



**Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of the  
El Paso Area Transportation Services, Local Government Corporation doing business as the El  
Paso Transportation Authority**

**Wednesday, April 29, 2026 – 01:30 P.M. Mountain Standard Time  
The Endeavors Health & Wellness Center  
12135 Pebble Hills Boulevard, Room 272, El Paso, Texas 79936**

**MINUTES PREPARED BY ANA Q. SANCHEZ, ADMINISTRATIVE SPECIALIST SENIOR**

**1. Open Meeting**

The El Paso Area Transportation Services Local Government Corporation meeting was called to order at 1:39 p.m. Members in attendance were:

**VOTING MEMBERS**

Chair- Commissioner Jackie Butler	El Paso County	Present
Arturo Rubio (Vice Chair)	Horizon City	Present
Joel Bishop	El Paso County	Present
David Stout - Virtual	El Paso County	Present
Andrea Carrillo	Village of Vinton	Present
Eddie Conde	City of San Elizario	Absent
Arnulfo “Arnie” Castaneda	Town of Anthony	Present
Daniel Vallejo – Virtual	Town of Clint	Present

**EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS**

Xavier Banales	WTEP	Present
Alejandra Valadez - Virtual	City of Socorro	Present
Harrison Plourde - Virtual	El Paso MPO	Present
Karl Rimkus	Sun Metro	Present

**Note: Some meeting agenda items were taken out of order at the discretion of the Chair. The minutes have been prepared in the order published on the agenda.**

- 1. OPEN MEETING**
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

### 3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Annalisa Tucker, ETA rider and Access Advisory Committee, presented a public comment regarding challenges accessing transportation services. She expressed difficulty securing rides on short notice when receiving same-day or next-day medical appointment reminders and noted barriers related to scheduling requirements and service limitations between providers. She also raised concerns regarding accessibility while using a wheelchair and the impact of advance reservation requirements on her ability to access both medical and non-medical destinations.

### 4. PRESENTATION

4.a. Present a certificate to Transdev's employee of the month for March 2026.  
*(Presented by Sylvia Balcazar, Transdev General Manager)*

**NO ACTION** – Transdev Operations Manager, Jennifer Garcia, presented the Employee of the Month recognition for March 2026 to Ruben Castaneda. Mr. Castaneda was recognized for his dedication and commitment to his duties and service.

4.b. Receive a presentation from El Paso Center for Children regarding the Safe Place program.  
*(Presented by Beatriz A. Marin-Olivarez, MA, LCCA, El Paso Center for Children)*

**NO ACTION** – El Paso Center for Children is a national youth outreach and prevention program for young people under the age of 18 in need of immediate help and safety. Safe Place designates businesses and organizations as Safe Place locations, making help readily available to youth in communities across the country. ETA has been designated as one of these locations. SafePlace logos have been placed on all ETA fleet vehicles.

### 5. CONSENT AGENDA

5.a. Approve the March 25, 2026, ETA regular meeting minutes.  
*(Presented by Ana Q. Sanchez, Administrative Specialist, Senior)*

5.b. Approve the Rio Grande Council of Governments to process the expenses incurred in March 2026 for administrative services and travel reimbursements.  
*(Presented by Annette Gutierrez, Rio Grande Council of Governments Executive Director)*

5.c. Authorize the Executive Director to execute an Amendment with Rio Grande Council of Governments for establishment of financial systems for El Paso Transportation Authority in consultation with legal counsel, provided that any material changes shall be brought back to the Board for approval.  
*(Presented by John Andoh, Executive Director)*

5.d. Authorize the Executive Director to execute the Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing Program Participation Agreement in consultation with legal counsel, provided that any material changes shall be brought back to the Board for approval.  
*(Presented by John Andoh, Executive Director)*

5.e. Authorize the Executive Director to execute the 2nd Amendment with First Transit, Inc for addition of automated vehicle annunciators and modifications to insurance in consultation with legal counsel, and to recommend approval to El Paso County Commissioners' Court; provided that any material changes

shall be brought back to the Board for approval.

*(Presented by John Andoh, Executive Director)*

***Brought back to the Board of Directors from the January 2026 meeting.***

5.f. Adopt Passenger Standing Policy for the El Paso Transportation Authority.

*(Presented by John Andoh, Executive Director)*

5.g. Authorize the addition of a Councilmember from the Town of Anthony as an alternate to the El Paso Transportation Authority Board of Directors due to staffing limitations.

*(Presented by John Andoh, Executive Director)*

5.h Authorize the Executive Director to execute an addendum with Spectrum Technologies as part of County Contract No. 2026-0247 for purchase of a copier/printer in the amount of \$14,700.00, payable in monthly installments of \$245.00 in consultation with legal counsel, provided that any material changes shall be brought back to the Board for approval.

*(Presented by John Andoh, Executive Director)*

MOTION: to approve Consent Agenda items 5a through 5h.

Chair Butler requested clarification regarding Item 5.e. Mr. Andoh explained that the proposed changes include increasing insurance coverage requirements from \$1 million to \$5 million in order to ensure compliance and eligibility to purchase insurance through the risk pool. He further explained that, rather than paying technology costs throughout the duration of the contract, ETA would pay a one-time capital cost upfront, followed by ongoing operating costs over the five-year contract term.

Motion: Commissioner Jackie Butler      Seconded; Arturo Rubio

Motion Carried Unanimously

## **6. REGULAR AGENDA**

6.a. Discuss the draft Fiscal Year 2027 Financial Plan, contribution amounts, review of service standards and service modification concepts and provide direction to staff.

*(Presented by Michael Walk, Texas A&M Transportation Institute)*

**NO ACTION** - Michael Walk with the Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI) presented an update on the Draft Fiscal Year 2027 Financial and Service Plan. He noted that FTA FFY 2026 apportionments were slightly higher than forecasted. Mr. Walk also provided updates on projected sales tax rates, estimated costs for general public demand response transit, proposed service planning concepts, and the timeline for completion of the FY2027 plan. TTI will continue refining financial data, with current emphasis on service planning to identify opportunities to reduce FY2027 costs. The Board provided input and direction to staff. Mr. Walk also touched on the intent to apply for FTA funds through sections such as 5310 from MPO.

6.b. Review proposals for strategic planning services and authorize the Executive Director to execute an Agreement for strategic planning services for EPATS, subject to approval as to form by legal counsel, and to take any action necessary to effectuate the Board's direction.

*(Presented by John Andoh, Executive Director)*

John Andoh, Executive Director, presented three proposals for strategic planning services for EPATS. The Board reviewed and discussed the submitted proposals. Following discussion, the Board authorized the Executive Director to execute an agreement for strategic planning services, subject to approval as to form by legal counsel, and to take any necessary actions to implement the Board's direction. The strategic planning services considered were Multimodal Solutions, OGx Consulting, and Via Mobility. Mr. Andoh shared his experience and knowledge on each and the proposed costs.

MOTION: to authorize John Andoh, Executive Director to execute an agreement with *Multimodal Solutions* Susan Hafner for strategic planning services.

Motion: Commissioner Jackie Butler                      Seconded; Joel B.ishop

Motion Carried Unanimously

6.c. Review the El Paso County Strategic Plan and provide recommendations for El Paso County for consideration in their next update as it relates to countywide public transportation.

*(Presented by John Andoh, Executive Director)*

**NO ACTION** – Mr. Andoh informed the Board that at the April 20, 2026, El Paso County Commissioners Court meeting, the County's Chief Administrator presented an update regarding the implementation status of the County Strategic Plan, including its goals and strategies. Mr. Andoh also reminded the Board that the Board of Directors adopted the General Public Demand Response Transit (GPDRT) Study during its February 2026 meeting. Based on projections provided by the Texas A&M Transportation Institute, the estimated cost of implementing the additional proposed services could reach approximately \$631,000. Discussion included the goals of the Strategic Plan, as well as related challenges and opportunities associated with countywide public transportation services. Mr. Andoh further shared that El Paso County plans to hold an all-day work session with the Commissioners Court on April 30, 2026, to review the Strategic Plan and discuss potential items for consideration in the County's Fiscal Year 2027 budget.

6.d. Discuss and consider action regarding legal counsel services for the El Paso Transportation Authority, including engagement or retention of outside counsel, and authorize the Executive Director to negotiate and execute any related agreement.

*(Presented by John Andoh, Executive Director)*

At the March 2026 meeting, ETA attorney, Nicklaus Jimenez voiced concerns that may not allow him to continue to represent ETA. Mr. Andoh discussed possible candidates to be considered and discussed the option to open an RFQ to seek these services.

MOTION: to open an RFQ for legal counsel services.

Motion Vice Chair: Arturo Rubio                      Seconded; Commissioner Jackie Butler

Motion Carried Unanimously

6.e. Receive an update on the transition of El Paso County Transit Operations Department employees to El Paso Transportation Authority from El Paso County Human Resources Department  
*(Presented by Sam Trujillo, El Paso County Interim Chief Human Resources Officer and John Andoh, Executive Director)*

**NO ACTION** – In the absence of representatives from the El Paso County Human Resources Department, Mr. John Andoh provided the Board with an update regarding the transition of employees from the El Paso County Transit Operations Department to the El Paso Transportation Authority. Mr. Andoh reported that discussions are ongoing to determine whether transitioning employees may remain within the current employee benefits pool. Coordination with benefit vendors is also underway. He further stated that meetings are scheduled for the following week to discuss employee vacation and sick leave balances, including the possibility of ETA purchasing those accrued balances in order to honor employee leave hours.

Additionally, Mr. Andoh shared that a proposal had been received from Texas Health and Human Services, and staff will begin developing related policies and procedures. Work is also continuing on the master agreement, with the intent of presenting a recommendation to the Board at the May meeting.

6.f. Receive a report from the Executive Director regarding El Paso Transportation Authority staff activities.

*(Presented by John Andoh, Executive Director)*

**NO ACTION** – Mr. John Andoh, Executive Director, provided a report on recent El Paso Transportation Authority (ETA) staff activities and ongoing initiatives.

Mr. Andoh reported that staff have begun meeting with various El Paso County departments to coordinate operational needs associated with the transition to ETA. He also shared that ETA staff met with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to discuss capital projects, including the transit facility project and progress toward reaching the 60% design phase, the passenger shelter project, and the electric bus project.

Additionally, Mr. Andoh discussed the passenger sampling survey currently being conducted on every bus trip and route, noting that a summary of the survey results is expected to be presented at the May Board meeting. He further stated that staff are exploring ways ETA services may enhance Sun Metro service, particularly along Route 10.

Mr. Andoh also announced that ETA had recently been awarded new grant funding totaling approximately \$500,000, recognizing the efforts of Ms. Reyna Mayorga in securing the funding. He noted that grant applications had also been submitted to Congresswoman Veronica Escobar and that staff are continuing to evaluate potential route realignments.

Additional updates included ongoing efforts related to surplus buses that are no longer in service, participation in Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) meetings, and ridership statistics demonstrating the positive impact that free fares have had on ETA services. Mr. Jesus Cerna also provided the Board with a summary of his experience utilizing the ETA Andale service within the Clint and San Elizario areas.

6.g. Receive report of Transdev's operations for the month of March 2026.

*(Presented by Sylvia Balcazar, Transdev General Manager)*

**NO ACTION** - Ms. Sylvia Balcazar, Transdev Operations Manager, presented the March 2026 operations report. Ms. Balcazar reported that there were zero accidents during the reporting period, including zero preventable and zero non-preventable accidents. Fixed-route on-time performance was reported at 95.5 percent. Ridership statistics included 176 Andale riders, 15,677 fixed-route riders, and 905 ADA riders. ADA riders per hour were reported at 1.14. Ms. Balcazar further reported that Transdev currently serves 240 clients within the service area and 20 clients outside the service area, with 38 Andale clients, for a total of 260 clients served.

Operational updates included two road calls during the month and 32 preventive maintenance assignments, all of which were completed. Staffing levels currently include 24 drivers and 10 ADA drivers, with two fixed-route drivers currently in training. Ms. Balcazar noted that additional drivers and reservationists have been added in response to increasing service demand. Lastly, Ms. Balcazar shared that Transdev staff participated in the Village of Vinton Easter Eggstravaganza community event.

MOTION: to move back into Executive Session.

Motion: Commissioner Jackie Butler      Seconded; Arturo Rubio

The ETA board entered into Executive Session at 3:50 pm.

## 7. EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Meeting may be closed under the following Texas Government Code of the Open Meetings Act for discussion as follows:

A. Attorney Consultation Code (§ 551.071)

B. Deliberations Regarding Real Property Code (§ 551.072)

C. Deliberations Regarding Personnel Matters Code (§ 551.074)

D. Deliberations Regarding Security Devices or Security Audit (§ 551.076)

E. Deliberations Regarding Cybersecurity to Protect Critical Infrastructure (§ 551.0761)

(Any final action as a result of this closed discussion will be held at the opening of the meeting or at any subsequent meeting.)

7.a. Discuss findings regarding persons necessary in the Closed Meeting.

*(Presented by John Andoh, Executive Director)*

7.b. Pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071, consult with legal counsel regarding legal issues, rights, and obligations related to Route 84 and associated paratransit costs provided by City of El Paso Mass Transit Department.

*(Presented by John Andoh, Executive Director)*

The ETA board reconvened into Open Session at 4:28 PM.

**8. REGULAR AGENDA CONTINUED**

8.a. Consider and take action on matters discussed in closed session.  
*(Presented by John Andoh, Executive Director)*

**NO ACTION**

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION: to adjourn meeting.

Motion by: Commissioner Jackie Butler

Seconded; Arnulfo "Arnie" Castaneda

Motion Carried Unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 4:29 PM.