

Minutes of the

REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

September 28, 2015

Committee Members Present: Vice-Chair Katie Rodriguez, Edward Reynoso, Jon Commers, Steve Elkins, Cara Letofsky, Deb Barber, Marie McCarthy.

Committee Members Absent: Chair Lona Schreiber, Jennifer Munt, Gail Dorfman.

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Vice-Chair Katie Rodriguez (filling in for Chair Schreiber) called the regular meeting of the Council's Transportation Committee to order at 4:05 p.m. on Monday, September 28, 2015.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

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

It was moved by CM Barber, seconded by CM Commers, to approve the minutes of the September 14, 2015 regular meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

TAB LIAISON REPORT:

Commissioner Randy Maluchnik reported on the following:

TAB Chair: James Hovland reported that the TAB Executive Committee meeting will move to a larger room in the lower level of the Metro Council building beginning in October and the Executive Committee agenda will be posted online to inform the public. TDM application deadline was last Friday, Sept. 11; eleven applications were received requesting \$2.4 M federal funding out of \$1.8 M available.

Agency Reports: MPCA – Shannon Lotthammer, director, announced that EPA will be releasing new ozone standards on October 1. This may affect that the region's attainment status. MAC – Carl Crimmins invited TAB to tour the MAC facilities or hold a meeting at the facility in the future. Carl will work with Elaine Koutsoukos and Jim Hovland in scheduling. The MSP 2035 Long Range Plan is underway. TAC Report: Steve Albrecht, TAC Chair, reported that there is ongoing discussion on de-federalization. A Scott County proposal is going through the process. TAB Bylaws: Proposed changes were approved, including adding the new TAB member added by the legislature representing the Suburban Transit Association and changes to quorum and voting.

Next TAB meeting will be held on October 21st.

METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER AND MTS DIRECTOR REPORTS

Metro Transit General Manager Brian Lamb updated the Committee on the following:

Twin Cities Marathon: It's been a big month for event ridership, with back-to-back home games at TCF Bank Stadium each of the last two weekends and several home Twins games. The Gophers and Vikings are on the road this weekend, but we'll still have our hands full as the Twins close out their regular season with home games on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Thousands of runners and spectators will also be using transit, particularly the METRO Green Line, to get to and from the Twin Cities Marathon on Sunday.

Single-day ridership on the METRO Green and Blue lines recently topped 100,000 for the first time ever. The milestone came on Thursday, Sept. 3, when there were a combined 100,909 light-rail rides. Nearly 64,000 rides were provided on the Green Line that day, while almost 37,000 rides were provided on the Blue Line. Nearly a quarter of the rides taken were attributed to fans traveling to a St. Paul Saints, Minnesota Gophers football or Minnesota Twins game.

Metro Transit is encouraged to see continued interest in transit-oriented development across the region. One of the prime TOD sites that's received a lot of attention lately is what's become known as the "Bus Barn" site on Snelling Avenue, near the Green Line and future A Line BRT. As you have likely heard, the MLS commissioner recently visited the site with St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman and had an enthusiastic response to its potential. We've had initial conversations with the Saint Paul Port Authority and are prepared to continue exploring the possibilities for the site as talks continue. As you're well aware, any land transfer would require approval from the Metropolitan Council and the FTA.

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The use of Go-To Cards and transit passes continues to rise. Customers took around 29.8 million rides using a Go-To Card or other fare pass through the end of August, a 2% increase over last year and up 36% from 2011. Around half of customers now use a Go-To Card or fare pass, which makes boarding faster and more convenient. It is expected that the use of Go-To Cards and transit passes will continue to increase this fall as students use their U-Passes and Student Passes. We're also excited that Northstar Link buses will have Go-To Card readers beginning Oct. 12. The addition of Go-To Card readers will make transferring to and from Northstar much smoother for customers.

Around 100 job seekers attended an Employment Open House held over the weekend at East Metro Garage in St. Paul. Metro Transit and the Council have hosted three open houses since July in an effort to promote full-time positions and a new Metro Transit Technician training program. Participants in the training program will be put on a path toward full-time employment through customized college readiness coursework, a Metro Transit internship and support toward earning an AAS degree. Applications for the program will be accepted through Wednesday, Sept. 30. More than 300 applications have been received to date. A comprehensive presentation about the training program and ongoing recruitment efforts will be made to this committee on Oct. 12.

Snelling Avenue bus barn: Metro Transit is encouraged to see continued interest in transit-oriented development across the region. One of the prime TOD sites that has received a lot of attention lately is what's become known as the "Bus Barn" site on Snelling Avenue, near the Green Line and future A Line BRT. As you have likely heard, the MLS commissioner recently visited the site with St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman and had an enthusiastic response to its potential. We've had initial conversations with the Saint Paul Port Authority and are prepared to continue exploring the possibilities for the site as talks continue. As you're well aware, any land transfer would require approval from the Metropolitan Council and the FTA.

MTS Director Arlene McCarthy updated the Committee on the following:

The process will begin for reappointing seven TAB positions whose term expires at year end (all are two-year terms):

Citizen Positions A, B, C and D

A: Districts 1 & 2 (Rodriguez, Schreiber) Gerry Butcher, incumbent

B: Districts 3 & 4 (Munt, Barber) John Gunyou, incumbent

C: Districts 5 & 6 (Elkins, Dorfman) Jennifer Janovy, incumbent

D: Districts 7 & 8 (Cunningham, Letofsky) Kenya McKnight, incumbent

Two Transit reps – Dave Van Hattum, Robert Lilligren, incumbents

Non-Motorized (bike-ped) rep – Ethan Fawley, incumbent

Federal update: The Senate failed to reach 60 votes to move forward on a continuing resolution that would have funded the federal government until December 11th. A resolution must be reached by midnight Wednesday (September 30th) to avoid a government shutdown. The FHWA would not be affected immediately, and the FTA would be partially affected. The Surface Transportation legislation continues to wait for a revenue source to pay for a bill that would continue current levels of funding.

BUSINESS

CONSENT ITEMS:

There were no consent items.

NON-CONSENT ITEMS:

2015-229: 2016 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Approval, Resolution No. 2015-21.
Proposed action, that the Metropolitan Council:

- Adopt the proposed 2015 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) with a budget of \$5,058,670.
- Adopt the attached resolution authorizing the filing of an application with the Minnesota Department of Transportation for a planning grant under MAP-21.
- Authorize the Regional Administrator to enter into agreement with the State of Minnesota, Department of Transportation, for distribution of FHWA and FTA planning funds.

MTS Senior Planner Katie White presented this item. CM Commers commented about air quality monitoring, expressing the need for a more focused conversation at this Committee regarding the governance of that process and coordination of that monitoring, as he personally feels it is difficult to follow and that the public would benefit as well.

It was moved by CM Commers, seconded by CM Elkins, that this business item be approved. Motion carried. **Non-consent to Council.**

INFORMATION

1. Low Income Fare Program Pilot. This information item was presented by Metro Transit Supervisor of Revenue Operations Mary Capistrant and Met Council HRA Housing Manager Terri Smith. Brian Lamb commented that it is part of the Transportation Committee's work plan to try and find ways to offer low income fares to the public by applying the equity principal, but with good stewardship at the same time. CM Elkins asked about next steps in scaling it up; CM Barber asked how it would work in opt-out situations (*i.e.*, Carver County using suburban transit providers). CM Letofsky expressed enthusiasm for this pilot project and interest in seeing how it will move beyond benefiting voucher holders only.
2. Arterial BRT Update. This information item was presented by Metro Transit Manager of BRT & Small Starts Katie Roth. CM Letofsky asked about the alternative east-west route providing better

access, and other routing; Brian Lamb explained that we will be coming back with more service concepts and how they all fit together.

3. SWLRT Update. This information item started with a “fly over” video in addition to a powerpoint presentation. Presented by Program Director for LRT Extensions Mark Fuhrmann and Director of Transit Systems Design Jim Alexander.
4. Regional Solicitation Sensitivity Analysis. Presented by MTS Planning Analyst Steve Peterson, using two documents, the analysis memo and the schedule, which covered the key findings and next steps.
5. Transit Control Center Tour, led by Brian Lamb and TCC Manager Chad Loeffler.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 6:23 p.m.

Linda Thayer
Recording Secretary