

**MINUTES OF THE  
EAGLE VALLEY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
November 08, 2023**

A meeting of the Eagle Valley Transportation Authority (“Authority”) Board of Directors (“Board”) was held on November 08, 2023, at 12:30 p.m. The meeting was held in person at the Avon Council Chambers located at 100 Mikaela Way, Town of Avon, Colorado, 81620, and on Zoom. Notice of the meeting was posted on November 04, 2023, and included agenda items, location and time, as well as the teleconference information needed to participate in the public portion of the meeting. The Notice of Board of Directors Meeting dated November 04, 2023, and the certification of posting are attached hereto.

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**ATTENDANCE**

**Directors in Attendance:**

Director Amy Phillips, Mayor and Councilor, Town of Avon

Director Dave Eickholt, Beaver Creek Metro District

Director Jeanne McQueeney, Commissioner, Eagle County

Director Barry Davis, Councilor, Town of Vail

Director Earle Bidez, Mayor, Town of Minturn

Director Nick Sunday, Councilor, Town of Eagle.

**Directors Absent:**

Director Dana Veljacic, Member of the Board of Trustees of the Town of Red Cliff

**Also in Attendance:**

Tanya Allen, Executive Director, EVTA

Larry Tennenholz, Acting Director, ECO Transit

Ray Shei, Alternate Board, Beaver Creek Metro District

Jeff Wetzal, Operations Manager, ECO Transit

Greg Barret, Safety & Security Manager, ECO Transit

Vanesa Duarte, Admin/Fiscal Tech, ECO Transit

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Lance Trujillo, Transit Technology and Innovation Manager,  
ECO Transit

Dayana Herr, Admin Supervisor, ECO Transit

Eric Heil, the Town Manager for the Town of Avon

Tim McMahon, Community Member

Joanna Kerwin, Community Member, Edwards Metro District

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**APPROVAL OF THE  
AGENDA**

Director Phillips presented the agenda. Director Davis motioned to approve the Agenda. Director Eickholt seconded this motion, which passed with a unanimous 6-0 vote.

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**APPROVAL OF MINUTES  
AND FINANCIAL  
STATEMENTS**

Director Phillips presented the Minutes dated October 11, 2023 for approval and asked if any other Directors had any questions or requests for corrections. Hearing none, Director Davis moved to approve the minutes and financial statements. Director Bidez seconded the motion, which passed with a unanimous 6-0 vote.

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**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Tim McMahon, a member of the community, expressed that having a noon meeting on a Wednesday is not ideal for community members who rely on the bus. He inquired if the Board has conducted any surveys or input sessions to determine the best times for bus riders to attend these meetings. He suggested that meeting dates and times be posted earlier than just five days in advance. He inquired if there had been any conversations about using EVTA's money to contribute to the completion of the bike trails. Lastly, he requested an update on staffing for the winter season.

Director McQueeney requested that a Board Member Comment section be added to upcoming regular agendas to allow Board members to provide information and comments about items of interest not on the EVTA Board agenda.

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**AGENDA ITEMS**

**5. Resolution 2023-21 A Resolution to Amend Annual  
Budget Adoption Date**

Executive Director Allen explained that current EVTA bylaws required the budget to be adopted by December 1. However, the

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statutory requirement is December 31. Staff and legal counsel were proposing a resolution to amend the bylaws to reflect the statutory date, allowing more time for review before submission if necessary.

Director Eickholt moved to approve Resolution 2023-21 A Resolution to Amend Annual Budget Adoption Date. Director Davis seconded the motion, which passed with a unanimous 6-0 vote.

## **6. ECO Transit Quarterly Report and Updates – Acting ECO Transit Director Larry Tenenholz**

Mr. Larry Tenenholz, the acting ECO Transit Director, announced that starting wages for operators would be increased starting November 13, making them highly competitive with other area agencies. He thanked Eagle County for its support in getting this done.

Mr. Tenenholz updated on some Winter Schedule developments, including the introduction of "Loop Buses" to ease overcrowding on the busiest routes and the arrival of SP+ vehicles and drivers to operate the contracted Vail-Beaver Creek Express service.

Mr. Tenenholz updated on some organizational and staffing developments, including the procurement of three Ford Escapes to facilitate the movement of road supervisors across the valley; the adoption of a new interactive training program, and the selection of two new full-time road supervisors, who were promoted from within the company's existing workforce.

Mr. Tenenholz presented the most recent ridership report. While farebox reports show lower ridership on some routes than in previous years, these reports do not include mobile fare ridership, which can not yet be broken down by route. Once this is factored in, total ridership is clearly up system-wide.

Discussing the Operations Report, Mr. Tenenholz acknowledged that work was still needed to address mechanical issues. As part of the process they were reviewing staffing against the industry standard, which is one mechanic for every five buses. Currently, ECO has one mechanic for every nine buses. Mr. Tenenholz recommended that EVTA keep this

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standard in mind as they develop future plans regarding efficient fleet service.

Farebox and Pass Sales revenue both continued to exceed budget projections, further confirmation of improved ridership.

Mr. Tenenholz invited all Board members to attend the first annual Safety Award Ceremony, scheduled for November 17th. The ceremony will recognize operators who have remained accident-free for a period of 1 to 15 years.

Regarding the hiring report, Mr. Tenenholz noted an improvement in overall candidate quality and hiring yields when compared to 2022. This suggests that the Operations and County HR County teams are doing a better job of attracting and identifying the right candidates. Despite the fact that fewer offers were extended in 2023, more operators were hired than expected for this Winter Season.

Tim McMahon, a member of the community, asked if some of these extra “Loop Buses” were going to be used on the last three trips for the Highway 6 route out of the Vail Transportation Center since every night those trips are very crowded and sometimes riders are left behind.

## **7. Housing Strategy Overview and Town of Avon Project Presentation**

Executive Director Allen introduced Eric Heil, the Town Manager for the Town of Avon, to present on an employee housing partnership that she believed would be of interest to the Board given their goal of creating an integrated hiring and housing strategy to attract and retain future staff.

Executive Director Allen gave an overview of ECO Transit’s current housing program, including the changes that have been observed since she joined ECO in 2019. ECO’s housing pool has grown from a handful of shared rental units to a wider mix, including two purchased townhomes and five RV spots. She mentioned that ECO has typically provided a shared two-bedroom, two-bathroom arrangement for employees, but they have noticed that more and more job candidates prefer having their own space, whether it's a studio apartment or a

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one-bedroom. Future planning should take these changing needs and preferences into account.

Mr. Eric Heil shared information regarding the planned "Avondale Apartments" project, which will be located in the Home Depot/Walmart area in the Town of Avon. The project aims to accommodate up to 56 units per building, with two elevators in each building. The Town of Avon plans to finance half of the units, but they are seeking partner organizations to complete the remaining units. Mr. Heil stated that the estimated apartment building cost is between \$27-28 million. The Town of Avon has already secured \$7-8 million in cash investment and is looking for \$7 million in bond financing.

If the EVTA is interested in partnering with the Town of Avon for this project, Mr. Heil proposed two options. The first is the possibility of master leasing units, which would cost \$3,000 per month per unit with a commitment of five years. The second option is an upfront cash investment, with a possible 30-year lease agreement. He noted that these were preliminary ideas and that they were open to discussion.

A challenge identified by the Board was that EVTA did not yet have a defined housing strategy. More information and discussion was needed around this topic before any financial commitments could be made.

A related discussion followed as to whether the EVTA would be interested in participating in a multi-jurisdictional housing needs survey that the Town of Avon was getting underway. Director Eickholt asked Mr. Heil to clarify why the Town of Avon was requesting \$25,000 from the EVTA for a survey when they had already received \$200,000 from state funds for the project. Mr. Heil explained that these additional costs were related to promoting and advertising the survey. This was a recommended pledge and partners would only be billed actual costs if they came in lower than projected.

Ms. Joanna Kerwin, a member of the Edwards Metro District community, expressed her gratitude to the Town of Avon for presenting this opportunity to the board, citing that it would be a valuable project for the organization.

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Director Earle Bidez made a motion to proceed with the survey project once Executive Director Allen had completed a review and made an administrative decision on the matter. Director McQueeney seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously with a vote of 6-0.

Director McQueeney suggested forming a subcommittee to examine the "Avondale" housing project in detail. The subcommittee, comprising Director Jeanne McQueeney, Director Nick Sunday, and Director Dave Eickholt, could present their recommendations to the board during the January retreat as part of a housing strategy discussion. As this is a subcommittee with three directors, their meetings would need to be publicly posted.

## **8. Retirement Plan Update**

Executive Director Allen asked for Board direction and input on two specific items related to an EVTA retirement plan: using Eagle County's current provider, the Colorado Retirement Association (CRA), and whether to consider the option of opting out of Social Security, similar to other public agencies.

She shared CRA's proposal and highlighted key aspects, including the fact they specialize in handling County, Municipalities, and Special districts within Colorado and their administrative model. Using CRA would allow for a smooth transition for existing Eagle County employees as they will be able to use the same credentials to access their accounts. The program could also potentially be configured to recognize prior vesting with Eagle County and allow for the transfer of any loans that employees currently have taken against their accounts.

Director Eickholt inquired about the satisfaction of the current employees of ECO Transit with their provider. Executive Director Allen responded that based on her conversations with the Drivers' Committee and others, it appeared ECO employees were satisfied with CRA and would appreciate the continuity.

Director Bidez made a motion to move forward with the Colorado Retirement Association organization and explore the

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possibility of opting out of Social Security. Director Davis seconded this motion, which passed with a unanimous 6-0 vote.

### **9. Communications Update**

Mr. Ray updated the Board on recent visits to community groups and encouraged the Board to provide additional suggestions for outreach. He added that in response to public comments about a lack of available information he had created a Facebook page for the EVTA, which will enable them to share more content with the public, including meeting updates and other information about the organization.

### **10. Executive Director's Updates/Future Topics**

Executive Director Allen noted that December's meeting would include the required public hearing for budget adoption. Based on the Board's request, she would also start working on planning for a January retreat.

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#### **NEXT MEETING**

December 13, 2023.

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#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:04 PM

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