

Monthly Board Meeting – June 2023

Sunday, June 11, 2022 – 10:00 AM

Location: Virtual – A recording of the meeting can be [found here](#)

Attendance

Voting Members in Attendance:

Zach Adams, Randy Atkin, John Pearson,
Michael Plowman, Chris Stout

Non-Voting Members in Attendance:

Curtis Haring, Scott Harris

Excused Voting Members:

Mike Christensen

Unexcused Voting Members:

Meeting Called to Order at 10:05 AM

Minutes

Approval of April Minutes - All

Minutes were sent a few days after the April meeting but not provided as materials for the June meeting. Motion was to table approval until July.

Executive Director activities report/Membership Update – Curtis Haring

Over the past month, Curtis worked 14.25 hours.

Media/Outreach.

- Published Transit: Imagined landing page

Fundraising:

- Advanced with Larry H. and Gail Miller Family Foundation
- Funds being released from UCAIR

Networking:

Upcoming activities

- Will be creating letterhead and sending out to high-dollar individuals

Numbers:

- 29 new Twitter Followers, now at 803.

- 0 new TikTok Followers, remains at 12.
- 0 new YouTube follower, remains at 8.
- 7 new members, now at 220.
- 1 new person on the mailing list (not members), now at 41.
- 1 new dues paying member for the year, now at 13.

Approval of Michael Plowman to the Board – Curtis Haring, Michael Plowman

Curtis started off by introducing Michael to the board. Michael was born and raised in Logan and has a history working with the Boy Scouts in Orem, but the area extended down to St. George. Michael was also the Executive Director for the Union Station Foundation and currently on the board of directors for that organization. In addition, Michael is the Deputy Executive Director for the Krohn Breakthrough Foundation in Orem, which does humanitarian missions.

Randy motions to accept Michael to the UTRU Board, Chris seconds. Unanimous Vote

Call For Board Bio's – Curtis Haring

Curtis is asking board members to submit short bio's for the website. There have been a few grant requests that have asked for more info for who sits on the board. Specifically, he is looking for a one or two sentence bio that includes why the individual is interested in transit.

Fundraising Planning – All

John noted that he had made additional contacts while attending the annual UCIAR meeting. From the UTA Board of Trustees, he met with Beth Holbrook and Jeff Acerson. In addition, he made contact with individuals from Rio Tinto, Zions Bank, AT&T, and Ivory Homes and will reach out further (with the exception of Beth Holbrook, who Curtis has a personal relationship with). Michael did note that his organization just got a “no” from Zions for a different grant.

John also mentioned conversations with the Utah Manufacturers Association and might be able to connect us with Stadler Trains. Randy also has a connection with Stadler and might be able to assist.

Randy wanted to add J. Fisher, who is the master developer for Union Station in Ogden, which might be a transit ally. Michael added that on the 15th, there will be an open house for the for J. Fisher and will distribute that information.

Michael also mentioned the Union Pacific Foundation and Nathan Anderson, and he will work with Curtis on building that relationship.

Bike Bus Discussion - All

John and Curtis had a discussion about bike buses and wanted to bring the issue to the board to see if it might be something UTRU wants to take on. In short, a bike bus is a group of students who ride their bikes to and from school, together, chaperoned by a group of adults, to provide an organized, safer, and no-automobile focused way to move around a neighborhood.

John feels that this is a natural extension of UTRU because it would help to instill a mindset that non-car transportation can be an option in kids, shows a display of non-automobile transit in a community and helps communities ask what streets are for, and (most importantly for UTRU) act as

a way to put pressure on policymakers to create more and better bike infrastructure, naturally feeding into mass transit systems.

John feels that this is a good idea because it allows UTRU to reach a population that UTRU does not inherently reach: parents. As work from home becomes more and more common, the trend is moving away from transit as a way to commute and more of a way to get around a community, and by helping to sponsor bike buses and working with parents, we can create inroads into advocacy with these groups.

John also feels that this is a good way to get some short-term victories to show UTRU's value.

Chris feels that, though it is a great idea, our mission is transit advocacy and feels that this is mission drift. He wonders why the bike groups are not picking this up and that it seems that they may not have the ability to build out these programs, so why would we? To him, this is a bit of a red flag as to how effective this program could be. Ultimately, it isn't that Chris thinks it is a bad idea, just that it is a premature one for UTRU. In the meantime, he suggests that we reach out to the bike groups and work to ally with these groups to create something jointly instead of taking this on wholesale.

John noted that the movement in the Netherlands towards more transit usage was spurred by the pushback from auto/pedestrian deaths of children and the rise of bike-buses. In addition, he feels that this would help create inroads into communities and, potentially, get more women and minorities on the board.

Zack feels that there are a lot of opportunities to build coalitions around the idea of bike buses, and that we can be a leader in bringing groups together to organize and run these buses. Zack is currently putting together bike buses in Daybreak and he noted that the work he is doing can largely be templated distributed out.

Chris offered to reach out to the Executive Director of the Bike Collective to start a conversation and see if we can get a partnership going.

The group settled on the idea of promoting partnerships with bike groups and that UTRU would be an active participant, but not spearheading and going solo. In addition, it is agreed that we should put resources on the website to help people start bike buses in communities. Potentially, from there, UTRU plays an active role in transit usage and advocacy.

John will bring Curtis in on conversations he is having with the University of Utah to see what conversations we have and what can be built.

Hybrid Meetings? – Curtis Haring

Curtis asks the board if they would be interested in holding hybrid meetings. Due to time, this was largely tabled and will be discussed offline, though Chris did express that he wanted to do this.

Chapter Updates - All

South Salt Lake/Sugar House – Scott noted that the adopt a stop process is moving forward and that, from his end, he is just waiting for UTA to make things official. He noted that this has been really easy to do; so far he hasn't had to do much of anything other than to just check in on the stop from time to time.

They are also having a chapter meeting on June 13 at the Sprague library, Curtis will get that information out.

Scott also noted that the chapters could be a direct support group for bike buses, but the UTRU chapters could be the support structure around the organizations and provide things like bike maintenance and transit education and outreach while the parents provide day-to-day support.

Open Forum – All

Randy started discussion by noting the difficulties he had getting to and from the Pride Parade and using transit on a Sunday. In short, it was difficult to use the service, and with 30 minute service, people weren't able to get on the train. These are opportunities for UTA to shine or to show people that transit is not viable. UTA can and must do better. Curtis asked Randy to write a blog post regarding this experience and that we can also send this out as a letter to papers.

Chris would also like to find a way to figure out how we can better stay on top of things such as the Avenues Community Council meeting where discussions about transit are taking place.

Adjourn

The next meeting is scheduled for July 9, at 10 AM.