



SALEM AREA MASS TRANSIT DISTRICT
BOARD WORK SESSION MINUTES

Thursday, November 13, 2025 at 5:30p.m.

ATTENDEES: President Maria Hinojos Pressey | Directors Sadie Carney | Ian Davidson (Virtual) | Sara Duncan | Bill Holmstrom Absent: Directors Ramiro Navarro Jr.
STAFF: GM Allan Pollock | CSO Cliff Carpentier | CFO Denise LaRue | CELRO Jaél Rose | CPDO Shofi Ull Azum | COO Tom Dietz | Executive Assistants Crisandra Williams | Kirra Pressey

1. CALL TO ORDER

A. Note of Attendance for a Quorum

President Hinojos Pressey called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.
Attendance was noted.

B. Safety Minute

COO Dietz presented the safety moment, highlighting safety tips for cooking this holiday season.

C. Announcements | Changes to Agenda - None

2. PRESENTATIONS - None

3. DISCUSSIONS

A. Task Force Activity & Logistics

Presenter: GM Allan Pollock

GM Pollock presented two documents to the board: a draft of the task force charter that was sent to the coalition and the coalition's response. The goal of the discussion was to gather feedback from board members to finalize the document to send back to the coalition.

Director Holmstrom expressed appreciation for the staff's work in drafting the initial document. He noted that while the coalition's response was lengthy and contained some unnecessary commentary, they had responded quickly as requested. He felt the outcome proposed by the coalition was too broad and would benefit from being more targeted, though he acknowledged the value in hearing about the realities and context in which businesses operate.

Director Duncan shared similar sentiments, expressing concern that the coalition had completely removed any mention of the business tax from the document, which was the original purpose for starting the process. She mentioned being told that the Chamber of Commerce had been speaking at events stating their goal was to reduce the tax to zero or very low. She also felt that Meeting 3 as described in the coalition's response had become too extensive with added topics that might not be feasible in one meeting. Duncan highlighted a fundamental difference in perspective between the two groups: the board sees Cherriots as a public good, while the coalition seems to view it as a business.

Director Carney noted concern about a specific line in the coalition's response that suggested Cherriots should "demonstrate progress on operational efficiency system redesign and national best practices before requesting new revenue," which seemed to imply the district hadn't already implemented best practices.



GM Pollock presented a compromise document that attempted to incorporate both perspectives. The revised document outlined the task force goal as "strengthening community, mobility, and economic vitality" and working toward identifying recommendations to address long-term growth. It structured meetings to provide education about Cherriots' plans and performance while also allowing the coalition to share their perspective on the business climate. The final meetings would focus on reviewing service enhancement plans tied to potential tax rates and developing recommendations.

Director Duncan appreciated GM Pollock's work on the compromise document and suggested ensuring that economic benefits of transit be clearly communicated, including the return on investment of \$2.15 for every dollar spent on transit and increased property values near transit stops. She also stressed the importance of including the historical context of how neighboring transit agencies were established with this tax and how Cherriots has repeatedly attempted to secure similar funding.

Director Holmstrom agreed with Director Duncan's points and praised GM Pollock's work on the document. He suggested possibly switching the order of Meetings 2 and 3 depending on speaker availability.

Director Davidson expressed support for the compromise document but raised a concern about whether the current approach was correct. He suggested the possibility of a "blue ribbon committee" of business community representatives that would make recommendations to the board without Board members being committee members. Other Directors disagreed with this approach, preferring direct Board involvement in the discussions to ensure transparency, balance, and fulfillment of their commitment to negotiate with the business community.

The Board agreed to move forward with GM Pollock's compromise document with the suggested edits, including modifying language about "growth of the district" to reflect community needs and changing "historical review of local voter rejections of previous payroll tax initiatives" to more neutral language about "local voter outcomes of previous tax proposals."

B. Creating Community Connections Continued Discussion

Presenter: GM Allan Pollock

GM Pollock noted that there was little to discuss on this item as the work had been wrapped up and they were now waiting for the task force process to continue.

4. GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS

CELRO Rose briefed the Board on the first annual Bustache event, noting strong attendance, diverse participants, and over 300 likes on social media. The event included battery electric bus tours and received great support from Maintenance, Leadership, HR, Accounting, and Marion County.

CFO LaRue announced her resignation to join another public agency, with her last day on December 16. Board members thanked her for her service and for ensuring ample training time before her departure. She noted she is leaving behind a fully staffed and capable team.



A. Upcoming Agenda Items

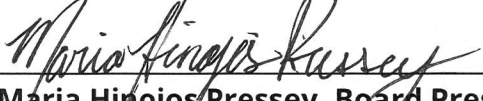
B. Board Calendar

GM Pollock reviewed the upcoming agenda and calendar items.

5. ADJOURN

President Hinojos Pressey adjourned the meeting at 6:18 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted



Maria Hinojos Pressey, Board President