

Minutes of the

REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

February 26, 2018

LOCATION: Metropolitan Council Chambers, Saint Paul, MN

Committee Members Present: Acting Chair Lona Schreiber, Deb Barber, Jon Commers, Gail Dorfman, Steve Elkins, Cara Letofsky, Marie McCarthy, Edward Reynoso

Committee Members Absent: Chair Katie Rodriguez, Jennifer Munt

TAB Liaison Present: Peter Dugan

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum was present when Acting Chair Schreiber called the regular meeting of the Council's Transportation Committee to order at 4:05pm on Monday, February 26, 2018 in the Metropolitan Council Chambers, Saint Paul, MN.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Motion by Elkins, seconded by Letofsky to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Motion by Reynoso, seconded by Barber to approve the minutes of the February 12, 2018 regular meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

Employee Recognition – Metro Transit:

Metro Transit Deputy General Manager Mark Fuhrmann on behalf of General Manager Brian Lamb introduced the following, who presented recognition awards to employees:

Metro Transit Bus Transportation Director Christi Bailly, who presented to:

Metro Transit Bus Operator Bradford Benner

Metro Transit Field Operations Assistant Director David Hanson introduced the following, who presented recognition awards to employees:

Metro Transit Street Operations Manager Chang Yang who presented to:

Metro Transit District Streets Supervisor Dan Craig

Metro Transit District Streets Supervisor Nabell Khoury

Metro Transit District Streets Supervisor Bruce Otiso

Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Nick Thompson presented recognition awards to the following Metropolitan Council employees for their work on the Metro Mobility Task Force mandated by the Minnesota Legislature:

Metropolitan Council Enterprise Initiative Manager Lesley Kandaras

Metropolitan Council Community Relations Specialist Zoë Mullendore

TAB LIAISON REPORT

Peter Dugan relayed the following information from the last TAB meeting:

Autonomous Vehicles

There will be informational items related to autonomous vehicles coming before the Transportation Committee soon.

Corridors of Commerce

The Corridors of Commerce received a total of 150 comments, 75 from the Metro.

VW Settlement

A handout from TAB was shared detailing the current status of the VW Settlement, or Beneficiary Mitigation Plan. The Phase One goals are for the disbursement of \$11.75 million of the \$47 million received over the ten years, these goals are flexible and may be adjusted. Currently, the funds are divided thus: school bus replacement (20% of funds), heavy duty on-the-road vehicles (35% of funds), heavy duty off-the-road vehicles (15% of funds), heavy duty electric vehicle programs (15% of funds), and electric vehicle charging stations (15% of funds). 60% of the violating vehicles were in the Twin Cities, so the Twin Cities will receive 60% of the settlement funds.

MAC

The Metropolitan Airports Commission reported that Sun Country is outsourcing ground services, airport construction is starting again, Jet Blue is starting service to one destination on May 18, 2018.

TAB Operations

A handout regarding the TAB streamlined process was shared. TAB discussed how scope changes will be evaluated: a dollar amount or kind-for-kind, etc. A Task Force has been commissioned by the Technical Advisory Committee to consider this.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR AND METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Nick Thompson reported:

TPP

The TPP Draft is on schedule, March 8, 2018 recommendations will start coming from TAC subcommittees and TAC.

Legislative Session

The legislative session has started and there are multiple hearings this week. There are hearings on the Metropolitan Council's budget, as well as a presentation of findings from the Metro Mobility Task Force.

Corridors of Commerce

Last Friday MnDOT sent the list of projects to be scored for the Metro area. MTS staff are starting to go through the ~76 projects that will be evaluated and discerning which should be supported. Metropolitan planning organizations have 60 days to offer letters of support for projects.

Suburban Transit Providers

The distribution of funds has moved to a block grant process. Distribution percentages have been established for the four suburban providers and that percentage will not change. The final allocation percentages were sent out to the four suburban providers last Friday, February 23, 2018.

Metro Transit Deputy General Manager on behalf of General Manager Brian Lamb reported:

Commuter Choice Awards

Council members are invited to encourage nominations to our upcoming Commuter Choice Awards, which celebrates individuals, organizations and businesses that are advancing sustainable transportation in the region. There are six award categories, including employer and government entity of the year. Nominations are due by March 7, and the awards will be presented at a luncheon on Thursday, April 26, at the 514 Event Center in Minneapolis. Find more at metrotransit.org/commuter-choice-awards

Police Awards

Council members are also invited to join us as we celebrate Metro Transit police at the department's annual awards ceremony. The awards will be held at the Midpointe Event Center in St. Paul at 2:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 21. Officers will be recognized for extraordinary efforts, and the department will also use the event to name and recognize their Officer of the Year.

Transit Driver Appreciation Day

Metro Transit will join transit agencies and customers across the country in celebrating its operators on Transit Driver Appreciation Day next month. Meals will be provided at each of our garages and light rail facilities on Thursday, March, March 15. We'll also be encouraging staff and customers to write commendations and share thank-you cards with their operators on that day. The thank-you cards can be downloaded and printed at metrotransit.org/transit-driver-day.

(Note: Will be distributing materials. This is more of a Save the Date at this point.)

St. Patrick's Day Free Rides

Metro Transit and MillerCoors are teaming up again to offer free rides on all Metro Transit routes from 6 p.m. until 3 a.m. on St. Patrick's Day, Saturday, March 17. Free rides will also be available on all MTS routes, MVTA and Anoka Transit. In 2017, nearly 53,000 free rides were provided. MillerCoors underwrites the cost of the free rides and together we encourage people to celebrate the holiday responsibly.

BUSINESS

Consent Items:

Motion was made by Reynoso, seconded by Elkins and carried, to approve the following consent items:

1. **2018-51:** 2018-2021 TIP Amendment: MnDOT Traffic Management Projects

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council concur with the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) action to amend the 2018-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to increase the cost of a MnDOT traffic management project (SP # 8825-614) and add another MnDOT traffic management project (SP # 8825-664).

2. **2018-52:** 2018-2021 TIP Amendment: MnDOT Water Resources Projects

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council concur with the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) action to amend the 2018-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to add two MnDOT water resources projects (SP # 8825-558 and SP # 8825-681).

3. **2018-53:** 2018-2021 TIP Amendment: Metropolitan Council Travel Behavior Inventory

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council concur with the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) action to amend the 2018-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to add the Metropolitan Council's Travel Behavior Inventory project (SP # 090-070-023).

Non-Consent Items:

1. **2018-45:** Southwest Light Rail Transit (Green Line Extension) Contract Award for Condemnation Appraisal Services

Metro Transit SWLRT Assistant General Manager Jim Alexander presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council members.

Motion by Elkins, seconded by Barber:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute three contracts for Condemnation Appraisal Services for the Southwest LRT Project as follows:

- Integra Realty Resources not to exceed \$500,000
- Patchin Messner Dodd & Brumm not to exceed \$500,000
- RLS Valuation Services not to exceed \$500,000

Motion carried. Hearing no objection, Acting Chair Schreiber stated this item could proceed as Consent to Council.

2. **2018-37 SW:** Amendment to the 2018 Unified Planning Work Program

Metropolitan Transportation Services Senior Planner Katie White presented this item. Schreiber asked which systems the Freeway System-to-System Interchange Study includes. MTS Director Nick Thompson responded that there are about 50-52 interchanges that qualify for this study. An example of a selected interchange is the 35W and 494 interchange. In almost every case, the interchange is one where two state freeways come together: MnDOT-level roads.

Motion by Dorfman, seconded by Barber:

That the Metropolitan Council amend the 2018 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to include the System to System Interchange Study.

Motion carried.

INFORMATION

1. TAP Update

Metro Transit Revenue Operations Supervisor Mary Capistrant presented this item.

McCarthy asked if we have services that go all the way to the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe tribe area or if the partnership listed is for their members in the Twin Cities. Capistrant said they are allowed to distribute the cards to those who can use it, and Capistrant does not think we have services that far north. Reynoso asked how the agreements with individual high schools are structured because we have agreements with school districts but in those cases the school districts pay the discounted rate. Capistrant stated that the individual schools came to Metro Transit and said that all of their students qualify for free and reduced lunch. Reynoso expressed his concern that the schools are circumventing the regular school system. Capistrant said she will bring this back to the program. Dorfman shared that homeless individuals using shelters receive a community card and do not often have another form of identification, so she is grateful the community card is being accepted. Dorfman said that a suggestion she has heard is to add a small incentive for folks to sign up for a TAP card. Letofsky asked how we quantify the statement that more people are taking more rides with TAP. Capistrant replied that rides are tracked on a monthly basis. Letofsky asked for clarification whether individuals were tracked or if it was tracked as a group. Capistrant said that the product is tracked as a group. Elkins shared that he has received feedback from a TAP partner that TAP helps connect people with jobs. Capistrant responded that this program is seeking ways to further support current partners and new ones. Barber requested that schools are asked to share what the passes are being used for by students. Capistrant

said she will follow-up. Metro Transit Finance Director Ed Petrie shared that the card being used is a Go-To Card and can be tracked, thus how it is known that 60% are local routes. McCarthy asked for the estimate of program costs. Capistrant said that the program estimates were initially \$2 - \$3 million a year, but the program is currently running below estimates.

2. Annual Park & Ride Survey Results

Metro Transit Manager Planning & Urban Design Anna Flintoft and Metro Transit Engineering & Facilities Intern Soobin Choi presented this item.

McCarthy asked for clarification on the closure of East Bethel and Family of Christ Lutheran Church locations; what happens with locations when they close. Flintoft said that the facilities were leased by Anoka County so they were not permanent facilities. Dorfman asked if there has been a comparison study done to know how our system capacity and usage compare nationally. Flintoft said that Park & Ride trends mimic bus ridership. Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Nick Thompson shared that the ridership data will be shown in the next information item and ridership data trends are easier to compare with peers. Elkins commented that he thought we were one of the larger Park & Rides systems in the country. Barber asked if there is an optimal capacity number. Flintoft answered that we built for future demand and have not seen it grow as quickly as expected. McCarthy asked if facility use for the State Fair is taken into consideration when averages are generated. Flintoft said that the last week of September and first week of October is when the snapshot is taken to generate averages to ensure that the averages reflect the typical commuter and not ridership from an event.

3. 2017 Ridership Report

Metropolitan Transportation Services Contracted Transit Services Manager John Harper presented this item.

Dorfman asked when local bus reductions were first seen trending. Metro Transit Deputy General Manager Mark Fuhrmann invited Metro Transit Finance Director Ed Petrie to share. Petrie said that local ridership has been trending downwards for the last 2-2.5 years, prior to that it had leveled off. Dorfman asked if the reduction in gas prices and increase of fares were a cause of the downward trend. Petrie said American Public Transit Association has reported that ridership is down nationally due to low fuel prices. Elkins shared that he has read articles that Uber and Lyft are having an impact in off-peak hours nationally, he asked if our off-peak ridership has dropped, presumably due to Transportation Network Companies (TNCs). Petrie said he believes we have seen an off-peak ridership drop but he will follow-up. Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Nick Thompson shared that last Wednesday, Metro Mobility had 9,300 Metro Mobility riders which was 1,000 more than the program has ever had in a single day. Overall, Thompson said that ridership appears to have rebounded strongly. Elkins asked if the TNCs were impacting Metro Mobility ridership as well. Thompson said that we have anecdotal data but no quantitative evidence. Dorfman said that we anticipated the downfall with the ridership fare increase, but we estimated that it would be recovered, she asked the timeframe we had initially estimated for that recovery. Petrie said that we had estimated about 4.5-5% ridership loss and that it would take about 24 months to recover that ridership loss. McCarthy asked if the closure of some express bus service routes last year was a substantial number in regard to impacting the reduction of ridership. Petrie stated that routes with low ridership impact were part of those closures so they would have had nominal impact on the overall ridership loss numbers.

4. 2018 Transportation Committee Work Plan Draft

Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Nick Thompson and Metro Transit Deputy General Manager Mark Fuhrmann on behalf of General Manager Brian Lamb presented this item.

Elkins asked the current status on the consultant being hired to study fare policy. Thompson said the final draft will reflect that. Commers commented that ridesharing could be a fundamental business management issue for Metro Transit, he shared that he would be interested in knowing the business strategy side of the issue. Fuhrmann suggested that MnDOT and Hennepin County be invited to share with the Transportation Committee since they are hosting autonomous vehicle demonstrations. Commers commented that for the operational purpose of our business, ridesharing and autonomous vehicles are converging. Fuhrmann stated that initial Blue Line vehicles are now mid-life and investment options are being considered. Fuhrmann expressed his hope for the outcome of the legislative session to reflect full funding for the D Line project and the sixth bus garage and maintenance facility. Commers asked for information on the continuity of BRT lines. Fuhrmann shared that September 10, 2018 has a big picture update, but each time an individual line is brought before the committee, a context can be provided. Dorfman asked what the transition looks like when a new Minnesota Governor is selected. Fuhrmann shared that there is some carryover, the current tenure continues into early 2019, historically Quarter 1. Fuhrmann added that then the Council calls out for nominations of Councilmembers; historically, that then goes through the nomination committee that interviews candidates. Fuhrmann said that typically the Chairperson is identified/nominated first and then the 16 districts.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 5:45pm.

Jenna Ernst
Recording Secretary