The following are minutes for the meeting of the Mesilla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Policy Committee which was held April 11, 2018 at 1:00 p.m. in Commission Chambers at Dona Ana County Government Building, 845 Motel Blvd., Las Cruces, New Mexico.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Nora Barraza (Town of Mesilla)
Trent Doolittle (NMDOT)
Councillor Jack Eakman (CLC)
Commissioner Kim Hakes (DAC)
Trustee Stephanie Johnson-Burick (Town of Mesilla)
Councillor Gabriel Vasquez (CLC)
Councillor Gill Sorg (CLC)
Trustee Carlos Arzabal (Town of Mesilla)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Commissioner Benjamin Rawson (DAC)
Commissioner Isabella Solis (DAC)

STAFF PRESENT: Tom Murphy (MPO staff)
Andrew Wray (MPO staff)
Michael McAdams (MPO staff)
Dominic Loya (MPO Staff)

OTHERS PRESENT: Jolene Herrera, NMDOT
Becky Baum, RC Creations, LLC, Recording Secretary

1. CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE (1:03 PM)

Eakman: I’d like to call our meeting to order today, the prerogative of the Chair. If I could please, would you all join me in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ALL STAND FOR THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

Eakman: Thank you so much.

2. CONFLICT OF INTEREST INQUIRY

Eakman: I do need to read this one statement on conflict of interest. Does any Committee Member have any known or perceived conflict of interest with any item on the agenda? If so that Committee Member may recuse themselves from voting on a specific matter or if they feel that they can be impartial we will put their participation up to a vote by the rest of the Committee. Would you please each declare?
THERE WERE NONE.

Eakman: Thank you so much.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Eakman: We're now open to public comment. Is there anybody here for crowd control? Jolene. Thank you so much. Thank you so much. One at a time please. Seeing no one here, at this time, Ms. Baum did you have anything you wanted to say? Okay. Thank you.

4. CONSENT AGENDA *

Eakman: What are your wishes on the consent agenda? I would be open to a motion to approve or whatever.

Vasquez: So moved.

Sorg: Second.

Eakman: It is moved and seconded that we approve the consent agenda. Mr. Wray would you poll the board.

Wray: Yes Mr. Chair. Councillor Sorg.

Sorg: Yes.

Wray: Mr. Doolittle.

Doolittle: Yes.

Wray: Trustee Arzabal.

Arzabal: Yes.

Wray: Councillor Vasquez.

Vasquez: Yes.

Wray: Commissioner Hakes.

Hakes: Yes.

Wray: Trustee Johnson-Burick.

J-Burick: Yes.
Wray: Madam Mayor.

Barraza: Yes.

Wray: Mr. Chair.

Eakman: Yes.

MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. * APPROVAL OF MINUTES

6.1 * February 7, 2018

- VOTED ON VIA THE CONSENT AGENDA

6. DISCUSSION ITEMS

6.1 Committee training: MPO 101

Eakman: Moving on, we have discussion items. The staff is going to be helping us with those. Would you please move forward, Mr. Wray.

Wray: Thank you Mr. Chair. First of all I want to say this is going to be a little bit more of a little free-flowing presentation today. The presentation I'm going to be giving is going to be on the MPO 101 book which Commissioner Hakes and Trustee Johnson-Burick, since they're brand-new with us, just received theirs just a few moments ago. If anybody else brought theirs with them today, we have got some refills, updated materials, we're happy to have those distributed out to everyone today. These are brand-new materials. We know that none of you have this particular piece of information. And I also want to say that if there's anything as I go through this presentation that you find that you are missing out of your MPO 101 book, let staff know. We don't have it with us today but we will get that to you very shortly.

So getting started here, the overall purpose of the MPO 101 book is to provide a quick reference manual on MPO-related documents and materials for all members of the MPO committees and the MPO staff. Members of the Policy Committee all received one when they join. The members of the TAC and the BPAC all receive one, and we as a staff each have our own copies of the MPO 101 book. Just kind of the introductory materials that you'll find when we go in there: We've got the committee and staff rosters. We don't really make a habit of updating those as changes happen because, as everyone can imagine, changes happen with committee rosters fairly frequently and it's just not a good use
of paper for us to be continually handing out new copies to everyone. So we have an updated copy in there for when someone receives their book, but if anybody does want to have an updated copy of the roster provided to them, let us know and we will get that to you.

Getting on into kind of the meat of the document, and this is one of the two that we have here available for everyone, is the Transportation Planning Process Briefing Book. This is a very useful document that is put out by the Federal Highway Administration. It is a very good overview of the transportation planning process from kind of the federal perspective, federal viewpoint of their expectations for metropolitan and statewide planning. The most recent edition that they have published was actually 2017 edition but it was put out very early this year, and we have copies of that available if everyone will please take that with them when they leave today and replace the old copy out of their MPO 101 book. The next item that follows in the 101 book is the MTP. This is also a very important document that is the long-range plan document for the Mesilla Valley MPO. It basically is a document that sets the foundation for all of the projects and the processes that go on in the MPO, the TIP, and the UPWP etc. I do want to note here for the Committee Members who have been with us for several years, will probably remember in the past when they received their MPO 101 book, we did include a copy of the TIP, the Transportation Improvement Program in the MPO 101 book. We no longer do that because the TIP changes on basically a quarterly basis. Again, it's not really a good use of paper for us to continually be handing out paper copies of that as the changes happen. However, I will hasten to add that an updated version of the Mesilla Valley MPO TIP is always available on the Mesilla Valley MPO website and now the State of New Mexico eSTIP is also online, so Mesilla Valley MPO TIP information is available from the eSTIP as well. And also, just a little shameless plug, MPO staff is going to be starting the Metropolitan Transportation Plan process for the next update in the coming months, towards the tail-end of this year. So be watching for that process to get off the ground.

The next item is an NMDOT item. It is the Planning Procedures Manual. This is the document produced by NMDOT that guides the MPO process within the state of New Mexico, and very useful in that it has a lot of timelines about the work products and when they are expected, and it's just a very good explanation in the Planning Procedures Manual about what MPOs are expected to do, what the requirements are, etc.

And then the next item in the 101 book is the Unified Planning Work Program, the UPWP. This is the biannual document that lays out staff activities for those two years. The Committee probably remembers that we're in the process of updating to pass the 2019-2020 UPWP. That'll be coming before this Committee next month. The copy that is in the MPO 101 books that you all have now is out-of-date, though, because we did an amendment back in December of last year. So we have up-to-date copies of those for everyone. I guess I should say that Trustee Johnson-Burick
and Commissioner Hakes, you guys have all the latest and greatest in yours so these would be for the other Committee Members that we have the updates for.

The next document is another document that we are going to be updating very soon. It's the Public Participation Plan. We currently have an ongoing public comment period going on for the Public Participation Plan. You'll be hearing more about that at your next meeting, I presume. The Public Participation Plan is the document that guides the public involvement activities of the MPO, mainly relating to MPO staff's activities that we take as part of our, basically it lays out public comment period requirements, various public outreach tools, things of that nature. The Mesilla Valley MPO, and I can't describe this as unique to us but we do handle it slightly differently from a number of other places. We incorporate our Title VI compliance document within our Public Participation Plan. I believe the El Paso MPO does a similar thing of incorporating the two, but I think the other MPOs kind of keep those separate, but that's the way that we've handled it here at Mesilla Valley.

Then the next section is the MPO Governing Documents. This includes the Joint Powers Agreement between the City of Las Cruces, Dona Ana County, Town of Mesilla, and New Mexico Department of Transportation. That is the document that creates the Mesilla Valley MPO. That section also contains the MPO Bylaws which we have had some conversations recently about those. So those are the two. We have in the past had a couple of different MOAs that were included in there but most of those are now expired or lapsed and so those are the two documents that we have within the Governing Documents section at this time.

And then we have the boring part: The federal regs. Those are very important, obviously. However, I want to cast everyone's mind back to the Transportation Planning Manual put out by FHWA that is the first meaty document in the MPO 101 book. That is the document that makes the federal regs easily digestible to the layperson. And when it comes to federal regulations I don't know of anybody who's not a layperson. By all means, go in and read the regs. I have read them myself. They are not scintillating reading though, and the transportation outline book put out by FHWA is a very good guide and explanation of what the federal regs say. So that's kind of the tie there.

And then the last section is kind of just various bits of information that we find relevant to the MPO processes to related transportation planning issues. That is going to vary from MPO 101 book to MPO 101 book depending on what we had to go in that section at the time when the books were distributed. I mean historically, we've had things like access management materials, just things of that nature. Actually, right of the top of my head I don't remember what all we have in that particular section right now, but it's kind of a, "This is where you, if you find something that you find of interest to you relating to the MPO, stick it in that section."
That's what I do, that's what MPO staff does, and that's the purpose of that particular section. And I will stand now for any comments or questions.

Eakman: Yes. Member Hakes.

Hakes: Andrew. Where did you say the explanation for the federal regs was? Is that in the notebook? I didn't follow you there.

Wray: It's the first section immediately after the committee rosters. I can't remember off the top of my head what it's called, but it's the FHWA Transportation Planning Process Briefing Book. That's the explanation of the regs.

Eakman: Yes.

Vasquez: Thank you.

Eakman: Councillor Vasquez.

Vasquez: Thank you Mr. Chair. Mr. Wray, thank you for that overview and thank you for the book. The great work that you do to put that together for us. Is this available online or as a .pdf for us to maybe read digitally?

Wray: We do not have all of the pieces of it online and it certainly has no kind of coherent existence online. We could certainly look at putting a number of the things together in kind of one spot as a section in our website and handle it that way. That's excellent suggestion.

Vasquez: Sure. And mostly I was asking, often if it comes up and I want to reference the .pdf version on a tablet or something during a meeting, it'd be useful to have that and not carry around the big Bible/encyclopedia. Thank you.

Wray: We will look into getting some version of the MPO 101 book up online very soon.

Eakman: That'd be great. Thank you Councillor Vasquez. Any other questions? Hearing none.

6.2 Comments on El Paso MPO Destino 2045

Eakman: Let's move to the next item. Let's hear what we did on the comments for El Paso MPO.

Wray: Thank you Mr. Chair. The El Paso MPO is currently in the process of adopting their MTP, which they have named Destino 2045. We would
have liked to have had the opportunity to present as comment to this
Board for vetting. Unfortunately, the public comment period for Destino
2045 began after the most recent Policy Committee meeting and closed
this prior Monday. We read through the document and felt that it was
important for Mesilla Valley MPO to provide a comment. If you want to
turn to page 31 in your packet, the comment that we provided to El Paso
is there. We did vet this comment through the Technical Advisory
Committee to get some feeling from the jurisdictions as to their responses
to Destino 2045. Specifically, we were looking at Dona Ana County since
Dona Ana County is a member of the El Paso MPO, and also consulted
with Jolene and Harold as representatives of District 1 who are also
represented on the El Paso MPO. I did get a couple of suggestions for the
comment and then the comment that you read in your packet is the one
that I guess had consensus from the TAC for us to pass on, and we did
pass this comment on to El Paso MPO staff this past Monday.

Eakman: Any questions of Mr. Wray on this report? Hearing none.

6.3 NMDOT update

Eakman: We're moving on pretty well. I'll call on Mr. Trent Doolittle at this time for
the NMDOT report.

Doolittle: Thank you Mr. Chair. Just a quick update on two ongoing projects. On
North Main we are about finished. We have about a month of final
additional work, punch-list work, general cleanup, striping, landscaping,
those kinds of things. But we are about finished. We certainly appreciate
the patience of the community. We actually have received several
positive comments from people who gave very negative comments during
construction. So it's really opened it up and it seems to be flowing very
well. I think one of those people that calls anonymously is Jolene just
because she drove through it every day. But if you haven't had an
opportunity to go through it, I encourage you to. It really cleaned up the
flow through that intersection. Aesthetically it's a much more pleasing
intersection, so I'm real happy that it turned out as well as it did.

The contractor for that project, AUI, also got the Valley Drive project
which we're currently under our ramp-up time. That project is looking to
start sometime in mid- to late June. That'll last about a year. For those of
you who aren't aware, that project will go all the way from Avenida de
Mesilla to Picacho, to include that real small stretch of Avenida de Mesilla
to the McDonald's intersection, which is a City part but we're really trying
to tie in the bike path, pedestrian access, those kinds of things to the
Valley Drive corridor. So that project is expected to start sometime in
June.

Those are the only two ongoing projects that we have. The last
one I want to discuss real briefly is one that's upcoming that I'm sure will
affect everybody. We're reconstructing the University/I-25 interchange to
include some tie-ins of Triviz under University directly into the Pan Am
parking lot, those kinds of things. That project is scheduled to let in
October of this year so we can expect to see construction probably in late
winter/early spring of 2019, so about this time next year we'll be under
construction. Right now we have $40 million set aside for that project. So
it's a lot of money considering that our normal annual STIP is $30 million,
but we're dual-year funding it so that we can split it up and it doesn't
impact us too terribly. But we have some severe safety issues with the
students getting off of I-25 at University southbound that we're going to
address.

Those are the three major projects that we have in the area and I'll
stand for any questions or comments anybody may have.

Eakman: Any questions of Mr. Doolittle on this report? Down this way, Mayor Pro-
Tem Sorg.

Sorg: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Thank you Mr. Doolittle. I recall not too long
ago at our MPO meeting, there was a project on North Main at Elks and I-
25, just a resurface. How's that project coming along?

Doolittle: Yes Mr. Chair, Councillor Sorg. We are currently working on the design
on that project. That's one that we're ahead of schedule so we're going to
put it on the shelf. We originally had it scheduled in 2019, I believe, and
we bumped it out to 2021? Jolene's shaking her head. I'll let her come up
and explain what we're doing on that one.

Sorg: No, I'm not talking about the intersection. I'm just talking about the
surface.

Doolittle: Correct.

Sorg: From Elks/Triviz to Del Rey exit, maybe, I don't know.

Herrera: Right. Good afternoon. Jolene Herrera, NMDOT. Yes. It's the pavement
preservation project from Elks to Del Rey with a little bit of bridge work and
then the ramps that go to I-25.

Sorg: And when is it scheduled?

Herrera: So it's scheduled right now for August of 2019, but it is going to be
designed early. We are going to send it to Santa Fe and hopefully get
funding in this August for it. So that's what the plan is, but if we don't get
that funding then it'll be next year.

Sorg: A year from then.
Herrera: Yes.

Sorg: Yes.

Herrera: I know that ...

Sorg: So if you do get the funding, give me a ballpark date of construction start.

Herrera: So we would know in August if we got it funded or not, so probably next spring is what we'd be looking at.

Sorg: Okay. April-ish, this time next year?

Herrera: Yes. About this time next year.

Sorg: Okay. Thank you. Thank you Mr. Chairman and Mr. Trent.

Doolittle: Thank you Jolene.

Eakman: Thank you. Any other questions?

Vasquez: Mr. Chair.

Eakman: Yes Councillor Vasquez.

Vasquez: Thank you Chair. Mr. Doolittle, at our prior City Council meeting as we were discussing some of gateway entry signs for the City of Las Cruces being placed on NMDOT property, we had a discussion about the process of being able to conduct that in a timely manner with the permission of NMDOT if that was the location that we chose to essentially put up signage, and we also talked about the lack of I guess information regarding the guidelines that NMDOT is developing that would allow us to move forward with that process. So this is maybe part of a two-part question, because the other issue that came up is also within some of the artwork that was placed on some prior NMDOT bridges in the City of Las Cruces. There seemed to be some concern about using the City's logo or the three crosses iconography that was perceived to be I guess religious and discouraged by NMDOT. Could you provide some clarification on those two things?

Doolittle: Mr. Chair, Councillor. I'll certainly try. This is a project development issue that I may need to get some clarification later, but I'll do my best to explain my understanding of the situation. So the signage is directly related to the district. Any signage that is placed on interstate or U.S. routes requires approval from Federal Highway. Federal Highway and the DOT are
currently undergoing their regulations tied to incorporation of those things into DOT right-of-way, only because there's very inconsistent application between the six districts statewide. Right now, or in the past that approval fell directly on the district and the traffic engineer for that specific district. The General Office in Federal Highway recognizing the inconsistent implementation has begun a review process that would incorporate a statewide committee so it would no longer be allowed to fall on the DOT. That policy is currently under review internally to the Department. It's completely out of the control of the district and I don't have a timeline for it, but the direction we have at this point is we are not to approve any additional signing at all within DOT right-of-way until that policy is approved. I will tell you that I saw the draft policy probably six months ago, eight months ago, and I have not heard anything since then. What I'll do is I have a biweekly district engineers conference call with executive staff. I'll put that on the next agenda item to see if I can get you an update on where we sit with that. But my traffic engineer has been in contact with City staff specifically on the two signs, one on I-25 at the US-70 area and one on I-10/I-25, to try to give them some guidance on what we're doing. But at this point I don't have any real solid direction for you. My traffic engineer did recommend to City staff that if they can find a piece of property adjacent to where the property owner would let them, very similar to what they did on I-25 out by the US-70 interchange, that's actually sitting on private property, and it may be City property, but that would certainly expedite as opposed to waiting on us or Federal Highway.

Vasquez: Sure. And thank you Mr. Doolittle and I appreciate you bringing it up on your next call. I think it is an issue of great importance to the City and probably the County as well, because we see it as an economic development opportunity that really brands our community. And while it would be fine and I think we are exploring, our staff is exploring the option to look at private parcels where a sign might be appropriate, from looking at the maps it looks like some of the highly-desirable locations as entry points to the City are located on NMDOT property and I think we would want to see that as an option, at least. So thank you for bringing that up and I think the consensus of the Council was that we would like at least a timeline of when those guidelines or regulations might be improved. So that'd be great.

And then the reason I asked the second question Mr. Doolittle about the iconography is because I'm not sure what the design process is for the University bridge project but I know that's going to incorporate some type of kind of mural or concrete work art similar to what's been done in the other overpasses in the City. And obviously we would always like the opportunity to brand the City with the three crosses that signifies our community, and so just wanted to see if there was anything that really prohibited us in regulations through NMDOT from doing that, because
there was also some conversation about NMDOT discouraging those
types of designs.

Doolittle: So on that one Councillor, the Department is in the process of selecting
the artist for that interchange. I will tell you that Federal Highway, at least
the New Mexico division, has been hesitant about approving any kind of
logo at all. NMSU originally approached us as well, specifically for the
bridge that crosses, that Triviz will cross under University. They
specifically were asking about that one. I think Federal Highway and even
internally are more open to discussions with that one specifically as
opposed to the one over I-25, only because there is concern about
specific logos on routes that are on federal property. The one that's come
up before, and I've discussed this with this Board prior to, is if you travel to
Albuquerque, the Los Lunas interchange, they have Los Lunas written all
over it. To this day I'm not so sure how that happened because we've
been told that won't happen in this area. The UTEP pickaxe as you travel
on I-10 through El Paso, you know that's in interstate right-of-way.
Oklahoma, I guess Oklahoma State has a university that has their logo.
Again, I haven't received any real clear direction on how they handle those
types of things but all artwork specifically on an interstate system goes
through Federal Highway for final approval before we're able to do it. As
we go through this process specifically on I-25 and University I'll share this
with the design team of the City's request. But again, NMSU has made
the same request and our early discussions with Federal Highway, it
doesn't appear that we'll do any of that because all those bridges on that
project fall within DOT right-of-way. Originally there was some right-of-
way maps that showed the Triviz side falling within either University right-
of-way or the City. That's been clarified it is not. It is DOT property and
we will be the owners.

Vasquez: Mr. Doolittle. The on-ramp from I guess it would be Bataan Memorial on
Highway 70 going up to when it turns into North Main Street and you have
the concrete block with the City of Las Cruces logo. Is that NMDOT
property?

Doolittle: It is. And Councillor, under the previous direction that we had even before
this rewrite of this policy, those types of things were allowed and we were
actually working with the City to implement some sort of sign where the
roadrunner is on I-10, that was a previous direction. Under our current
direction I would tell you that that monument that sits at US-70 would not
be allowed.

Vasquez: Thank you Mr. Doolittle, and for me personally it seems like we're kind of
drawing the short end of the stick there because it's an opportunity for us
to really brand ourselves using existing infrastructure projects that are
already funded, that are being planned as we speak, and I know UTEP's
giant pickaxes are just, they make an impression as you come in, and it shows also the pride in the university. So if there's any way that we can get some more information about how to influence that process, it would be appreciated. Thank you. Thank you Mr. Chair.

Doolittle: Councillor, Mr. Chair. If I may just expand just real briefly, so City staff is involved in the design of University and I-25. I will tell you, as an NMSU alumni, I'm pushing to try to get that thing painted ...

Vasquez: Crimson.

Doolittle: Crimson or whatever we need to do, but I will certainly share that. I encourage you to have discussions with your City staff. Again, I think the problem is this drawing-up of this new policy. The timing is not good for University because of our strict timelines with the design. We actually have a meeting on Friday to discuss some other things with that project, but again I'll bring it up with design staff at that point.

Eakman: Are there any other questions?

Sorg: Yes Mr. Chairman.

Eakman: If I might though, Mr. Sorg, one comment.

Sorg: Sure.

Eakman: It sounds like we're limited to branding our own cattle. Mr. Sorg.

Sorg: Excellent point Mr. Chairman. I would like to compliment Councillor Vasquez for remembering to bring up the signage that we discussed in the Council meeting. It slipped my mind, and I add my avocation for this same thing that Councillor Vasquez did. But I would like to add one more thing, and that is I would like to see a signage that includes all of our major roads, not only I-10, I-25, but also Highway 70 near the City limits, and so out on Highway 70 there's an entrance to the City that is used by a lot of traffic, and so signage there too. We don't know exactly what it's going to look like. It might be very simple, not a monument, just to say, "You are entering Las Cruces," or something similar to that, and, "with mountains of opportunity." So I just wanted to add that to it. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Eakman: Thank you Mayor Pro-Tem Sorg. We are into marketing today. Good for us. Is there anything else, Mr. Wray? Mr. Doolittle?

Wray: Not for that item, at least as far as I'm aware of. Mr. Doolittle has completed.
6.4 Committee Attendance

Eakman: Then if I might, I will cover an item that we can find on page 33 of our handout. Last year we had problems with attendance of our members, and it was quite a challenge, and so we discussed it at a previous meeting and now it looks like we're not going to have attendance problems. I only want to emphasize the mission of this group. I congratulate us all for being here today and cooperating on the important work to be done of this policy-making group. I wanted to remind everybody that if they cannot make a meeting, we do need each entity represented at every meeting. Proxies are available and are very much welcome here. It would have to be an official of your district or your city, and so it could be a County Manager or Assistant County Manager in your place, or someone that represents the Town of Mesilla. For the City it would be our City Manager or one of our two Assistant City Managers. And so I'd very much like to see that. I would like to make a commitment to you of, I would like to meet with Mr. Wray and Mr. Murphy prior to every meeting to go over the agenda and to see that we can live within a one-hour time frame with our meetings. I want these to be very productive and the only thing that would sway that would be public comment, which I don't want to control. I very much would like to see that free-flow and people have what's on their mind, but as far as this business of the committee, I would like this to be able to live within a one-hour, highly productive time frame so that you can with confidence keep your schedule what it needs to be. Does that sound like something we can work with?

Arzabal: Absolutely.

Eakman: Excellent. Excellent. Let's do that.

7. COMMITTEE AND STAFF COMMENTS

Eakman: And then we'll move on to Committee and staff comments. I'll start with our Committee. Does anyone on the Committee have a comment about anything?

Baraza: Mr. Chair.

Eakman: Yes Mayor.

Baraza: Mr. Chair, thank you. Just a couple things I want to comment on, one being that I'm sorry I did miss the last meeting. I saw that Former Mayor Bill was on the agenda and a very interesting meeting, and I'm sorry I missed that. I would've liked to really participate and what he had to say regarding the New Mexico Border Authority, and maybe in the future we
can bring him back and maybe he can give us an update as to what's going on out there on the border.

Second is the Destino 2045, regarding the potential passenger rail connection between El Paso and Las Cruces, I don't know what, and I think Mr. Doolittle participates in the El Paso MPO. If any discussion has been made, are there any future plans for this type of rail connection between Las Cruces and El Paso? Because it is something I think that we would be very interested in, and also sitting on the RTD Board and we did the feasibility study, I'd like more information and maybe we can get it on the agenda for future reference. I don't know what the rest of the Board, on the MPO Board feels about it but something I am very interested in also.

And just lastly is that I'd like to welcome Trustee Johnson-Burick from the Town of Mesilla to the MPO. I think some of our trustees wonder why I ask them to be on different boards, but I think it's a wealth of information that they can all gain as to what is going on throughout our community and how we can collaborate our services all together, and how we can work together with the City of Las Cruces and Dona Ana County for the future of our communities. So thank you. And I know Trustee Arzabal has been on our committee before. He is a teacher so sometimes it is difficult for him to get away, but I sincerely appreciate him being here today.

Arzabal: No problem, Mayor.

Eakman: And he has advised me that he has one hour for these meetings when he can get away, so we'll make that very productive for him.

Barraza: Very good. Thank you.

Eakman: I appreciate your comments. If I might, we might want to invite the City Manager of Las Cruces to this meeting. He has a vast experience in rail and transport and has a vision in mind so that this would not cost us directly that much money to initiate. He thinks there's sizeable funding available from outside our community, brand-new money for our communities. And so I think if we could work on that, that would be a very interesting presentation for both this group and the SCRTD. Are there any other Committee comments? Yes Mayor Pro-Tem.

Sorg: Thank you Mr. Chair. It's as a follow-up to Mayor Barraza's comment. I'd like to have the Committee to be understood that in the past we've had a study for rail from El Paso to Las Cruces as well as a study by Burlington Northern on what it would take to add rail to the two cities. So we don't want to redo things that have been done in the past. They no doubt need to be updated somewhat, but these works have been done in the past and
I want to make sure we are aware of that and we use them to whatever extent we can. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Eakman: Thank you. I think we would all agree with that. I think Mayor Baranza that study with SCRTD was probably less than 18 months ago.

Baranza: I think maybe, yes, two years. I know we had received the funding through our legislators for that study. So it could've been two, two and a half years ago. Councillor Sorg, do you recall?

Sorg: I think it's even further back than that.

Baranza: Further back, yes.

Sorg: Maybe even four years.

Baranza: Wow.

Eakman: No, I wasn't on the Council then.

Sorg: I know.

Eakman: It was done within my time frame.

Sorg: Oh, well this is another one then.

Eakman: Yes. You're talking about the Burlington. I'm talking about the SCRTD.

Sorg: I'm talking about a third one, third one that was financed by the State Legislature, at the time Representative Jeff Steinborn had a capital outlay of around $20,000, $30,000, $40,000 to do a study on rail.

Baranza: Mr. Chair. I think that wasn't the RTD. The SCRTD did that, initiated that study, so yes.

Eakman: That's correct.

Baranza: And Councillor Sorg is probably correct, three or four years. Time flies when we're having fun.

Eakman: Thank you. Yes.

J-Burick: I just wanted to thank everyone for their warm welcome. I know Linda was on this Committee for several years and I'm very honored to have been chosen and selected to take her place, and I look forward to working with everyone. So thank you.
Eakman: Thank you. We welcome you and Commissioner Hakes to our group and look forward to your productive input. Are there staff comments?

Wray: I do not believe so Mr. Chair.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT

Eakman: And we once again have time for the public. How much time should I give them?

Wray: However long you want, Mr. Chair.

9. ADJOURNMENT (1:41 PM)

Eakman: If there's no other business, we're adjourned. Thank you.

Chairperson