

## Minutes of the

### REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

August 10, 2015

Committee Members Present: Chair Lona Schreiber, Vice-Chair Katie Rodriguez, Jon Commers, Steve Elkins, Jennifer Munt, Cara Letofsky, Deb Barber, Gail Dorfman

Committee Members Absent: Marie McCarthy, Edward Reynoso

#### CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Schreiber called the regular meeting of the Council's Transportation Committee to order at 4:06 p.m. on Monday, August 10, 2015.

#### APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Approval of the Agenda was moved by Letofsky and seconded by Rodriguez. Motion carried.

Reconsideration motion on July 27, 2015 Committee action approving the July 13, 2015 Transportation Committee meeting minutes. Motion by Rodriguez to approve, seconded by Elkins. Motion carried.

Approval of the July 27, 2015 Committee Minutes, motioned by Elkins, seconded by Rodriguez. Motion carried.

#### TAB LIAISON REPORT

There was no report given for this meeting.

#### MTS DIRECTOR AND METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

**Metropolitan Transportation Services Deputy Director Amy Vennewitz**, filling in for MTS Director Arlene McCarthy, advised that Ms. McCarthy will be out of the office for the next three weeks, and that she and MTS Assistant Director Gerri Sutton are her delegates. Amy asked that members of the Committee copy one of them on any correspondence being sent to MTS during that time. She also advised that the MVST report for July came in at 100%.

**Metro Transit General Manager Brian Lamb** reported that Hour Car, a local car share service, will announce that Transit's Go To Cards will also work to access its fleet of shared vehicles. Members will then be able to use one card to both pay for transit and access an Hour Car, making multimodal trips that much more convenient. Additionally, there are plans in place in coming months to make the Go To Card even more versatile by allowing riders who use the Northstar Link Service (the connecting bus service from St. Cloud) to use it, and we are currently negotiating options with Nice Ride Bicycles as well. We will keep you posted on these exciting multimodal developments as we move forward.

The Metro Transit Wall of Fame in the Heywood Chambers is populated with plaques honoring those employees retiring with 30 years of service, and has been expanding. Nearly 30 Metro Transit employees have retired this year after more than three decades of service. Together, they represent more than 1,000 years of combined service. Retirees with more than 30 years of service are honored with plaques on a bus or light rail vehicle, a plaque on our Wall of Fame and a biography on the Metro Transit website. (Mr. Lamb distributed a brochure that further explains this recognition program.)

This week marks the last week many of our 2015 summer interns will be with us. In total, Council-wide and including our Urban Scholars and high school interns, the Council had 95 young people helping with various projects. They helped us take a look at where we have been by starting a Metro Transit history project. They helped us see who we are and who we can be in many of our departments, working to research what we are doing right and where we can improve. One project, for instance, is centered on how we can best work within our cycling community moving forward. They often went above and beyond their assignments. In one instance, an intern in our Office of Equal Opportunity took to the radio airwaves at La Mera Buena 107.5 FM to help us reach Spanish speaking audiences.

Mr. Lamb added, “as we say goodbye to this year’s group, we all know that we are a better organization thanks to the work they put in.”

## **BUSINESS**

### **CONSENT ITEMS**

There were no Consent Items.

### **NON-CONSENT ITEMS:**

**2015-180:** 2016 Capital and Operating Grant Applications to Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB). Proposed Action: That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to apply for Calendar year 2016 grants from the Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) for the following projects:

Capital Grant applications:

METRO Orange Line : Est. \$10,700,000

METRO Green Line extension : Est. \$99,300,000

METRO Blue Line extension : Est. \$17,760,000

Mall of America Station Improvements: Est. \$6,000,000

Operating Grant applications:

Northstar Commuter Rail: Est. \$6,800,000

METRO Blue Line and METRO Green Line LRT : Est. \$23,200,000

I-35W South BRT Express – Operating: Est. \$200,000

Cedar Avenue BRT Express: Est. \$500,000

METRO Red Line BRT: Est. \$1,500,000

The business item was presented by MTS Deputy Director Amy Vennewitz. Councilmember Dorfman asked whether the capital money would ultimately be matched by federal dollars; Vennewitz replied that it would be correct with the full funding grant agreement. Letofsky asked how competitive a process this is, and can we anticipate that these are funded? Vennewitz answered that CTIB goes through an investment strategy process, where they identify the level of funds they have available to allocate through the next grant process. These projects are thoroughly reviewed by CTIB as to which may apply prior to the application, and the application itself actually solidifies the amounts.

It was moved by Letofsky, seconded by Elkins, that the Council approve the proposed action. Motion carried, **non-consent to Council.**

## INFORMATION

1. Freight Rail Update. Presented by MnDOT Rail Planning and Program Development Manager Peter Dahlberg, introduced by MTS Senior Planner Connie Kozlak.

Question by Elkins regarding positive train control; Dorfman asked about national derailments data and whether poor track conditions caused the majority of derailments and suggested that more detailed information about monitoring be available to the public; Munt asked about the Met Council/MnDOT/Railroads communication process; Letofsky asked about safety considerations when drivers switch from one rail line to another when a rail car needs to go on a shorter line route; Barber asked whether MnDOT should take the lead in resolving issues between the railroads and public agencies; Commers asked whether the crude bi-rail safety issues will be addressed in the draft State Rail Action Plan; Rodriguez asked which of the lines carry Bakken oil in the Twin Cities area, and which of them are traveled most frequently; Dorfman asked who is responsible for putting together Emergency Preparedness Plans for areas at risk; Commers asked how local governments are supposed to send their people to training when they are not privy to the types of cargo traveling through their jurisdiction; Chair Schreiber asked that MnDOT contact the railroads regarding where the hot spots are, and share that information with local governments.

2. Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) Program of Projects. Presented by Hennepin County Commissioner Peter McLaughlin and Kathy Aho, President of Springsted, Inc., a financial planning firm.

Question from Dorfman about streetcars being a part of the CTIB Program of Projects; Chair Schreiber asked about the organization of CTIB; Rodriguez thanked the transit coalition for bringing transit to the region; Munt asked about what the prospects were for gaining ½ cent sales tax revenue for Southwest.

3. I-94 Corridor Study. MTS Deputy Director Amy Vennewitz introduced MnDOT's Planning Director of Investment Management and Regional Coordination Brian Isaacson, who presented this information item.

Chair Schreiber asked about engineering specific costs; Elkins asked about the I-94/280 interchange design accommodating a MnPass lane; Letofsky asked about the possibilities of healing some of the unsightly remnants (chain-link fences, etc.) along the corridor; Munt asked if there was funding available to build the highway in a way that will connect people; Amy Vennewitz added that the Met Council is also participating financially in the engagement piece of this project and utilizing staff resources.

4. Metro Transit Energy Conservation/Sustainability Update. Metro Transit Principal Engineer Robert Rimstad presented this item.

Dorfman asked about the Overhaul Base heating system change; Munt remarked on the million dollar savings gained and asked if there was a dashboard for the Dayton administration to show the sustainability accomplishments; Rodriguez mentioned that the Council is looking at overall indicators and hopes that some of these metrics are included, as they are very impressive.

5. 2015 State Fair Service Marketing Plan. Metro Transit's Senior Marketing Development Specialist Kelci Stones and Assistant Manager-Street Operations Greg Tuveson presented this item.

Dorfman asked if we allow state fair vendors to advertise on the buses; Munt thanked the presenters and added that taking Transit is a no-brainer, there is no better way to get to the State Fair, and the great customer service provided brings them back as regular commuters; Letofsky asked if Go To passes worked on the express service; Elkins added that the State Fair

service pays for itself; Brian Lamb agreed, adding that we have not raised the fares in more than ten years.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 6:28 p.m.

Linda Thayer  
Recording Secretary