

Minutes of the

REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

November 9, 2015

Meeting at the Blaine City Hall Chambers

Committee Members Attending:

Chair Lona Schreiber, Vice-Chair Katie Rodriguez, Steve Elkins, Gail Dorfman, Jon Commers, Deb Barber, Ed Reynoso, Marie McCarthy

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Schreiber called the regular meeting of the Council's Transportation Committee to order at 4:05 p.m. on Monday, November 9, 2015.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

It was moved by Reynoso, seconded by Commers to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

It was moved by Rodriguez, seconded by Commers to approve the minutes of the October 12, 2015 regular meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

TAB LIAISON REPORT

Commissioner Randy Maluchnik reported that the only action item discussed at the last TAB meeting was a TIP Amendment which TAB adopted after public comment, which increases the project length of the CSAH 16 reconstruction project. MTS Planning Analyst Steve Peterson presented the 2016 Regional Solicitation overview including results of the surveys following the solicitation and a list of key topics that are going through the committee process. Councilmember Rodriguez added that the first Equity Workshop was held following the TAB meeting. There was consensus by TAB to schedule future Equity meetings in conjunction with the TAB meetings to ensure the best possible attendance.

Following the TAB Liaison report, Chair Schreiber thanked Mayor Tom Ryan and his staff for their excellent assistance to the Transportation Committee staff in preparing for today's meeting. Mayor Ryan welcomed everyone from the podium and answered a question that Chair Schreiber asked about the tile design that spells out "City of Blaine" on the main floor. Councilmember Reynoso also thanked the Mayor for his 21 years of service and dedication to Blaine. Councilmember McCarthy also thanked the Mayor for hosting this meeting, and the Mayor commended Councilmember McCarthy for being very involved and supportive regarding issues facing the City of Blaine.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR AND METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

MTS Director Arlene McCarthy deferred her report until the next meeting of the Transportation Committee.

Metro Transit General Manager Brian Lamb reported on the recent Metro Transit Police Graduation, welcoming 13 new officers; the kickoff meeting for the new Maintenance Tech program; he also mentioned the FTA grant opportunity to fund low or no-emission electric buses, and that Metro Transit plans to apply for funding to cover the cost of upgrading five diesel 40' buses to electric 40' buses and one on-route charging station.

Mr. Lamb also reported that Regions Hospital staff have now joined the Metropass program; and that the C-Line (Penn Avenue Arterial Bus Rapid Transit line) open house meetings are set for November 17th and 18th at four locations in Minneapolis and Brooklyn Center.

BUSINESS

Consent Items:

1. 2015-272: Authorize Execution of Contract Options with Gillig LLC (Paul Colton 651-602-1668)
2. 2015-255: Policies and Standards for Advertising on Metro Transit Property (Bruce Howard 612-349-7694)
3. 2015-269: Authorization to Award Contract for Operator Uniforms (Steve McLaird 612-349-7572)
4. 2015-253: Southwest Light Rail Transit (Green Line Extension): Subordinate Funding Agreement (SFA) No. 5 to the Master Funding Agreement with the MN Department of Transportation (MnDOT) for Staffing (Nani Jacobson 612-373-3808)
5. 2015-254: Blue Line Extension LRT Project: Subordinate Funding Agreement (SFA) No. 2 to the Master Funding Agreement with the MN Department of Transportation (MnDOT) for Staffing (Kathryn O'Brien 612-373-5377)
6. 2015-257: Central Corridor (Green Line) - Subordinate Funding Agreement (SFA) No. 12 to the Master Funding Agreement with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) for Staffing (Chris Beckwith 612-373-3889, Kathryn O'Brien 612-373-5377)

Councilmember Rodriguez made the motion to approve all of the Consent Items, seconded by Councilmember McCarthy. Motion passed. Consent to Council.

Non-Consent Items:

1. 2015-271: 2016-2019 TIP Amendment: CSAH 116 Reconstruction in Andover and Ham Lake. Presented by MTS Deputy Director Amy Vennewitz. Ms. Vennewitz explained that MTS recommends concurrence with TAB in passing the amendment extending the project. This project is consistent with the TPP, it maintains fiscal constraint as well as air quality conformity. There were no questions. Councilmember Reynoso moved its approval, seconded by Councilmember McCarthy. Consent to Council.
2. 2015-281: Authorization to Award and Execute a Construction Contract for the Downtown East Pedestrian Bridge (Jim Harwood 612-349-7339, Pat Jones 612-349-7606). Proposed action: That the Metropolitan Council (Council) authorize the Regional Administrator to award and execute a contract with the lowest responsive and responsible bidder, LS Black Constructors, for the construction of the Downtown East Pedestrian Bridge project at a cost of \$9,650,000.

Jim Harwood, Lead Project Manager with Metro Transit Engineering and Facilities, presented the business item related to the construction contract. There were several questions and comments posed from the committee members. Councilmember Dorfman stated she thought this project was a bad deal before and a worse deal now and that she would oppose the business item. Councilmember Barber asked if Metro Transit was surprised to only have received two bids. Mr. Harwood stated that we were surprised to receive only two bids especially considering that 19 qualified and capable contractors had reviewed the Invitation for bids. Councilmember Reynoso stated that he was originally opposed to the project as he didn't believe the terms were fair. He commended the Vikings for their \$6,000,000 funding commitment and stated the business item should move forward for safety reasons. Councilmember Rodriguez asked if staff studied additional options for pedestrian movement besides the pedestrian bridge. Mr. Harwood responded that other options were studied and that the proposed pedestrian bridge is by far the best option for safety.

Councilmember Rodriguez also asked what the advertising promotional support we are receiving from the Vikings. Metro Transit General Manager Brian Lamb stated that the advertising revenues from the station are estimated to be \$310,000 annually of which we would receive 10%. Mr. Harwood stated that the agreement also provides \$300,000 from the Minnesota Vikings and MSFA in annual promotional support value in addition to the advertising revenue. Councilmember Dorfman asked why "at the 11th hour" did this get added to the needs of the Stadium. Mr. Lamb stated as soon as the stadium location was announced, staff started working on the transit related needs. He added that by the time staff had convinced all project partners of the need, all of the Viking/MSFA stadium project funding had been allocated. Mr. Lamb stated that we've been attempting to convince our partners to reallocate funding or allocate new funding since that time.

Chair Schreiber asked how many events would be held at the stadium per year. Mr. Harwood responded that they estimate over 400 events would be held at the stadium each year but the number where significant crowds would require additional transportation control measures is likely closer to 20 to 30. Councilmember McCarthy asked about the number of people that needed to cross the rail after events; Mr. Harwood stated that our modeling shows that 2,100 people will need to cross the rail in 55 second windows, and this is repeated approximately every 2 minutes on average.

A motion to approve the business item by Councilmember Reynoso was seconded by Councilmember Elkins. The motion carried (8 yes, 1 no) and will move to the Council as a non-consent item.

3. 2015-242: Approval of Metro Transit's Title VI Service Monitoring Study Results. Proposed action: That the Metropolitan Council approve the results of the 2015 Title VI Service and Facilities Standards Monitoring Study. Cyndi Harper, Manager of Metro Transit Route Planning, presented the results of the study. Councilmember Barber asked if suburban providers have to do a similar study. Ms. Harper answered that the FTA requires all transit providers receiving federal funds to set these standards, but only requires transit systems with more than 50 peak vehicles in operation to do the monitoring study. In this region the 50-peak vehicle threshold applies to Metropolitan Council/Metro Transit and MVTA; Southwest Transit is close to this threshold and may have to do this analysis in the future. Council Member Barber then asked about observations from the 2012 study and whether there was improvement. Ms. Harper replied that the one area of potential disparate impact in 2012 was the placement of heated shelters. Additional review determined there was no disparate impact due to the limited number of heated

shelters outside of downtown Minneapolis and St. Paul and difficulties determining the demographics of shelter users in these areas. Councilmember Dorfman asked if there are different standards for stops and stations in low-income and minority areas with security concerns. Ms. Harper clarified that this study reviewed whether we had fewer amenities at stops in low income and minority areas compared to the entire system. General Manager Lamb said that locally we are doing more by increasing the number of lighted shelters in areas with security needs. Councilmember Elkins mentioned Council Member Cunningham's work with staff to make improvements in downtown Minneapolis, in particular at 7th St and Nicollet Mall. General Manager Lamb added that we are working closely with city and county partners all along 7th Street in preparation of Arterial BRT. The item was moved by Councilmember Rodriguez and was seconded by Councilmember Barber. Motion passed, consent to Council.

4. 2015-260: MOA Architectural/Engineering Contract. Proposed action: That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute a contract with Kimley-Horn for design and construction support services for the Mall of America Transit Station Renovation for a cost of \$2,268,716. Business item was presented by Jeff Freeman, Metro Transit Senior Project Coordinator. Councilmember Elkins stated that when built, this was one of the few malls in the country where the access to Transit was closer than the furthest parking space and added that the station is very dark and dreary. Councilmember Commers inquired about financial participation by the MOA. Mr. Freeman responded that the Mall's participation is the continuation of the original easement that was obtained for \$250,000 and was renewed for a 30 year term in 2005 to coincide with the addition of LRT at the station. Council Member Elkins moved to approve the business item, and it was seconded by Councilmember Barber. Motion carried, non-consent to Council.
5. 2015-270: Design of Heywood II Garage. Proposed action: That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute a contract with LHB, Inc. for design and construction support services for the Heywood 2 Garage for a cost of \$8,000,000. Presented by Jim Harwood, Lead Project Manager with Metro Transit Engineering and Facilities. Council Member Elkins asked if garage would be looking more closely at Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) for the bus fleet. Brian Lamb answered that we are looking at and evaluating the incremental cost increase as part of the project to make a decision.

Council Member Letofsky asked about how the land acquisition process is happening, referring to a past information item about land acquisition around the Heywood Campus. Pat Jones answered that the process is still moving forward and we are having favorable responses in negotiations. The NEPA (environmental documentation) process needs to be approved before we are able to close on the property. Councilmember Barber motioned to approve the business item and Council Member Dorfman seconded the motion. The motion carried, non-consent to Council.

6. 2015-273: Orange Line BRT Architectural/Engineering Contract. Proposed action: That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute a contract with HNTB for design and construction support services for the Orange Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project for a cost of \$6,748,535.

Christina Morrison, Senior Planner with Metro Transit's BRT/Small Starts project office provided a presentation updating the Council members on Orange line project progress over the past several months since the previous presentation on July 13th. Jim Harwood, Lead Project Manager with Metro Transit Engineering and Facilities, then reviewed the business item related to the award of the Architectural and Engineering Contract.

Councilmember Barber noted that the project office was reviewing multiple options for alignment of Knox Avenue in Bloomington and the station in Burnsville and asked how far they would progress multiple designs before settling on a preferred option. Ms. Morrison responded that Metro Transit expects the preferred Burnsville station location to be recommended by our local project partners by the end of this year. She also stated that Metro Transit won't move forward with a preferred alignment option at Knox Avenue until after the environmental review is completed and discussions on land acquisition can proceed which is anticipated in spring of 2016. A motion to approve was made by Councilmember Dorfman and seconded by Councilmember Letofsky. Motion carried, non-consent to Council.

INFORMATION

There were no information items presented.

ANOKA COUNTY/CITIES PRESENTATION

1. Welcome by Mayor Tom Ryan and spotlight of City. Mayor Ryan introduced Erik Thorvig, Economic Development Coordinator, who presented historic and demographic information about the City of Blaine, mentioning points of interest such as the National Sports Center, the TPC of Twin Cities Golf Course, and the Anoka County-Blaine Airport.
2. Welcome by Rhonda Sivarajah, Chair of the Anoka County Board of Commissioners, who spoke about the need for safe transportation infrastructure.
3. Welcome by Anoka Commissioner Scott Schulte, who gave a detailed presentation about the history of Anoka County's transportation system and how current problems evolved.
4. Anoka County Transportation Division Manager/County Engineer Doug Fischer, who highlighted current and future county transportation projects and how they are tied to policy issues.
5. Ramsey City Manager Kurt Ulrich and Coon Rapids City Manager Matt Stemwedel, who spoke about the transportation issues involving Trunk Highway 10.
6. East Bethel City Manager Jack Davis and Jean Keely, Blaine City Engineer spoke about transportation issues facing Trunk Highway 65.
7. Columbus City Engineer Larry Bohrer addressed transportation issues regarding Trunk Highway 97/Interstate 35, particularly the need for repair of a 50-year old bridge that MnDOT has slated for redecking.
8. An overview of Transit initiatives, including the Anoka County Traveler, Anoka County Transit Link, T.H. 65 Express Bus Demonstration Project and TMO initiatives was provided.
9. Anoka County Transportation Division Manager/County Engineer Doug Fischer and other city managers discussed railroad/highway at grade crossing congestion and safety issues at various locations in the county.

Chair Schreiber asked Scott McBride of the Department of Transportation's Engineering Services Division to share MnDOT's perspective about the railroad/highway at grade crossing congestion issues in Anoka County. Mr. McBride stated that these issues are a real emphasis for Governor Dayton and Commissioner Zelle. Money has been appropriated for a study of Ferry Street in this corridor (Highway 47) just north of Highway 10, and a project manager was recently hired. Chair Schreiber asked about possible revenue streams for these projects, and McBride explained that, while by statute Trunk Highway funds cannot be used, Governor Dayton has come up with some creative approaches to tax the railroads. Doug Fischer concurred, stating that Governor Dayton and Commissioner Zelle recently attended a Railroad Forum in the City of Coon Rapids which was very well received, and that the Legislative Bonding Tour met with Anoka County this last summer.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Linda Thayer
Recording Secretary