

## Minutes of the

### REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

September 14, 2015

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

**Committee Members Absent:** 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 4:05 p.m. on Monday, September 14, 2015.

#### APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

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

It was moved by CM Commers, seconded by CM Letofsky to approve the minutes of the August 24, 2015 regular meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

#### TAB LIAISON REPORT

There was no report for this meeting.

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

MTS Director Arlene McCarthy reported on the following items:

The second month for MVST receipts was not strong at only 88% of the February 2015 forecast; the year to date revenue for first two months of the state fiscal year, however, is at 94.42%.

Regarding the Equity Workshops: A workshops planning session, with consultant Barbara Ray of the Center for Policy Planning and Performance has been scheduled for September 22<sup>nd</sup> from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. We will be working towards scheduling the workshops and preparing for them.

A consultant has been selected for the Principal Arterial Intersection Conversion Study. The contract is with Bolton and Menk at a value just under \$500,000. MnDOT hired this firm for the Trunk Highway 10 Study which had good and creative results; they have strong local experience.

At the federal level, the USDOT now projects that the Highway Trust Fund will stay solvent until May 2016 due to slightly higher than expected gas tax receipts; the USDOT had previously expected the HTF to become insolvent in December 2015. The current MAP21 extension expires October 29, Congress will need to authorize another short-term extension with this already identified funding.

Metro Transit General Manager Brian Lamb reported on the following:

State Fair ridership: Metro Transit provided 575,348 rides to and from this year's State Fair—the highest express and regular route ridership ever. Ridership increased 8% over last year and accounted for 16% of total State Fair attendance. The percentage of fairgoers who traveled to the State Fair on Metro Transit was the highest since 2008, when Metro Transit also operated free shuttles to the fairgrounds. The highest single-day

ridership this year was on Saturday, Aug. 29, when nearly 70,600 rides were provided. Almost 90 percent of State Fair ridership was from the 13 free Park & Ride locations where Metro Transit provided express service. We look forward to giving fairgoers another option to get to the State Fair when the A Line opens next year.

Vikings/Gophers/Twins: We're preparing to serve a lot of sports fans in the coming weeks as the Gophers and Vikings play back-to-back home games each of the next two weekends at TCF Bank Stadium. The Twins will add to the festivities with a 10-game homestand, including games at Target Field on Saturday evening and Sunday afternoon. During the Viking's first season at TCF Bank Stadium, around a quarter of fans rode transit on gamedays. We expect that strong ridership to continue and are well-prepared to handle the expected large crowds. In addition to light rail and buses, fans can take special Northstar trips to and from the Vikings and Twins games. To help make boarding more efficient before and after games, fans are encouraged to purchase round-trip fares in advance online through Metro Transit's website.

Roadeo: Council members are invited to put their driving skills to the test at Metro Transit's upcoming Bus Roadeo. The annual safe driving competition will be held at the Como Avenue parking lot across from the State Fairgrounds from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 22, Wednesday, Sept. 23 and Thursday, Sept. 24.

LRT shutdowns: Light-rail service was interrupted over the weekend to allow for a variety of planned construction and maintenance activities. This weekend's work included the replacement of deteriorating pavers at several Blue Line platforms, track modifications and the installation of a new skyway that crosses over the light-rail tracks and connects with the new U.S. Bank Stadium. Some additional overnight and weekend light-rail disruptions are expected in October as the opportunity for construction in Minnesota nears an end. Customers will be notified well in advance and staff will be at affected stations to direct customers to replacement buses.

Student Pass: Students are again traveling to and from school and other activities on Metro Transit. In addition to Minneapolis high schoolers, students at St. Paul's Johnson High School traveled to classes for the first time using their Student Passes last week. Staff were on hand to assist for the first few days and all the students now seem very comfortable riding transit. Johnson HS students have taken around 10,000 rides already. Staff were also out on campus last week teaching new students at the U of M how to use their U Pass and Campus Zone passes.

Metro Transit is re-examining the current conditions along the Nicollet Mall detoured routes that took effect last July 6th, looking at upcoming construction/utility projects, analyzing on-time performance and reviewing ridership. We have installed five temporary shelters; we are working on getting private/county owned property approval to install temp shelters near the inner core. Some bus stops currently have overhangs on existing buildings that provide shelter. Total August 2015 Ridership on the affected Nicollet Mall Routes were down 18.6% compared to August 2014. Paid rides on those routes were down 15.1%, while the free rides (which were only 8% of the total) were down 45%. We are analyzing our on-time performance since routes were moved. We will be reviewing travel time and operations with buses on other detour options.

Ms. McCarthy also brought up the FTA Triennial Review audit which took place last week. There was an exit conference on Friday afternoon and some preliminary findings that we need to provide additional information on; the Committee will be kept informed through their final report. They were very complimentary overall on our staff's professionalism. Brian Lamb added that some of the FTA team are still in the Twin Cities and are touring along a variety of corridors and reviewing a host of current Council projects.

## **BUSINESS**

### **CONSENT ITEMS:**

There were no consent items.

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

2015-212: 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program. Proposed Action, that the Metropolitan Council concur with the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) action to adopt the 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. Metropolitan Transportation Services Senior Planner Joe Barbeau presented this item. CM Letofsky asked whether the TIP is updated every year despite the regional solicitation occurring every two years. Barbeau replied that the TIP is updated every year, though this is not the practice at some MPOs. CM Commers asked whether air quality modeling has been done in the past and whose role it is to adhere to federal air quality requirements. Barbeau replied that the Council has completed air quality models when it was in non-attainment and that Mark Filipi and Jonathan Ehrlich from MTS will respond to him on the question of roles. Motion by CM Elkins that the business item be approved as it is written, seconded by CM Letofsky, and carried. Non-Consent to Council.

2015-217: Rejection of all proposals for contract 15P014 MTS Electronic Equipment Maintenance. Proposed action, that the Metropolitan Council authorizes the Regional Administrator to reject all proposals for contract 15P014 titled MTS Electronic Equipment Maintenance. This item was presented by MTS Manager of Contracted Transit Services John Harper. Harper explained that MTS intends to enter into a sole-source agreement with the current vendor for up to one year to allow time to improve the scope of work and rerelease the Request for Proposals. CM Dorfman asked several clarifying questions including whether the current vendor submitted a proposal, the action was approved by the Office of General Council (OGC), and if the sole-source authorization is for an indefinite period of time. Harper explained that the current vendor is one of the two proposers on this procurement and that the sole-source authorization is for up to one year. Additionally, Arlene McCarthy, Director of MTS, explained that current contract was competitively procured, that the new RFP will be a clean slate, and that OGC and Procurement have approved the action. Motion CM Commers, second CM Dorfman, motion approved. To Council as Consent item.

2015-202: Authorization to exercise 5 option vehicles with Siemens under the current contract 09P157. Proposed action, that the Metropolitan Council Authorize the Regional Administrator to exercise the contract option with Siemens Industry, Inc. for the purchase of 5 Light Rail Vehicles for the METRO Blue Line. This will increase the existing Siemens LRV Contract 09P157 by \$20.3 Million, for a revised contract value not to exceed \$237,964,820. This item was presented by Metro Transit Director of Finance Ed Petrie and Director of Rail Maintenance Rick Carey.

CM Elkins asked whether vehicles that are in maintenance counted as spares. Rick Carey originally confirmed, but in hindsight (with the committee report) added that the correct answer is yes, the total number of vehicles, minus the number of vehicles used for revenue service, gives you the number of spares. Vehicles that are in the shop for maintenance are included in the spare count. CM Dorfman asked whether we would purchase these 5 vehicles if we did not have the Superbowl in 2018?" Carey answered affirmatively.

After the financing piece was presented by Ed Petrie, CM Dorfman asked, "How does the cost per vehicle compare from the original contract to the price now?" Carey answered that the original contract cost per vehicle was 3.3 million. CM Munt asked "How do we tell the average person about the difference of an 8% spare ratio to 19%?" Carey answered that the customer would not typically know

the difference unless we are unable to provide all of the needed cars for revenue service. Sometimes we are not able to provide all 3 car consists due to keeping a vehicle in the shop for scheduled maintenance. Customers are impacted by that, and we receive customer reports. Our department goal is to not have to short any 3 car consists. The added vehicles and increased spare ratio will prevent us from having to short revenue vehicles to perform scheduled maintenance. Motion by CM Letofsky, second by CM Rodriguez, motion carried. Non-consent to Council.

2015-201: Counties Transit Improvement Board Agreements for Purchase of 5 Option Light Rail Vehicles for the METRO Blue Line. Proposed action, that the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute multiple agreements with the Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) for the exercise and purchase of 5 -option Light Rail vehicles from Siemens Industry, Inc. for the METRO Blue Line. The negotiated and executed agreements are as follows: Counties Transit Improvement Board 2015 Capital Grant Agreement which includes a 2015 A-1 Grant in an amount not to exceed \$6,000,000 awarded by CTIB on November 19, 2014, to provide 30% of the funds for the procurement of light rail vehicles; 2015 A-2 Grant Note Payable in an amount not to exceed \$14,000,000 to provide the 70% Matching Funds from the procurement of light rail vehicles; Counties Transit Improvement Board Promissory Note not to exceed \$14,000,000 in connection with the 2015 A-2 Grant Note Payable for the procurement of light rail vehicles; and Counties Transit Improvement Board Security Agreement in connection with the repayment obligation of the 2015 A-2 Grant Note Payable for the procurement of light rail vehicles.

Ed Petrie described the Financing of the purchase of the 5 Option Light Rail Vehicles for the METRO Blue Line. Detailed descriptions included: Total Cost of the Vehicle, Terms of the \$6.0M CTIB Capital Grant (2015 A-1 Grant); Terms of the \$14.0M CTIB Interest Free Note Payable (2015 A02 Grant); Details of the Promissory Note, and CTIB Security Interest in the Vehicles. Petrie answered all Council Member questions; CM Barber made a motion to approve, which was seconded by CM Munt. The business item passed unanimously and will go first to Management Committee, then non-Consent to Council.

2015-207: Authorization to Amend the 2015 Unified Budget. Proposed action, that the Metropolitan Council authorize the amendment of the 2015 Unified Budget as indicated and in accordance with the attached tables. Item was presented by Metro Transit Director of Finance Ed Petrie. There were no questions, and CM Letofsky motioned and CM Munt seconded this item for approval, motion carried. Business item will be heard in Management Committee, and goes non-Consent to Council.

2015-208: Authorize the assignment of 4 Option Vehicles with Siemens Industry, Inc. under Light Rail Vehicle (LRV) contract 09P157 to Hampton Roads Transit. Proposed action, that the Metropolitan Council Authorize the Regional Administrator to allow the assignment of 4 Light Rail Vehicle contract options with Siemens Industry, Inc. to Hampton Roads Transit under the existing Siemens LRV Contract 09P157. Metro Transit Director of Finance Ed Petrie presented this item. Petrie described the terms of the assignment of the 4 Light Rail Vehicle Options with Siemens Industry, Inc. to Hampton Roads Transit under the existing Siemens LRV Contract 09P157. Upon assignment of the Siemens LRV Contract Options to Hampton Roads Transit, the option vehicle specifications, pricing, delivery, funding and payment will be negotiated between Siemens Industry Inc. and Hampton Roads Transit. Petrie also stated that no Metropolitan Council Funding will be expended with the exercise of these four option vehicles. Petrie answered all Council Member questions, and the business item passed unanimously; to Council as non-consent Item.

2015-211: Authorization to Award, Negotiate and Execute Power Purchase Agreements and Facility License Agreements with Solar City Corporation. Proposed action, that the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to Award, negotiate, and execute Power Purchase Agreements

and Facility License Agreements with Solar City Corporation. Robert Rimstad, Project Manager, and Pat Jones, Assistant Director Engineering and Facilities, presented the item.

CM Commers commended the work being done and taking the Thrive MSP 2040 Outcomes for sustainability and running with them to make progress. He stated that this was good news for the agency. CM Commers followed up with a question about the recent Public Utility Commission (PUC) ruling limiting the size of arrays to 1 megawatt (MW) and what affect this had on this project. Rimstad explained that the ruling did have an effect on the Environmental Services planned Community Solar Garden (CSG) at the Empire plant that limited the size of that system from 10 MW to 5 MW since sites that met certain project requirements, were grandfathered into the program since there was not initially a limit set. This will reduce the Metro Transit 40% subscription to the Empire CSG. Pat Jones also added that each of the roof top sites are stand-alone sites and do not exceed 1MW in size, so the PUC ruling does not affect the sites in this business item.

CM Letofsky asked how these six sites were chosen. Rimstad explained that Metro Transit had been looking at our roofs for solar since 2009 when a partnership and grant with Xcel Energy was proposed, beginning with the Heywood Garage. About a year ago, when the opportunity for a Power Purchase Agreement/Facility License type of arrangement seemed financially viable, we reviewed and prioritized Metro Transit facilities. Sites were chosen based on sun exposure, roof condition, and longevity. Based on the success of this project, future sites will be considered for a second phase, including the Heywood 2 Garage and the two light rail extension operations and maintenance facilities.

CM Elkins asked about how this fit into the TPP work plan item on greenhouse emissions. Arlene McCarthy responded that Transportation and Community Development staff have not yet started on the TPP work plan item to study strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

CM Dorfman asked how the Hennepin County solar array was performing out at their Medina facility. Jones responded that we don't know the exact details about it, but it is still up and functioning and the system performance is available to view online.

Brian Lamb asked Pat Jones to talk about how the economics have improved in the past 5 years. Jones responded that when we first started looking at solar in 2009, paybacks of systems were in the 50 year range. The material costs have come down dramatically, efficiency of panels continues to improve, and systems are easier to install. This project will realize a positive cash flow in just a few years.

CM Munt motioned to approve the business item and CM Rodriguez seconded the motion. The motion was approved and the business item goes to Council as a non-consent item.

## **INFORMATION**

1. MTS Regional Ridership Report (John Harper 651-602-1744).
2. Central Avenue Traffic Signal Priority (Lisa Johnson 612-349-7570, Gary Nyberg 612-349-7303)

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 5:54 p.m.

Linda Thayer  
Recording Secretary