

Minutes of the REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Monday, August 26, 2013

Committee Members Present: **Adam Duinick, Chair** **Katie Rodriguez**
 Lona Schreiber, Vice Chair **James Brimeyer**
 Steve Elkins **Jon Commers**

Committee Members Absent: **Edward Reynoso** **Jennifer Munt**
 John Doan

TAB Liaison: **Robert Lilligren – present**

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum was not present when Committee Chair Duinick called the regular meeting of the Council's Transportation Committee to order at 4:00 p.m. August 26, 2013. The chair requested that staff proceed with reports and information items while awaiting a quorum. A quorum was present following the reports and during the regular business of the Transportation Committee.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

It was moved by Elkins seconded by Schreiber to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

It was moved by Elkins, seconded by Commers to approve the minutes of the August 12, 2013 regular meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

TAB LIAISON REPORT – Robert Lilligren

TAB Liaison Robert Lilligren reported that the TAB met on August 21 with an agenda consisting largely of information items. The TAB did adopt the 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Plan, which will next be sent to the Transportation Committee for approval. Work continues on revising the regional solicitation evaluation process, and a presentation to the Transportation Committee will be scheduled for one of its September meetings. CM Duinick noted that the release of the board's report on the project has been moved from late 2013 to early 2014.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION – Metro Transit

Chief Operating Officer Vince Pellegrin introduced Santos Bustamante, Sr., Lead Janitor for Metro Transit Facilities Maintenance. Mr. Bustamante is being recognized for the excellent quality of his work as well as his consistently positive attitude and willingness to take care of whatever needs to be done. Mr. Bustamante is well liked and respected among his coworkers.

Ruter Garage Transportation Manager Doyne Parsons introduced operator #9395 Peter Malcolm. Mr. Malcolm, who has been with Metro Transit for 19 years, is being recognized for his dedicated service on several Metro Transit committees as well as his volunteer work in his community. Mr. Malcolm is also the recipient of 3 Outstanding Operator awards and 18 Safe Driving Awards.

Chair Duinick and GM Lamb offered Mr. Bustamante and Mr. Malcolm their thanks and congratulations and presented each with a certificate of accomplishment.

DIRECTOR AND GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

MTS Director Arlene McCarthy reported the following:

1. MTS Assistant Director Gerri Sutton and Grants Manager Mary Gustafson have been working for some time with the FTA to resolve an issue with new hybrid Metro Mobility buses which were 100% funded with federal grant money. A number of the buses were not functioning properly. The vendor subsequently

filed for bankruptcy, eliminating any potential for repair or replacement of the vehicles. The FTA ultimately determined that the defective buses could be retired before their federally mandated life cycle was completed and with no financial penalty to the Council. The favorable outcome was due in large part to the efforts of Sutton and Gustafson.

2. As reported in 2012, the Council was made aware of excessive use of emergency radio frequency by Metro Mobility operators, as reported by the Minnesota Emergency Services Board. Staff has been working with the MESB, and the Council has invested significant funds in an additional radio system to be used by the operators for routine and customer communication. A pilot of the new system is currently underway; results have been impressive, with reduction in emergency frequency usage of over 50 percent. A more detailed report will be presented at a upcoming meeting of the Transportation Committee.

Metro Transit General Manager Brian Lamb reported the following:

1. Now a third of the way through the Minnesota State Fair, Metro Transit service is off to a good start. Ridership Thursday through Sunday was 160,000, up about 3 percent over this time last year. About 14.5 percent of fairgoers are using Metro Transit to get to and from the fair versus about 13 percent last year. Service on local routes 3 and 84 is up significantly. In addition, the Maplewood Mall park & ride ramp is now open and provides covered parking for hundreds of fairgoers coming from the east metro. Ridership is up 11 percent from that site over last year. The METRO Red Line is a new option from the south metro to connect with State Fair service at the Bloomington site adjacent to Mall of America, which shows ridership up about nine percent compared to last year.
2. Higher numbers of express customers last month helped boost bus ridership to 5.7 million – an increase of 181,000 rides (3.3 percent) over July 2012. On Northstar, ridership increases also continued as customers boarded trains nearly 71,500 times in July – an increase of nearly 9,000 rides over a year ago. Overall, July ridership on buses and trains was 6.6 million – up 156,000 (2.4 percent) from 2012. Street Operations reports that as of the beginning of August, there were a record 189 detours in effect throughout Metro Transit's service area. This is the highest number of active detours recorded in the three-and-a-half years recorded by the department. The high number is due to construction projects and many special events - the Street Operations group and bus operators have done an excellent job preparing for these to keep trips on time and get customers where they need to be.
3. Thousands of senior high school students in Minneapolis are returning to school using their Go-To Student Passes. This includes 2,200 students at South and Southwest who are also participating in the Student Pass partnership with Minneapolis Public Schools this year, bringing the total number of MPS passes to 6,000. In order to best serve returning students as well as Metro Transit's everyday customers, 118 additional weekday trips have been scheduled for MPS and other schools in the region. Today and tomorrow 21 connecting locations and schools will be staffed with 27 people to help South and Southwest students board and transfer to the right buses. KSTP rode along with a Roosevelt student who uses his pass for school, his job and beyond. The student observed to the reporter that the air conditioning on Metro Transit buses is a nice perk of the Student Pass program during the recent hot weather.
4. Over the past week in the overnight hours, Green Line light rail vehicles have been operating on University Avenue between Stadium Village in Minneapolis and Fry Street near Snelling Avenue in St. Paul. The LRVs are drawing power from the overhead wires for the first time in this stretch of the 11-mile line. Testing on the eastern half of University and the rest of the corridor will begin later this fall. Months of testing will follow, the outcome of which will determine the line's opening date in mid-2014. One new aspect of METRO Green Line operations will be joint running of both buses and trains on the tracks through the transit mall in the heart of the U of M campus. Testing of the operation has begun in preparation for resuming service on Washington Avenue beginning in December.

BUSINESS

Consent Items

There were no consent items on the agenda.

Non-Consent Items

2013-245: Authorization to Enter into Agreement and to Execute a Purchase Order to Operate Trunk Highway 65 Commuter Express Service

Adam Harrington, Assistant Director of Metro Transit Service Development, and Tom Humphrey, Deputy Director of Metro Transit Bus Maintenance, presented the item. There were no questions from committee members and no further discussion.

It was moved by Schreiber, seconded by Elkins that the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to enter into agreement with Anoka County for Metro Transit to operate Trunk Highway 65 commuter express service and to execute a Purchase Order with Motor Coach Industries (MCI) for seven coach buses on contract 08P114 with an estimated cost of \$3,855,000.

Motion passed.

Hearing no objection, Chair Duininck stated that this item could proceed to the full Council as a consent item.

2013-246: Authorization to Award Contract for Fuel Supply for the Northstar Commuter Rail Service

Ed Byers, Metro Transit Deputy Chief of Rail Operations, presented the item and responded to a question from CM Brimeyer about fuel storage at the Big Lake vehicle maintenance facility.

It was moved by Elkins, seconded by Commers that the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to award and execute a contract with Lubrication Technologies to supply diesel fuel for the Northstar Commuter Rail Service.

Motion passed.

Hearing no objection, Chair Duininck stated that this item could proceed to the full Council as a consent item.

INFORMATION

1. Agency Performance Measures

The Metro Transit performance indicators for July 2013 were presented by Chief Operating Officer Vince Pellegrin, Chief of Police John Harrington and Finance Director Ed Petrie. Included in the report were statistics for ridership, on-time performance, vehicle reliability, accidents/incidents and police response time and onboard hours.

2. Bus Maintenance Training Opportunities

Don Wolf, Senior Training Officer for Metro Transit Bus Maintenance, presented an overview of the programs in place for recruiting and training mechanics, helpers and cleaners to ensure consistent, qualified staffing in place for bus maintenance. Strategies include partnering with area technical/vocational schools and developing current employees and promoting from within.

3. Travel Behavior Inventory (TBI) Overview

MTS Planning Analyst Jonathan Ehrlich reported on the results of the survey of travel behavior in the Twin Cities region. Factors in the study included age, geographic area, purpose and mode. Publication of a summary report is planned for September 2013.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 5:28 p.m.