



Nevada Department of Transportation

Board of Directors • Meeting Minutes

February 12, 2024

9:30 AM

Meeting Location:

1263 South Stewart Street
Third Floor Conference Room
Carson City, Nevada 89712

123 East Washington Avenue
Building B
Las Vegas, Nevada 89101

1951 Idaho Street
Conference Room
Elko, Nevada 89801

SEC 1. OPENING

1. Welcome/Call to Order/Roll Call

Governor Lombardo called the meeting to order on Monday, February 12, 2024. A roll call was conducted, and a quorum was established.

In attendance: Lieutenant Governor Stavros Anthony, Controller Andy Matthews, Member Virginia Valentine, Member Justin Kalb, Member Gary Perea, Member Frank Lepori.

2. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

3. Consideration of Appointment of Deputy Director Sajid Sulahria as Secretary to the Transportation Board of Directors pursuant to NRS 408.121. – *For possible action*

Director Tracy Larkin Thomason explained that Deputy Director Sajid Sulahria would be replacing former Deputy Director Jeff Lerud, who retired in December, and that his main duties will be roll call and to sign off on the minutes.

Motion: Approve Deputy Director Sulahria as Secretary to the Transportation Board of Directors
By: Lieutenant Stavros Anthony
Second: Member Frank Lepori
Vote: Passed unanimously

4. Receive Director's Report – *Information item only*

Director Tracy Larkin Thomason began her presentation with a discussion of the previous year's traffic fatalities, noting that Nevada has seen a 7 percent drop in overall fatal crashes statewide with unrestrained, fatal crashes down 23 percent; motorcycle, bicycle, and light vehicle crashes down more than 20 percent; but pedestrian fatal crashes increasing by more than 116 percent. Director Larkin Thomason informed the Board that speed and impairment remain the largest contributing factors to crashes in Nevada. Director



Nevada Department of Transportation

Board of Directors • Meeting Minutes

February 12, 2024

9:30 AM

Larkin Thomason further noted that NDOT is particularly targeting vulnerable road users and intersection safety in the next year and in its upcoming projects with the help of the active and engaged advisory committee on traffic safety comprised of NDOT, Department of Public Safety, DMV, and other state and local agencies.

Director Larkin Thomason next shared a slide of the Super Bowl configuration in Las Vegas and informed the Board that this configuration will remain in place through Valentine's Day.

Ryan Wheeler, NDOT Senior Project Manager, added that three lanes were open in each direction to facilitate movement of people to and from the big game and that the configuration has been in place since February 1, in order to prepare businesses and people for the big game.

Director Larkin Thomason next discussed the new Harmon Avenue Half Interchange that opened on January 26, noting that this provides additional access to both northbound and southbound I-15, and indicated that it will be open for the full duration of the I-15 Tropicana project, and provides another mode of access to and from the Las Vegas Strip.

Director Larkin Thomason indicated that Phase 3 of the I-15 Tropicana project will begin on February 16, from 9:00 p.m. through February 19, at 5:00 a.m. with the closure of I-15 between Russell Road and Flamingo Road and the closure of Tropicana Avenue over I-15 between New York New York and Dean Martin to facilitate the demolition of the southern structure. Director Larkin Thomason indicated that NDOT has done extensive stakeholder outreach and planning with the media, and is also working with Caltrans, Utah DOT, and Arizona DOT to amplify the message and to catch drivers the night before they travel down the I-15.

Governor Lombardo questioned if the stakeholders' meetings included all the businesses in the surrounding area.

Ryan Wheeler confirmed that NDOT reached out to all businesses and has a stakeholder list that includes over 1300 businesses in the area that were contacted three to four weeks prior regarding this closure.

Director Larkin Thomason acknowledged that this is a significant impact, but that NDOT is making every effort to shorten the length of time and noted that Phase 3 will continue into the fall of 2024. Director Larkin Thomason reiterated that the new Harmon Half Interchange is open but noted that Tropicana will



Nevada Department of Transportation

Board of Directors • Meeting Minutes

February 12, 2024

9:30 AM

return to its pre-Super-Bowl configuration of the temporary divergent diamond interchange, with the ramps closed 24/7, and the following other closures: southbound I-15 flyover to eastbound Tropicana; Tropicana Avenue to southbound I-15; northbound I-15 access to Arena Drive; and northbound I-15 off-ramp to Tropicana Avenue.

Member Virginia Valentine indicated that there are many opportunities for people to see what is going on in this corridor, and noted that NDOT has done extensive outreach via email and phone calls, as well as online and via app.

Director Larkin Thomason indicated that www.i15trop.com and the dedicated I-15 Trop app are good sources for information regarding this project.

Ryan Wheeler indicated that in working with the public outreach team, NDOT also already has had media events with the media about the upcoming closure. Mr. Wheeler further noted that NDOT has a planned media event for Friday morning so that local news stations can provide sound bites about the coming closure.

Director Larkin Thomason next discussed the grant received by the Elko Amtrak station and Elko Depot. Director Larkin Thomason indicated that more than \$28 million in funding has been awarded by the Nationally Significant Multimodal Freight and Highway Projects Program and the World Surface Transportation Grant Program for Rural Funds to complete environmental clearances, design, and construction of corridor-based improvements on the Union Pacific Railroad in the Elko Amtrak station and the Elko Yard in rural Nevada. Director Larkin Thomason explained that currently, the Amtrak stations are on two separate sides of the track, and this project will connect them, as well as produce some existing rail lines so that the UP Rail can move more offline and allow the passenger rail, Amtrak, and BNSF, to move more efficiently. Director Larkin Thomason indicated that currently rail in northern Nevada, particularly passenger rail, is unreliable in terms of timetable, and noted that this project will improve this by providing extra rail sidings where the freight rail can come off and the passenger rail can go through. The Director noted that while NDOT is partners with this, it is not an NDOT project, so no highway funding is going towards it. Director Larkin Thomason explained that Salt Lake City, Utah DOT has been talking with NDOT regarding the restoration of some service from Salt Lake City to Las Vegas, as well as incorporating service to Idaho.

Governor Lombardo inquired about the build-out time on the project.



Nevada Department of Transportation

Board of Directors • Meeting Minutes

February 12, 2024

9:30 AM

Director Larkin Thomason indicated her belief that it is a couple of years, but does not know the exact build-out time. The Director added that the project still needs to go through environmental clearances.

Director Larkin Thomason next discussed the US 395 North Valleys Project, which intends to take 395 out of Reno headed toward California. The Director indicated that at the end of January, NDOT began major earthwork operations and has reduced 395 down to two lanes from Oddie Boulevard to the Golden Valley Road. Director Larkin Thomason explained that the lane reductions are needed for safety while retaining walls are constructed and the highway is resurfaced and widened. Director Larkin Thomason further noted that the northbound McCarran on-ramp to northbound 395 is also closed with nearby highway access at Clear Acre and that these closures will remain in place through 2025 for long-term traffic control. Director Larkin Thomason informed the Board that ultimately, the multi-year project will widen and repave approximately four miles of US 395 between North McCarran and Golden Valley, and that more information can be reached via the project website at 395northvalleys.com, hotline, and text alerts. The Director explained that the ramp closure will be in place for approximately 1.5 years, but that there are workarounds in place, and that there is no other way to complete the widening without the shutdown.

Director Larkin Thomason next discussed the I-15 Central Corridor NEPA project, noting that in partnership with FHWA, NDOT has been working on improvements to I-15 over the past three decades to accommodate the growth in Las Vegas and indicated that this section of I-15 between Tropicana and Sahara is the last to be upgraded adjacent to the resort corridor. The Director explained that the Las Vegas strip feasibility study was conducted in 2019 to identify alternatives for safety traffic operation, right-of-way needs, and has now moved into the environmental phase. Director Larkin Thomason indicated that NDOT held an in-person meeting on January 31 and that the virtual public meeting will run from this coming Thursday through to February 16. The Director indicated that more information can be obtained at www.i15central.com.

Director Larkin Thomason next discussed the US 50 Tahoe East Shore Corridor Management Plan, noting that it is out for public review. The Director indicated that the virtual meeting beginning on February 12 will continue through March 14, and the in-person meeting will be held on February 27. Director Larkin Thomason pointed out that NDOT included the fact that lane reductions are not recommended as part of the study right on the slide and not only in just the talking points.

Governor Lombardo requested the highlights of the management plan at the following meeting.



Nevada Department of Transportation

Board of Directors • Meeting Minutes

February 12, 2024

9:30 AM

Director Larkin Thomason next discussed the Flamingo Road Safety Management Plan, which is a study of Flamingo Road, also known as State Route 592, from Paradise Road to Pecos Road. The Director explained that this study came about as a result of the high number of fatal and serious injury crashes that have occurred on the major east-west thoroughfare that feeds the Las Vegas Resort corridor, UNLV, and other key stakeholders. Director Larkin Thomason indicated that this study would incorporate corridor studies, access management, intersection and road capacity, traffic crash data, and highway safety manual methods. The Director explained that NDOT is now in the third public meeting phase, and the public outreach following the findings will include neighborhood meetings, pop-up meetings, virtual and in-person public meetings, with a certain virtual meeting for this study beginning January 22 and running through February 22 and an in-person public meeting taking place on February 13 from 4:00 to 7:00 at the Cambridge Recreational Center at 3930 Cambridge near Flamingo and Maryland Parkway.

Governor Lombardo asked if the development of alternatives has been completed.

Director Larkin Thomason indicated that it has not as this is a process to determine the alternatives.

Governor Lombardo questioned if there was a consideration for the county to adopt this road.

Director Larkin Thomason explained that the county has a portion of the roadway and that the negotiations between the county and the state have been a tradeoff. The Director added that she is unaware of the specific stage of conversation that has taken place regarding this piece and informed the Board that the county does want the state to take over more of the 215 gradually in trade. The Director explained that the intent is ultimately for NDOT to end up going around to about where Summerlin comes in, at the end of the 215. The Director further noted that when roads are swapped or traded, they are generally brought up to a certain level of service prior to the exchange.

Governor Lombardo indicated that there is a very high corridor there for pedestrian fatality and suggested that the county might be better served coming up with alternatives rather than NDOT given the speed of the state, and suggested that this be included in the conversation.

Director Larkin Thomason next discussed the critical hires for NDOT during the winter months. The Director thanked the Governor for his approval of nine highway maintenance worker positions coming out of retirement to help plow and train new recruits how to plow. The Director indicated that this executive order has resulted in between 30 and 40 new hires around the state. Director Larkin Thomason further



Nevada Department of Transportation

Board of Directors • Meeting Minutes

February 12, 2024

9:30 AM

noted that NDOT is looking at partnering with Hopes for Prisoners, as well as at training, indicating that NDOT uses federal funds to train CDL drivers through its civil rights program. The Director confirmed that the state is contracting with a third party for the CDL training as NDOT does not have personnel to spare to do this training. The Director further noted that NDOT is reaching out for public service interns for 70 available positions statewide. Director Larkin Thomason indicated that all NDOT basically needs to hire for these positions is a resume and contact information.

Director Larkin Thomason next discussed vacancy rates, noting that NDOT is currently at a 20.7 percent vacancy rate, and explained that this is trending in the right direction as this percentage was at 26 earlier. The Director explained that NDOT has just under 800 positions with a 16 percent vacancy: District 1, 17 percent vacancy; District 2, 29 percent vacancy; District 3, 20 percent vacancy; along with 54 new positions that are in the process of being filled, some of which are seasonal, and some of which are student workers, so they are not included in the others. Director Larkin Thomason indicated that District 1 struggles with filling engineer and project management positions; District 2 struggles with filling maintenance worker positions; and in the rural areas, NDOT is in direct competition with mining. The Director acknowledged that NDOT is currently spending almost three times the amount it used to on outsourcing, approximately 120 million as compared to the previously spent 40 million. The Director explained that engineers tend to be more successful in District 2 because of its proximity to UNR, whereas there is more issue finding construction and engineers in the south.

Justin Kalb questioned if the engineering vacancies are directly related to salary or other contributing factors.

Director Larkin Thomason explained that salary is part of it, but licensing also plays a role, as does location. The Director indicated that the Assistant District Engineers in Las Vegas currently have the job split between the south half and the north half, with the northern half containing more of the rural areas.

Director Larkin Thomason informed the board that in December, two new deputy directors were appointed: Sondra Rosenberg, who replaced Darin Tedford; and Mario Gomez, who replaced Jeff Lerud. The Director further indicated that Bhupinder Sandhu has been appointed as the new District 2 Engineer after having been the acting District 2 Engineer for the past few months. Director Larkin Thomason further noted that with both Sondra and Mario having been promoted, those positions are now vacant, as is the Assistant Director of Operations, and the Communication Director, as well as a 50-percent vacancy in administrative support.



Nevada Department of Transportation

Board of Directors • Meeting Minutes

February 12, 2024

9:30 AM

Governor Lombardo questioned how the vacancies are being addressed, and whether an advertising issue is partially to blame.

Director Larkin Thomason noted that this is more of a timing issue than anything else, and explained that interviews are scheduled and in progress for some positions, and others have only recently been posted. The Director indicated her belief that the majority of the positions will be filled by middle to end of the following month.

5. Consideration of Approval of the December 11, 2023, Nevada Department of Transportation Board of Directors Meeting Minutes. – *For Possible Action*

Motion: Approve the December 11, 2023, NDOT Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
By: Lieutenant Stavros Anthony
Second: Controller Andy Matthews
Vote: Passed unanimously

SEC .2. CONSENT AGENDA: Items No. 6 through No. 10

Governor Lombardo explained that items 6 through 10 will be taken together unless any of the Board members wish to hear an item separately.

Contracts over \$40,000, or 20% over the engineer's estimate from November 10, 2023, through January 11, 2024

6. Contract 3998, Project No. SP-000M (300), on I-580, US 50, SR 439, SR 659, and SR 878, with Q&D CONSTRUCTION, LLC, for barrier rail at multiple locations, Lyon, Storey, and Washoe Counties, Nevada. – *For possible action*

Agreements over \$10,000,000 from November 10, 2023, through January 11, 2024

7. Agreements with PARSONS TRANSPORTATION GROUP, INC., TIMMONS GROUP, INC., GANNETT FLEMING, INC., ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEM RESEARCH INSTITUTE, INC., STELLAR SERVICES, INC., AND EPLUS TECHNOLOGY for professional information technology services, statewide, Nevada. – *For possible action*



Nevada Department of Transportation

Board of Directors • Meeting Minutes

February 12, 2024

9:30 AM

Right-of-Way

8. SUR 22-01 - Disposal of a portion of US-395 North Virginia Street, Washoe County, Nevada. – *For possible action.*

General Administration

9. Consideration of Approval of Legislature-Approved Fiscal Year 2024 Procurement of Additional Vehicles in Accordance with NRS 408.389. – *For possible action*
10. **Contracts, Agreements, and Settlements**
Pursuant to NRS 408.131 the Board may delegate authority to the Director which the Director may exercise pursuant to NRS 408.205. These items and matters have been delegated to the Director by the Board by resolutions in April 1990 and July 2011. – *Informational item only*

Motion: Approve Consent Agenda Items 6 through 10
By: Lieutenant Stavros Anthony
Second: Member Gary Perea
Vote: Passed unanimously

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

SEC. 3. ITEMS TAKEN SEPARATELY FROM CONSENT AGENDA

No items were taken separately from the consent agenda.

SEC. 4. ADDITIONAL BUSINESS ITEMS

11. **Brightline West High-Speed Train Project presentation.** – *Informational item only*
Sarah Watterson, Brightline West President, discussed Brightline's history, noting that NDOT and the entire state of Nevada have been very supportive of Brightline West and as such, the company feels an immense responsibility to give back to the state.

Sarah Watterson indicated that the United States has invested heavily into federal highways, with 160,000 miles, 5,000 public airports, and an immense amount of infrastructure, but explained that this is still not



Nevada Department of Transportation

Board of Directors • Meeting Minutes

February 12, 2024

9:30 AM

enough. Ms. Watterson explained that if comparing the US to any other modern country, the US is way underrepresented in terms of high-speed rail. As such, Ms. Watterson explained that Brightline's goal is to rectify this issue. Ms. Watterson indicated that Brightline was formed in 2012 and owned a free corridor in Florida up and down Florida's east coast, deemed too long to drive but too short to fly, and realized the need for high-speed rail for that 200–250-mile segment. Ms. Watterson explained that the first phase of the project ran passenger rail from Miami to Palm Beach, and that as of this past September, has extended that rail all the way to Orlando. Ms. Watterson indicated that the train moves at about 125-mile speeds, so not true high speed, but definitely more efficient than driving in heavily trafficked areas.

Governor Lombardo asked why only 125.

Sarah Watterson explained that this is because of the number of grade crossings, an issue that would be less of a problem in the Nevada-to-California landscape. Ms. Watterson indicated that Brightline did everything possible to make the train fast, green, efficient, and modern. Ms. Watterson then shared a potential promotional video with the Board.

Sarah Watterson indicated Brightline's plan to build a 220-mile system from Las Vegas to Rancho Cucamonga with a high-speed rail station stop in Victor Valley in the middle and then a smaller stop that will be used for certain trains in Hesperia. Ms. Watterson explained that in partnering with NDOT, Caltrans, and Bureau of Land Management, among other partners, Brightline's right of way is almost entirely in the median of the I-15, allowing for usage of primarily excess land to build a barrier-protected corridor. Ms. Watterson explained the ability of the trains to hit high speeds in long, straight areas, as well as the fact that the rail system is not on viaduct but is on the ground as a result of the topography. Ms. Watterson explained the reasoning behind the station in Rancho Cucamonga, noting that everyone driving to and from this market from California would pass the Brightline station as it will be 0.8 miles off of the I-15, as well as the adjacent Metrolink system, allowing connection to anywhere in southern California by rail connection only. Ms. Watterson explained that Brightline is bringing over trains from Europe that have already done tens of billions of miles to use as prototypes for American-style trains here in the US.

Sarah Watterson indicated that there are approximately 50 million one-way trips made between greater southern California and Las Vegas each year, 85 percent of which are currently made by car. Ms. Watterson explained that the real goal is to get people out of the highly congested travel corridor by offering a faster, more enjoyable, more reliable, predictable alternative.



Nevada Department of Transportation

Board of Directors • Meeting Minutes

February 12, 2024

9:30 AM

Sarah Watterson next discussed the design-build of the project based on the success of the Florida project, noting that in Florida, Brightline delivered an on-time, on-budget project in terms of both phases. Ms. Watterson explained that Brightline breaks up a project into subdivided packages and indicated that all the civil highway work will be done by civil folks and split across four project packages between Nevada and California, on top of which will be layered the track and the systems providers, followed by testing. Ms. Watterson explained that Brightline is working with Southern Cal Edison and Nevada Energy on power for the trains and stations. Ms. Watterson further explained that prior to launch, everything is tested and commissioned by Brightline with the oversight of the various partners. Ms. Watterson informed the Board that this allows entry into fixed-price and fixed-time contracts, takes away an element of risk for all involved, and allows for more efficient financing and construction. Ms. Watterson discussed the company's buildup of the manufacturing supply in America, noting that approximately 95 percent of the project will be domestically sourced.

Sarah Watterson next discussed the stations, noting that Brightline Florida focused on the hire of hospitality professionals to try and change the preconception of what a commuter train or station means to most Americans to a holistic experience from journey's start to finish. Ms. Watterson explained that Brightline stations are clean and modern; provide free, good WIFI; provide food and beverage all the way through and in the station; baggage storage, and buildup of a fleet of ridesharing services. Ms. Watterson discussed the importance of ensuring that the pickup/drop-off area is designed to be the most efficient part of the entire experience. Ms. Watterson reiterated the convenience of the Rancho Cucamonga station, explaining its reach as more beneficial than one would be in downtown Los Angeles due to the connection of the Metrolink trains. Ms. Watterson informed the Board that the Vegas station sits between Warm Springs, Blue Diamond, I-15, and Las Vegas Boulevard, just south of the I-15/215 interchange, a parcel of land that was purchased because of its accessibility and visibility. Ms. Watterson added that the trains will hold up to 900 people per train, and will move each hour on the hour.

Sarah Watterson explained that 2023 was an important year for Brightline, thanks in part to partnerships, that culminated in the finalization of all permits and the ability to sign the last right-of-way contracts for the alignments and partnerships with BLM. Ms. Watterson indicated that this project would create 10,000 jobs, PLAs or agreements to sign PLAS with the building trades in both states have been signed, as well as agreements with 13 unions to operate the rail and maintenance area. Ms. Watterson reiterated that the trains themselves are emission-free, remove 3 million vehicles from the road, 16,000 short haul flights from the skies, and over 75 highway-related deaths per year. Ms. Watterson indicated that not just Brightline, but Nevada will be the blueprint for how to build high-speed rail in America.



Nevada Department of Transportation

Board of Directors • Meeting Minutes

February 12, 2024

9:30 AM

Member Justin Kalb questioned if the trains have the ability to scale up from 900 passengers if demand requires.

Sarah Watterson explained that the train cars hold 450 but are coupled together to hold 900. Ms. Watterson further noted that trains will run every hour in each direction and are capable of doing more than 11 million trips per year. Ms. Watterson further noted that the federal administration has already released a corridor ID program, for which Brightline will apply, that will allow Brightline to build additional tracks in the I-15 as demand is created over time.

Controller Andy Matthews asked about data on the impact to road congestion, road safety, travel times, et cetera in Florida.

Sarah Watterson explained that although the full 235 miles only opened in September, Brightline has been operating the lower part of that from Palm Beach to Miami since 2018 and as such, has significant amounts of data. Ms. Watterson indicated that the basic run rate is approximately 2 million rides on the train, which are cars that would otherwise be on I-95. Ms. Watterson noted that the urban, dense areas became more pedestrian-friendly, particularly in the underserved area where the Miami World Center ultimately was built.

Controller Andy Matthews requested that statistical data be shared with the Board.

Sarah Watterson invited Board members to come to tour Florida to see the results.

Controller Andy Matthews questioned the travel time via Metrolink from Rancho Cucamonga to Los Angeles.

Sarah Watterson indicated that this is about an hour, making for an approximate three-hour trip from LA to Vegas, and two hours from Rancho to Vegas.

Governor Lombardo informed the Board that NDOT and the governor are coordinating a trip to Florida and once the details have been worked out, all Board members will be invited. The Governor questioned if the contractors will be separated via California and Nevada or if they will be able to work across the border.



Nevada Department of Transportation

Board of Directors • Meeting Minutes

February 12, 2024

9:30 AM

Sarah Watterson indicated that California building trades and Nevada building trades will be working together so as to cross contracts across the border. Ms. Watterson explained that there are only certain contracts that actually cross state lines, and so the logistics of this are being worked through so that everyone can work under one umbrella.

Ryan Wheeler discussed NDOT's role in the project, beginning with a discussion regarding previous iterations Nevadans have heard about some version of a train between California and Las Vegas, the permitting that started from the environmental work from Victor Valley to Las Vegas in 2005, and was completed in 2015, followed by the 2019 purchase of Desert Express by Brightline West. Mr. Wheeler explained that the partnership and collaboration between NDOT and Brightline has been exceptional, open, honest, and transparent and has resulted in mutual respect, trust, and integrity. Mr. Wheeler further indicated that NDOT and Brightline West have entered into several agreements and memorandums of understanding to help the project move forward and strategically plan both modes of transportation within the I-15 corridor so as to allow NDOT success in maintaining the freeway and Brightline success in maintaining the rail corridor in the middle of the freeway. Mr. Wheeler explained that NDOT, Brightline West, and Caltrans have entered into an MOU to collaborate on project needs, and NDOT has met with Caltrans professionals on a monthly basis to ensure that the interstate design standards and agreements entered into with Brightline West are similar.

Ryan Wheeler indicated that Brightline West is a \$12 billion construction project that will be predominantly funded with private funds. Mr. Wheeler explained that in partnership, Brightline West and NDOT applied for a Federal Railroad Administration Grant, and on December 8, NDOT was awarded this \$3 billion through the Federal State Partnership Program. Mr. Wheeler indicated that NDOT will work collaboratively with Brightline West to administer the grant. Mr. Wheeler further noted that NDOT has worked with Brightline West to create a team of experts to oversee the project delivery, but that Brightline West maintains financial responsibility for the project, with NDOT's primary role being grant administration and project oversight. Mr. Wheeler further noted that as it pertains to the grant requirements, NDOT will utilize the services of the independent engineer to assist with this within California. Mr. Wheeler stressed that this is not an NDOT project, that the state of Nevada is not contributing state budget towards this project, and that NDOT is being reimbursed for staff and consultants' time spent towards this project. Mr. Wheeler indicated that a reimbursement agreement has been in place since 2019, and as such, the time allocated to date has been paid by Brightline West. Mr. Wheeler explained that Brightline West is the project developer, and as such, Brightline owns and is in charge of the planning, environmental design, construction



Nevada Department of Transportation

Board of Directors • Meeting Minutes

February 12, 2024

9:30 AM

operation, and maintenance of the private inner city passenger rail system, as well as the hiring and management of project scope, schedule, and budgets.

Ryan Wheeler explained that in 2019, NDOT assembled a professional engineers' team as well as a consultant team with high-speed rail experience and expertise. Mr. Wheeler indicated that through this assembled team, NDOT has members that used to work at FRA to assist with grant administration. Mr. Wheeler further indicated that NDOT utilized experts from the Nevada Attorney General's office to assist with the agreements. Mr. Wheeler informed the Board that NDOT has an open procurement for construction crew augmentation to assist NDOT with readjustments of highway infrastructure. Mr. Wheeler concluded with a discussion of the conversations that have taken place with Caltrans, with Nevada emergency responders, and with FDOT regarding the agreements and interactions with Brightline West, as well as the partnerships with Clark County and the Department of Aviation, the Public Works Department, Clark County Commissioners, and RTC Southern Nevada.

Lieutenant Stavros Anthony thanked Ms. Watterson and Mr. Wheeler for the presentations and asked for confirmation that this is a \$12 billion project, with \$3 billion coming from the federal grant, and the other \$9 billion coming from Brightline.

Sarah Watterson confirmed that this is correct.

Lieutenant Stavros Anthony questioned how the trains running every hour would look like.

Sarah Watterson indicated that there will be two flagship stations and multiple stations in the middle. Ms. Watterson explained that each station has at least two tracks with multiple miles of passing sidings, also called double-track areas, throughout the system. Ms. Watterson described a 10-mile passing track where the trains would pass at each train meet. Ms. Watterson reiterated that Brightline will be running one train every hour in each direction so there will be multiple trains on the tracks. Ms. Watterson indicated that this entire process is automated. Ms. Watterson reiterated that Brightline is using a European train signaling system that has been in use for billions of miles successfully. Ms. Watterson described Brightline's intended work with local transportation commissions to ensure transportation outside of the train for riders of the Brightline system. Ms. Watterson further indicated that there will be standard and premium seating within the trains, but food and beverage options, as well as baggage, will be available for either class of seating.

Governor Lombardo questioned whether the High-Speed Rail Authority is still an active authority.



Nevada Department of Transportation

Board of Directors • Meeting Minutes

February 12, 2024

9:30 AM

Sarah Watterson confirmed that it is and that Brightline reports to them twice a year.

Director Larkin Thomason added that NDOT has been meeting regularly with FRA on a regular basis to continually ensure that all requirements are being met.

Governor Lombardo questioned the potential groundbreaking date.

Sarah Watterson confirmed the projected date would be this spring.

Member Justin Kalb questioned the role of security going in and out of the stations.

Sarah Watterson explained that Brightline has a security protocol going in and out, with its own machines for baggage as well as a metal detector. Ms. Watterson explained that it is very touchless and that Brightline is constantly working on a process similar to that which a stadium would use.

Member Frank Lepori asked if there is any liability from the grant for NDOT.

Sarah Watterson indicated that Brightline is the project manager of NDOT, and Brightline is working to ensure that NDOT is set up with proper waterfalls in terms of reimbursement. Ms. Watterson further noted that the project costs, development, financing, and all monetary and personnel responsibilities are Brightline's.

Ryan Wheeler added that NDOT has entered into several agreements and have done the best possible to limit risk and ensure that roles and responsibilities of both parties are clear.

- 12. Executive Session:** Receive information from legal counsel regarding potential and existing litigation involving a matter over which the Transportation Board of Directors has supervision, control, jurisdiction, or advisory power and to deliberate toward a decision on the matter (Note: This item may be closed to the public pursuant to NRS 241.015(3)(b)(2) in order to discuss legal matters.). (For possible action)

There was no executive session.

- 13. Public Comment:** A period devoted to comments by the general public about matters relevant to the Board's jurisdiction will be held. No vote may be taken upon a matter not listed on the posted agenda.
-



Nevada Department of Transportation

Board of Directors • Meeting Minutes

February 12, 2024

9:30 AM

Comments will be limited to three minutes. Please clearly state your name and SPELL your last name for the record. If any of the Board wishes to extend the length of a presentation, this will be done by the Chair, or the Board by majority vote.

There was no public comment.

14. Adjournment – *For possible action*

Governor Lombardo adjourned the February 12, 2024, Nevada Department of Transportation Board of Directors Meeting.

Sajid Sulahria, Deputy Director
Secretary to the Board of Directors