

## Metropolitan Council

Metro Transit Heywood Chambers, 560 Sixth Avenue North, Minneapolis MN 55411

### Meeting of the Transportation Committee Monday, December 12, 2011

Members Present	Steve Elkins, Chair Lona Schreiber, Vice Chair Edward Reynoso	James Brimeyer Roxanne Smith Jon Commers	Jennifer Munt Adam Duininck
Members Absent	John Đoàn		
Staff Presiding	Arlene McCarthy, Director Metropolitan Transportation Services	Brian Lamb, General Manager Metro Transit	
TAB Liaison	Robert Lilligren		

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

A quorum was present when Committee Chair Elkins called the regular meeting of the Transportation Committee to order at 4:00 p.m. on December 12, 2011 at Metro Transit Heywood Chambers, Minneapolis.

#### **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Chair Elkins proposed that business item 2011-361 be moved to the end of the agenda and that discussion of the item commence at 5:30 pm. There were no objections, and a motion was made by Schreiber and seconded by Commers to adopt the amended agenda for the December 12, 2011 Transportation Committee meeting. Motion carried.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Commers, seconded by Smith to approve the minutes from the November 28, 2011 Transportation Committee meeting. Motion carried.

#### **METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR REPORT**

Arlene McCarthy, Director, MTS, reported the following:

Since the date of the next regular Transportation Committee meeting falls on a Council staff holiday, it has been suggested that the meeting be canceled. If committee members agree, a formal notice of cancellation will be sent out this week. The next regular meeting is scheduled for January 9, 2012, at the Met Council Chambers in St. Paul.

As an update on the status of motor vehicle sales tax (MVST) revenues, McCarthy reviewed the results of the state's November forecast and referred to two charts. The first graph demonstrated that the November 2011 MVST forecast for the remainder of the current biennium is very close to the February 2011 forecast which is used for budgeting purposes. However, the November forecast has MVST growing in the 2014-2015 biennium at a higher rate than the February forecast. As a result, the Council's transportation operating funding gap for the current biennium increased by \$1 million while it decreased by \$23 million for the 2014-2015 biennium. The Council's calendar year 2012 budget will not be reconsidered until the February 2012 forecast is released. The second chart showed the difference between MVST to the metropolitan area for transit operations with and without the increase due to the 2006 constitutional amendment.

Development of a new federal transportation bill continues to experience delays. It is widely believed that if a new bill is not passed by March of 2012 it won't happen in 2012 at all due to the upcoming national elections. The Senate Finance Committee is still exploring options to raise an additional \$12 billion in revenues to keep the Highway Trust Fund solvent. Committee Republicans released a letter sent to Committee Chair Baucus that provided a list of possible options for transportation revenues. Suggestions included diverting money to the Highway Trust Fund from other funds, such as the Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Leaking Underground Storage Fund; rescinding open-

ended appropriations in other areas; and expanding oil and gas exploration and development leases. Work on a bill continues, and it is anticipated that Congress will take any necessary action before the end of the year in order to avoid a federal government shutdown.

Information was published recently that shows that Americans have been driving fewer miles every month since March, 2011. The decline is attributed to factors ranging from the weak economy to high gas prices to aging baby boomers and teens driving less. This is the first time the U.S. has seen six consecutive monthly decreases since October, 2008, when gas prices first skyrocketed. In addition to the economy and gas prices, analysts point to the fact that baby boomers are no longer raising children – and therefore driving them around. More people are also taking public transportation, and even teenagers are driving less, with the percentage of teens holding a driver's license down from 46% in 1983 to only 31% in 2008.

## **METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORT**

Brian Lamb, General Manager, Metro Transit, reported the following:

Final November ridership was released last week. Bus service led the way with 142,000 more rides this November than last, a 2.5 percent increase. Light rail and Northstar were also up marginally over last November. Overall, customers have boarded Metro Transit buses and trains 2.3 million more times this year through November than last year at the same time, representing a 3.3 percent increase. Ridership is on pace to exceed 80 million rides for only the second time in 30 years.

Metro Transit was the event sponsor for the December 10 Target Holidazzle parade on Nicollet Mall. Metro Transit buses and light-rail trains were free for the event. In addition, special free Northstar service was offered for the first time and received an overwhelming response. Unfortunately, this resulted in trains being full before they left the Big Lake station and customers at the subsequent stations unable to board. Metro Transit will be offering free Northstar rides again for the December 17 Holidazzle parade and will increase capacity considerably to help ensure that all customers will be able to take advantage of the service.

Another popular Metro Transit promotion is the Miller Lite Free Rides offered in partnership with MillerCoors on St. Patrick's Day for the last several years. This year that service will be offered New Year's Eve as well. From 6:00 pm to the last scheduled trip on December 31, customers can ride free on Metro Transit, MVTA and Met Council-contracted bus and light-rail routes. Because it relates to responsible consumption efforts on a high DUI-enforcement holiday, the promotion has been endorsed by law enforcement agencies throughout the region and by the Department of Public Safety. More information is available at [www.metrotransit.org](http://www.metrotransit.org).

## **BUSINESS**

### **Consent Items**

A motion was by Commers, seconded by Smith to approve item 2011-334 as a consent item. Motion passed.

2011-334: Authorization to Purchase Innovations For Entrances Systems (IFE) Passenger Door Overhaul Parts for the Type 1 Light Rail Vehicle

Motion:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to purchase passenger door overhaul replacement parts for the Blue Line (Hiawatha) light rail vehicles in an amount not to exceed \$650,000 over a two-year period.

### **Non-Consent Items**

2011-353: Authorization to exercise Contract Options with Motor Coach Industries

MTS Manager of Fleet Services Alex Curtiss presented the item. There were no questions from committee members and no further discussion.

Motion by Reynoso, seconded by Commers:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to exercise existing contract options on contract 08P114 with Motor Coach Industries (MCI) to purchase six coach buses in an amount not to exceed \$3,244,800.

Motion passed.

Hearing no objection, Chair Elkins stated that this item could proceed to the full Council as a Consent Item.

2011-358: Central Corridor Light Rail Transit (Green Line): 2012 Counties Transit Improvement Board Capital Grant  
Metro Transit Deputy General Manager Mark Fuhrmann presented the item. CM Brimeyer asked how much funding CTIB provided annually. Fuhrmann responded that it was approximately \$90 million.

Motion by Commers, seconded by Duininck:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to execute a CY2012 capital grant agreement for the Central Corridor Light Rail Transit (LRT) project for right-of-way acquisition, fare collection equipment, construction and purchase of Light Rail Vehicles in the amount of \$97,879,633.

Motion passed.

2011-359: Southwest Light Rail Transit (Green Line): CY2012 Counties Transit Improvement Board Capital Grant  
Metro Transit Deputy General Manager Mark Fuhrmann presented the item. There were no questions from committee members and no further discussion.

Motion by Smith, seconded by Duininck:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to execute a CY2012 capital grant agreement for the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) project for Preliminary Engineering (PE) in the amount of \$13,562,000.

Motion passed.

2011-360: Authorization to Execute Agreements with the Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) for Transit and Rail Operations

Metro Transit Finance Director Ed Petrie presented the item. There were no questions from committee members and no further discussion.

Motion by Schreiber, seconded by Duininck:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to execute agreements with the Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) to receive operating funds for CY12 for the following projects:

- Hiawatha LRT - \$12,734,091
- Northstar Commuter Rail - \$8,964,925
- I-35W BRT - \$169,455
- Cedar Ave. BRT Express Service - \$453,047
- Cedar Ave. BRT Station to Station Service - \$269,909

Motion passed.

## **INFORMATION**

### 1. Bottineau Transitway Update

Joe Gladke, Hennepin County Manager of Engineering and Transit Planning, presented a report on the status of the development of the Bottineau corridor between downtown Minneapolis and the northwest metro area. He outlined the history, process and project milestones and answered questions from committee members.

### 2. Draft 2012 Transportation Committee Work Program

MTS Director Arlene McCarthy and Metro Transit General Manager Brian Lamb provided an overview of the proposed annual work plan for 2012. The draft program includes special projects anticipated in 2012, policy topics identified for committee consideration and routine business and information items that typically come before the committee. Staff requested feedback on the draft and any other input from committee members, based on which a final program will be developed and presented for committee approval at its January 9 meeting.

### 3. LRT/BRT System Name and Graphics Update

Bruce Howard, Metro Transit Director of Marketing and Customer Services, and Senior Graphic Designer Charles Decker presented visuals of the logos under consideration for the branding of the Metro LRT/BRT lines. They explained the process and rationale for the selection of a logo, showed examples of various design executions on LRT and BRT vehicles and answered questions from committee members.

### 4. Central Corridor (Green Line) Light Rail Project Update

This item was postponed due to time constraints.

## **BUSINESS**

### **Non-Consent Items (continued)**

2011-361: Discussion of Whether to Close Meeting Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 13D.05, Subdivision 3(b), for Attorney-Client Privileged Discussion of a Proposed Settlement Agreement Relating to Threatened Litigation Regarding Employment Discrimination Claims

Chair Elkins stated that business item 2011-361 was intended to address the Council's litigation options and strategies relating to threatened litigation regarding employment discrimination claims. He stated that he had been briefed on this item and that, based on his understanding of the issues, he believed there was a need to discuss this matter in a confidential setting because a discussion of these items in public could inhibit a free discussion among Council members and the Council's attorneys and undermine the Council's ability to manage and protect its interests. Brimeyer made the following motion which was seconded by Reynoso: (1) That the Committee find there is a need to discuss the matter in a confidential setting; and (2) that the meeting be closed to the public to discuss with legal counsel attorney-client privileged matters concerning the specific interests, options and strategies of the Council relating to the threatened employment discrimination litigation. Motion passed. All persons other than involved staff and the Council's attorneys left the meeting room.

Following the closed portion of the meeting Brimeyer made the following motion, which was seconded by Reynoso: That the Transportation Committee recommend to the full Metropolitan Council that it authorize the Council's Regional Administrator and its attorneys to proceed with all actions necessary and appropriate, including execution of any necessary documents, to defend and resolve the threatened employment discrimination litigation, consistent with the committee's discussions during the closed portion of this meeting. Motion passed.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Elkins adjourned the Transportation Committee meeting at 6:18 p.m. on December 12, 2011.

Respectfully submitted,  
Liz Maday, Recording Secretary