

RTD Proposal from Faith Winter and Matt Gray, Transportation Chairs

Governance Summary:

Step One: Establish a blue ribbon panel of local and national transit agency and transportation experts and local and state officials to perform an in-depth diagnostic review of RTD's core functions. The panel would meet as soon as practicable. To develop recommendations to assist with the better functioning of RTD. The report crafted by the panel would be submitted to interested parties including the Office of the Governor, CDOT, local governments, RTD and the Colorado General Assembly.

Specifics: Based on the blue ribbon panel established by Governor Charlie Baker in Massachusetts in 2015, the panel would be constituted by the Governor, and composed of 5 to 7 individuals including individuals at the top of their fields in the following:

- Academics with an expertise in regional transportation authorities and mass transit;
- Urban planning and development experts;
- Transportation policy experts;
- Elected officials from state and local governments;
- Experts in fiscal policy
- ADA compliance and equity

The panel would begin meeting as soon as it is constituted, and meet consistently over the course of a short duration to analyze the agency's performance in an initial "sprint" of work. In MA, the panel met 18 times over six weeks. The panel's scope of work:

- A literature review of recent studies of the transit agency and peer transit agencies;
- A performance review, benchmarked against similarly sized agencies;
- A review of RTD's core functions and deficiencies;
- A review of RTD's assets management, expansion and maintenance; its finances; its system of governance; and its capital planning processes;
- Data derived from RTD and third parties, including operational costs, program spends, revenue sources, performance data, personnel needs;
- ADA compliance and ability to meet the needs of transit dependent populations
- Interviews and meetings with current and former staff, board members, and stakeholders to better hone areas of focus for the control board;
- Site visits to RTD facilities;
- Ad hoc analyses as needed.

The panel would develop a list of recommendations following their work, which could inform the ongoing work of an accountability board. RTD will not hire a permanent GM until after the commission completes its work.

Step Two: This is based on the school accountability law (CRS § 24-11-301 et seq.). Once the blue ribbon commission completes its work an accountability committee will be formed. The accountability committee will work with RTD for a two year time period. The accountability committee will make recommendations every six months, for four times total. The accountability commission along with RTD will hold a public hearing on the recommendations. RTD must respond in writing to any recommendation they are not adopting and giving the reason why they are not adopting the recommendation.

Specifics: The accountability committee will begin work after the Blue Ribbon commission and no later than July 1, 2020.

Members of an Accountability Committee:

- Local Government Representative
- Disability Expert
- Human Resource Expert
- Transit Expert
- Equity Expert
- Financial Expert
- Urban Planning/Environmental Expert

The committee will be staffed by CDOT, will have a budget for research and some consultants. The accountability committee will receive a stipend that is equivalent to RTD board members.

The charge:

The accountability committee will be charged with researching all aspects of RTD from a management, board and public perspective. The accountability committee will have access to all of RTD's finances and procedures. The accountability committee and RTD board will be allowed to hold executive sessions (in accordance with current RTD rules).

The committee must examine the following but is not limited too:

- ADA accessibility and enforcement with special attention to paratransit
- Equity in service, geographically, fare structure, transit dependent populations
- Staff management, retention, hiring.
- Service delivery.
- Partnerships with local governments.
- Financial health
- Expansion/Reduction plans and criteria
- Recommend trainings and/or strategic planning
- Will review RTD's audit and determine if a state audit is necessary
- Pension review