeting Adjourned**

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## **I. Public Comment:**

Monica Guzman from Go Austin Vamos Austin spoke on the importance of engaging those who are most impacted by Project Connect before making key decisions. The process for choosing the ATP board has been rushed, and there was little or no culturally or linguistically inclusion engagement on this. There are many questions remaining. Concerns and complaints about public transit for marginalized communities continue to fall on deaf ears.

Joao Connolly, citizen, says that the Project Connect timeline to date has failed to build trust or transparency within the community. Meeting backup needs to be posted earlier than 72 hours before a meeting - at least a week before - to give the community time to prepare for meaningful participation. The community voted for Prop A because of the need for better transit or equity - not because they trust Capital Metro. There needs to be more transparency and we need to slow things down.

Yasmine Smith, Co-Chair of PUMA and a founder of the ATX Mobility Coalition, spoke on the importance of doing what you say you are going to do in order to build trust. Prior to the passage of Prop A there were promises that this would be the best and most equitable project possible. However, that is not what has manifested itself. It is astonishing how completely this goal has gone by the wayside. The ATP Board process has not been transparent, equitable, or engaged the community. She strongly suggested that last-minute changes to voted-upon materials include a red-line version.

Cesar Acosta, President of AURA, wants to echo the comments of previous speakers. There has been very little time to respond to the decisions being made or meetings being held. This is a 10-year process and we need to make sure that this is truly equitable. He supports many of the amendments made for the Citizen Advisory Committee, but suggests that it be given more "teeth" than just being able to offer suggestions to the Cap Metro Board and City Council. He also recommends moving the deadline to apply for the CAC back to give people more time.

Frances Acuna, a climate resilience organizer, commented that decision makers at both the City and Capital Metro are not engaged with residents. Austin's diverse communities of color must be engaged in meaningful ways. Low-income residents are seeing higher taxes, elimination of neighborhood bus stops, and higher transit fares. How can we trust this process when we have been let down so many times in the past? She is very disappointed in a public engagement process that seems to merely check a box saying that it has been done.

Ana Aguirre, citizen, owns a home in the Dove Springs area and has not found anyone involved in this process who can tell her the definition of anti-displacement. She has concerns regarding tenant and homeowner language used in the agenda packet, and commented that she hopes that some of the

environmental impact language can be adjusted to cover the entire city, not just project-adjacent areas. She recommends that the boards, committees, and staff involved in this process participate in the undoing racism training, and that an equity assessment tool be developed and used to measure progress.

Awais Ahzar, who is on the leadership team of Planning our Communities, asks that as the process of setting up the ATP Board, advisory board, and selecting an Executive Director moves forward that it be done in a transparent manner. The public should have access to all applications and nomination information. We need to be sure that these individuals represent Austin transit users and communities impacted by the development of transit infrastructure. It is also important that we be informed about the process of hiring a permanent Executive Director for the ATP.

Zenobia Joseph, citizen, wishes to comment on Project Connect generally - but also today's Item #4 specifically - on the language of today's ILA where it refers to "safe, reliable and efficient transportation to better connect members of our community". Language in the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2020 prohibits the use of public funds for propaganda. The black community has been bombarded with propaganda on Project Connect, especially on KAZI radio, with information claiming that this was a plan which has more ways to move us all. There are still no transportation options on Dessau Road to Howard Lane, nor are there any east to west on Parmer Lane/FM 734. She also feels there have been violations under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and read from Federal Transit Administration's Circular 4702.1(b) clarifying requirements under the Act. She will continue to ask the FTA to suspend Capital Metro's federal funding.

Nancy Crowther, citizen, expressed her happiness with the passage of Prop A and says she has been in the trenches on this for 25 years. She complimented Transit for Austin for their assistance in getting the proposition passed. Now there is much to be done. She commented that in reading through the ATP Board information she did not see a board member who had a focus on the either the disability or senior citizen communities.

Jessica Wolff, Deputy Policy Director for Worker's Defense, says that their membership endorses the plan, but that it is critical that the Austin Transit Partnership have fair representation of working people and immigrants on its board of directors. These people deserve a voice at the table. There has been a general lack of transparency in this process. We hope the selection of the Citizen Advisory Committee will be more transparent, and that these underrepresented communities get strong consideration for inclusion.

Cynthia Vasquez of Go Austin Vamos Austin feels that the Austin Transit Partnership board process was rushed. During COVID with thousands still lacking internet access, how are we authentically engaging with our consumers? As an East Austinite she has seen Capital Metro serving a growing population without serving herself or her neighbors. She stands with an underrepresented community in the eastern crescent of Austin who rise early to catch transit to work or hop on a route at 11 p.m. to get a ride home. She is tired, and so are her neighbors, and you all continue to pass us by. To study equity you need to understand inequity.

David Edmonson, Vice President of State Policy and Government Relations at TechNet, says his organization is excited about Project Connect and Prop A. He wants to say thank you for moving so quickly to establish the ATP oversight board and for the diversity of voices. This is truly a generational investment and is critical for our community's economic success and environmental stewardship.

Consuelo Amezcua, citizen, is a Southeast Austin resident and feels that this process has taken advantage of the community by rushing the process during a pandemic. Residents have not been offered an education process other than a glorified website. How can you expect the community to provide

meaningful input when there hasn't been equitable and inclusive outreach? We demand the return of bus routes critical to the communities of color in Austin's eastern crescent. We also need free neighborhood circulators. She demands equity, transparency, and will be holding the board and council accountable.

Cindi Reid, citizen, commented that as a native Austinite and a person of color she noticed that the election outreach to the communities of color - particularly to the African-American community - was great. We need that same level of outreach and transparency as this process moves forward with the ATP. She heard about this meeting very late. And we need to make sure that all communities are covered - families and the disability community and people of all ages included.

Sandy Guzman, CEO for the Austin Area Research Organization, wanted to say congratulations on the process to this point and for the closer relationship between the City and Capital Metro that got us to this point. This is a historic day and the partnership between the two organizations that created the ATP is key to bringing the transparency and accountability needed in a thoughtful and positive manner. AARO is committed to working with you and other regional partners in this process.

## **II. Presentations:**

### **1. Update on Project Connect and Upcoming Public Engagement Opportunities**

Project Connect Program Officer Dave Couch began the presentation with an update on the Project Connect process since the approval of the referendum in November. He shared the approved program sequencing plan and gave updates on each of the corridors and modes in the plan including the Red Line, MetroRapid, and Light Rail lines. He also showed a condensed chart with the deliverables for each of the next four quarters through January 2022.

Capital Metro Community Engagement Manager Jackie Nirenberg then led the board and council through the next phase of community outreach, which will cover the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. NEPA requires a variety of outreach and engagement processes, the first of which will be "scoping" meetings for the Blue and Orange Line kicking off in January. Also in January there will be online surveys and at-stop engagement starting, along with continuing outreach to neighborhood, community, and business groups.

Assistant Transportation Director for the City of Austin Annick Beaudet then provided an update on the City's Equity Assessment Tool, which is an important part of the anti-displacement work called for in the contract with voters for Project Connect. She walked through the language in the contract, and provided an update on the work to date.

## **III. Action Items:**

### **1. Approval of a resolution creating the Austin Transit Partnership, a Local Government Corporation under Subchapter D, Chapter 431, Texas Transportation Code; approving and adopting the corporation's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws; and appointing the initial Board of Directors.**

Chief Counsel and Chief of Staff Kerri Butcher lead this item.

Starting with the joint Capital Metro/City Council meeting in June, 2020, Kerri reviewed the timeline and sequencing of events leading to today's action creating the ATP. She then reviewed the actions that will be taken today and expected actions to be taken in 2021 leading to a Tri-

party agreement between the City, Capital Metro and the Austin Transit Partnership. She also provided a recap of the composition of the ATP Board of Directors and process that led to the slate of candidates being voted on today. The first ATP board meeting is scheduled for January 20, 2021.

Councilmember Alter from the ATP Board Nominating Committee then added details and comments on the nominating process. Seven applicants who were not named as board members are being recommended to the Board and Council to serve in some sort of advisory capacity.

Councilmember Kitchen echoed those comments and commented that she was very impressed with the level of commitment and expertise amongst the applicants. She emphasized the importance of making this a community project and taking advantage of that commitment and expertise, and also of building trust as the board goes forward.

Board Member Mitchell thanked his fellow nominating committee members, and emphasized how difficult the process was because of the wealth of qualified talent. The slate that was selected - who all selflessly stepped up - all should all serve the ATP well.

Board Member Travillion also echoed the prior comments and said that he believes the selected candidates will be very very strong. He hopes that the board can take advantage of some of the skills and relationships that other applicants provided through the creation of an advisory board.

Chair Cooper read the resolution, and Board Member Kitchen made the motion to approve (Travillion second). Chair Cooper then suggested a friendly amendment to add the name of a Capital Metro appointee to the board. Board Member Kitchen amended the motion to add Board Member Eric Stratton as that appointee (Travillion accepted the amendment.)

**RESULT: ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]**

**MOVER:** Ann Kitchen, Board Member

**SECONDER:** Jeffrey Travillion, Board Member

**AYES:** Mitchell, Garza, Cooper, Kitchen, Renteria, Travillion, Stratton

**ABSENT:** Troy Hill

2. Approval of a resolution authorizing execution of an amendment to the provision related to the Community Advisory Committee in an existing Interlocal Agreement with the City of Austin to provide for the membership, nominating process, roles and responsibilities for the Committee.

Board Member Kitchen provided the background and history on this item. She emphasized that this is a very special and important committee, and summarized the nominating process, some of the desired member characteristics and entities that will be involved. She noted the ambitious timeline for getting the committee up and running by the end of February.

Board Member Stratton expressed his thanks for this process and committee, and hopes that it will make the new ATP board more efficient and effective. He looks forward to working with this group.

Chair Cooper asked about the ability of the ATP Board itself to have involvement in the nominating process for this committee, or to place their own nominees on it. Board Member Kitchen said that this resolution was not intended to preclude either situation, and said that she imagines it would be up to the ATP Board to decide the way they wished to proceed.

**RESULT: ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]**  
**MOVER:** Ann Kitchen, Board Member  
**SECONDER:** Sabino Renteria, Jeffrey Travillion  
**AYES:** Mitchell, Garza, Cooper, Kitchen, Renteria, Travillion, Stratton  
**ABSENT:** Troy Hill

3. Approval of a resolution recommending the Austin Transit Partnership Local Government Corporation utilizing community members with experience in certain fields to assist the corporation in implementing the Project Connect System Plan.

(At the suggestion of Board Member Kitchen, this item was taken prior to the previous item to mirror the Council's order of items.)

Board Member Kitchen emphasized that this was a strong recommendation arising from the nominating process, and read the names of the 7 individuals with specific technical expertise who applied for the ATP board who would be excellent candidates to draw upon for this.

Board Member Stratton remarked that he appreciates the efforts of the nominating committee on this recommendation, and as a new board member of the ATP he hopes to draw upon the advice, talent and expertise of these individuals as the board begins to move forward.

**RESULT: ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]**  
**MOVER:** Ann Kitchen, Board Member  
**SECONDER:** Jeffrey Travillion, Board Member  
**AYES:** Mitchell, Garza, Cooper, Kitchen, Renteria, Travillion, Stratton  
**ABSENT:** Troy Hill

#### **IV. Items for Future Discussion:**

#### **V. Adjournment**

#### **ADA Compliance**

*Reasonable modifications and equal access to communications are provided upon request. Please call (512) 369-6040 or email [ed.easton@capmetro.org](mailto:ed.easton@capmetro.org) if you need more information.*

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS:** Wade Cooper, Chair; Delia Garza, Vice Chair; Eric Stratton, Secretary; Terry Mitchell; Troy Hill; Ann Kitchen, Jeffrey Travillion and Pio Renteria.

The Board of Directors may go into closed session under the Texas Open Meetings Act. In accordance with Texas Government Code, Section 551.071, consultation with attorney for any legal issues, under Section 551.072 for real property issues; under Section 551.074 for personnel matters, or under Section 551.076, for deliberation

regarding the deployment or implementation of security personnel or devices; arising regarding any item listed on this agenda.