



Richard J. Berry, Mayor

GABAC



GREATER ALBUQUERQUE BICYCLING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

DEPARTMENT OF MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT, PO BOX 1293

ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87103 (505) 768-2680

MEETING MINUTES

March 11, 2013

- **Welcome and Introductions** (4:30 pm)

Members Present

Steve Mathias, Chair	Bruce Farmer
Scott Hale, Vice Chair	Ronald Nelson
Don Simonson	Moises Gonzales
Ed Hillsman	

Staff Present

Michael Riordan, COA DMD	Julie Luna, MRCOG
Melissa Lozoya, COA DMD	Julian Paul Butt, COA P&R

Members Absent

Diane Albert	James Plagens
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Guests

John Barncastle	John Thomas
Jennifer Buntz	

- **Mr. Mathias called the meeting to order**
- **Mr. Mathias established the presences of a Quorum**
- **Approval of the March 11, 2013 Agenda**
Meeting Agenda was approved

- **Approval of the Minutes, February 11, 2013 Meeting**

Mr. Mathias did not feel that the meeting minutes could be approved based on the fact that the minutes had been sent out via email at noon the day of the meeting. Mathias did not feel there was adequate time to review the minutes. In addition, Mr. Mathias felt that the information presented in the minutes did not accurately reflect what happened in the meeting. Mathias recommended that revisions and /or comments be made by the members and the revised minutes be presented at the following meeting.

It was recommended that revisions and comments to the minutes be sent to Ms. Lozoya and Mr. Arrowsmith for incorporation into the minutes and be presented at the April meeting.

- **Approval of the Minutes, January 7, 2013 Meeting**

Revised minutes for the January 7, 2013 Meeting were provided to the members for their review and approval. Since none of the members had reviewed the revised minutes Mr. Mathias deferred the approval of the meetings.

- **Visitor Presentations - Mr. Michael Riordan**

Mr. Mathias began with a brief review of the letter that was sent from Mr. Riordan to Mr. Mathias addressing the committee's conduct at the February 11, 2013 Meeting.

Mr. Riordan began by stating that DMD Staff feels there tends to be a feeling of hostility when it comes to sharing and receiving information from the committee. Mr. Riordan requested that there be open lines of communication and a means of sharing information be established that is productive for the group, as well as, City Staff. Mr. Riordan went on to state that anytime information is presented to the committee it is a proposal that staff is looking for feedback on.

Mr. Mathias stated that there has been several times in which City Staff come with information on projects and share the information as if the decisions have already been made. There appears to be no opportunity for members to provide feedback and have it taken into consideration. Mr. Mathias did agree that there may be a problem with the tone that the committee takes with Staff but there is a lot of frustration on the committee's side. The committee feels that feedback is provided and it goes into a black hole.

Mr. Riordan went on to describe how projects and changes/additions to projects may come about through the life of a project. Mr. Riordan went on to say that open lines of communication need to be established so that the City and members of GABAC do not have to speak through the media, Councilor, and/or the Mayor.

Mr. Mathias referenced the letter and all those who were copied on it. He felt that the letter was a form of bullying.

Mr. Riordan went on to say that in the past GABAC has gone to Council or the Mayor so he felt that putting DMD's perspective in writing first was necessary in this occasion.

Several projects were discussed to identify the issues associated with the communication that occurs between GABAC and City staff. (i.e. Lomas/Vassar, Fair Heights Neighborhood Bike Blvd, Spain and Tramway)

Mr. Mathias stated that the City has a document that guides the development of bicycle facilities that should be followed. Councilor driven projects that do not follow the plan is not an effective/productive way of implementing projects/improvements.

Mr. Nelson spoke briefly on the Bosque Trail and his concerns regarding the current issues that have developed on the Bosque Trail. He went on to describe his concerns with the cracks that have developed but that the project overall was great. Mr. Simonson stated that any repairs on the trail should be part of the warranty and as a tax payer he would like to see that the contractor is help responsible.

Mr. Riordan stated that the City is looking into the issue and is doing their due diligence to make sure that it is handled in the best manner.

Mr. Hale stated that as a committee member they are getting questions on over 400 miles of bike facilities. They get feedback from the public and they are not able to do anything about it. Committee tends to get frustrated when issues are identified but there is no further acknowledgement which tends to lead to disconnect and frustration. Mr. Hale would like to see a punchlist of items that are on-going that need to be addressed. He went on to state that as a member he has never had any orientation which is a big problem because expectations are not shared along with the expectations. Mr. Hale went on to say there are so many processes involved and they do not know how things work. Mr. Hale referenced the Unser Trail and the disconnect that occurred regarding the trail location. Funding for projects seems to be a disconnect, as well as, sharing information between GARTC, MRCOG, Parks, etc.

Mr. Gonzales stated that when things come to the committee the information is presented as if they are already being done. He went on to say that it seems like the committee is there only for commentary.

Mr. Riordan stated that all the volunteers on the committee are appreciated and he would like to know when City Staff should come to them to present information. Mr. Riordan went on to say that when the City is in the process of developing the Bond and the TIP staff can present information on prioritization for feedback from the Committee. If the committee has projects that they would like included in the list for prioritization those projects should be provided to staff for inclusion. The nuances of the funding processes can be shared with the Committee as the GO Bond and TIP are being developed.

Mr. Hale stated that items out in the field need to be addressed and communication needs to occur (i.e. bollard collars). Mr. Hale went on to state that the committee does not have a voice in the budgeting and prioritization of projects. Mr. Hale agreed that at times the committee can get out of hand and the meetings are out of order, etc. Mr. Hale went on to state that he does not want to see people get hurt and will commit to working on items that need to be addressed.

Mr. Nelson stated that there are coordination issues between projects. He went on to identify the 50 mile loop, the Fair Heights NA Bike Blvd, and the Bikeways and Trails Master Plan.

Mr. Riordan went on to state that coordination between several projects/plans are the types of things that we would like the committee to bring up. Mr. Riordan went to state that if a Councilor has money that they would like to spend on their constituents then they have the right to do so.

DMD Staff will be looking to the GABAC Members for feedback on potential issues and areas that need to be focused on when moving forward in developing the proposed plans. Project information will be presented by Staff to the committee for the purposed of feedback and input.

Mr. Nelson stated that there are safety standards that need to be implemented. Crossing of major intersections tend to be an issue. Projects itself are great, but the safety standards need to be considered and implemented in the hazard areas. Mr. Simonson stated that if the safety standards are not incorporated then it is a waste of taxpayer money.

Mr. Mathias stated the he feels that the AASHTO standards are not being applied. He went on to state that he feels that the bicyclists are being used as street furniture.

Mr. Simonson made a statement regarding process. He went on to say that there needs to be a process in which things are reviewed in an orderly manner. Mr. Simonson asked if there is a checklist or chart that can be referenced to show what the timeline is for a project. Mr. Simonson gave the example of the Bikeways and Trails Master Plan as well as the 50 Mile Loop and how they are not aware of the schedule for these projects.

Ms. Buntz stated that it seems that City staff makes decisions on what they want to do and then they go to GABAC and present the information as just that. Ms. Buntz went on to say that the City staff who are working on the projects are not cyclists and it is problematic that they are trying to pick and choose what should be done. She went on to state that even with the best of intentions this is a problem because it is difficult for a person with an automobile background to do the right thing or know what the needs are. Cities that have successful bike programs have people on staff that are trained and have the credentials to understand the needs of the cyclists. Ms. Buntz went on to say that doing nothing at all is better than doing it half right. She went on to say that things do get emotional in the meetings for those reasons. She went on to say that it is not an excuse for bad behavior but City staff should be able to consult with GABAC in the appropriate timeframe.

Mr. Mathias stated that their biggest frustration comes from their view of their role as commenting and not an advisory committee. Mr. Mathias went on to state that he does not want to sue the City, but sometimes it takes statements like that to get someone's attention. Mr. Mathias questioned how projects get on the list of projects in the TIP.

Mr. Riordan stated that guidelines for the design of bicycle facilities have evolved over the last 10 years. Some of the facilities out there were designed early on and may not comply with the design standards that we have today. Mr. Riordan went on to describe the various types of funding that is available to fund bike facility projects. He requested that the committee come up with a list of projects that are a high priority for the group that we can use when programming funding through the MRCOG or the GO Bond.

Mr. Mathias stated that the details in a project matter. He went on to state that there are times when information is presented that is not understood by the members and the detail is missing. Mr. Hale agreed with Mr. Mathias that sometimes the information is not understood.

Mr. Riordan stated that information for projects will be presented to the committee by City Staff at the 30%, 60%, 90%, and final design. With those presentations the detail will be presented to the committee. Mr. Riordan went on to state that City staff will be looking for constructive feedback.

The committee was informed that the feedback that is provided may or may not be incorporated, but City staff will use the information and do the best they can to include it in the project.

Mr. Hillsman made a comment that the Fair Heights Bike Blvd is generally supported but there are questions regarding the details of the crossings. The Bike Blvd is typically for people who are not comfortable riding and so the crossings need to be looked at closely.

Mr. Simonson stated that City staff and Michael's attendance at the meeting is appreciated. Mr. Simonson went on to state that frustration has built up and staff tends to get the flack. Staff coming to the meetings with conclusions on projects is not welcomed by the group.

Mr. Riordan closed by requesting that GABAC members develop a list of Capital Improvement priorities and maintenance needs that the City can use in moving forward on projects and in programming funding. Mr. Riordan went on to say that bikeways projects will be presented to GABAC at the 30%, 60%, 90%, and final submittal milestones for feedback.

- **Visitor Presentation – Ms. Jennifer Buntz**

Due to time constraints and other visitor presentations and agenda items Mr. Mathias elected to skip the presentation by Ms. Buntz on the Bike Summit Report.

- **Visitor Presentations – Sergeant Rivera**

Sergeant Rivera presented the members with information on fatal crashes involving bicyclists. He provided the police reports on two accidents that APD responded to. He went on to state that APD only responds to accidents that are near fatal or fatal. Questions from the members were fielded by Sergeant Rivera as to the cause of the crashes and who was at fault. Discussion between the members and Sergeant Rivera on causes and citations occurred. A request from Mr. Nelson to Sergeant Rivera was to remind parents and kids that it is the law to wear helmets when they ride their bikes. Sergeant Rivera stated that there is an effort within APD to remind people when they are seen riding without a helmet that it is the law to wear a helmet when riding a bike. A question from one of the GABAC members was asked regarding people who ride on the sidewalk and whether or not APD tries to address the issue. Sergeant Rivera stated that with the limited police force and the numerous calls that are received for crashes they do not have the time to address the concern.

- **Announcements**

Mr. Mathias stated that there are upcoming meetings on the Paseo Study to discuss alignments on March 27th from 11:30 to 1:00 at the Dekker Parish Sabatini office and at 4:30 at the Northwest Albuquerque Police Substation. Ms. Luna provided additional information to clarify that the meetings are for the MRCOG Paseo Study that is being conducted for BRT.

Mr. Mathias stated that the TIP is out for public comment by the MRCOG. Mr. Mathias suggested that individuals provide comments by April 4th.

Mr. Hale stated that Garmin has a heat map that they have available on the Garmin website. Mr. Hale went on to say that it is pretty interesting and if people have an opportunity they should get on and take a look.

Mr. Hale went on to say that he has concerns regarding the latest literature that was recently published from the Bicycle Education Program stating that bicyclists should pass on the left side of traffic and not on the right side of traffic. Mr. Butt stated that in the United States it is tradition that passing vehicles pass on the left. He went on to say that according to the League of American Bicyclists recommends passing on the left. Mr. Hale and other members stated that more thought needs to be put into what we are telling the public about passing. Mr. Hale feels that the flyer does not present the information as a recommendation but as an absolute standard of practice, which is of concern.

- **Public Comment**

Mr. John Thomas gave up his time.

Mr. Barncastle stated that there is gravel that needs to be removed at the intersection of the North Pino Trail at the Journal Center Trail. Mr. Barncastle has been working with Diane Dolan and GABAC Attorney to get gravel removed. Mr. Barncastle went on to say that there is a broken fence on the South Pino Trail just west of San Pedro that needs to be addressed. Mr. Barncastle has had no luck in getting the issue addressed.

Ms. Buntz passed out literature and promoted the Gila Monster Challenge GranFondo Ride taking place in Silver City on October 5th. Ms. Buntz also provided information on the GranFondo Ride taking place in Taos on Saturday, July 6th.

- **Staff Reports**

Ms. Lozoya stated that projects will be brought to the Committee for review and feedback at the 30%, 60%, 90% and Final. Ms. Lozoya went on to say that in an effort to bridge the gap in communication questions from the members on information that is provided should be presented in a timely manner so that information/answers can be provided at the next meeting.

Ms. Lozoya stated that missing signs within the system are going to be looked at and considered for replacement.

Ms. Lozoya made a request to the committee and the chair about getting a member of the Committee to take and record the meeting minutes. Ms. Lozoya went on to say that in the past the meeting minutes have been one of the sources of frustration of the committee. Ms. Lozoya requested that in an effort to eliminate that issue perhaps the duty could be taken on by one of the members. Mr. Mathias stated that he would consider it. Ms. Lozoya stated that the recorder for the meeting could be used by the group.

Ms. Lozoya stated that she is currently working on the Engineering website in an effort to find a home for the GABAC website and a location for postings of meeting minutes and agendas. Ms. Lozoya went on to say that there is a lot of work that needs to be done with limited staff to get the website up and running.

Mr. Hale discussed the upcoming webinar being hosted by MRCOG “The Dynamics of Effective Advisory Groups” on Wednesday, March 20th from 1 to 2 pm. Mr. Hale encouraged that City staff attend.

Ms. Lozoya requested a monthly meeting with the Chair prior to that months meeting to review the proposed agenda. Ms. Lozoya went on to say that the goal of the meeting would be to discuss the agenda to ensure that all items are covered and that adequate information will be presented to the committee.

Mr. Simonson asked the question as to whether or not the Director of Parks and Recreation could attend the next meeting to address questions from the Committee. Mr. Mathias stated that a letter would be formulated to the Director to request attendance or feedback at the next meeting.

- **Adjourn**