

## Minutes of the

### REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

May 13, 2019

LOCATION: Metropolitan Council Chambers, Saint Paul, MN

**Committee Members Present: Chair Deb Barber, Lynnea Atlas-Ingebretson, Reva Chamblis, Molly Cummings, Christopher Ferguson, Kris Fredson, Francisco Gonzalez, Phillip Sterner, Raymond Zeran**

**Committee Members Absent:**

**TAB Liaison Present:**

#### CALL TO ORDER

A quorum was present when Chair Barber called the regular meeting of the Council's Transportation Committee to order at 4:00 p.m. on Monday, May 13, 2019 in the Metropolitan Council Chambers, Saint Paul, MN.

#### APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Motion by Cummings, seconded by Gonzalez to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Motion by Gonzalez, seconded by Zeran to approve the minutes of the April 22, 2019 regular meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

#### METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR AND METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Nick Thompson reported:

##### Location Changes

The Transportation Committee meetings will remain at Robert Street through the rest of 2019 due to construction at Heywood.

##### Revenue Reports

The Council receives monthly updated revenue reports. The budget is conservative, assuming for 95% of what is forecast, this year MVST is coming in at only 92% so the trend is being closely watched.

##### 7W

MTS Staff and Council Members Zeran and Johnson attended a meeting with partners in Sherburne and Wright Counties who are in the urbanized areas of the MPO region. Three major projects recently funded were discussed and the subject of Big Data was brought up as well.

Metro Transit General Manager Wes Kooistra reported:

##### Summer Student Passes

Passes that allow area high schoolers to ride transit for one low cost through the summer will go on sale later this week. Summer Students Passes can be purchased online and at Service Centers beginning Wednesday, May 15, 2019. The passes cost \$29 and are available to current ninth- to twelfth grade students attending a participating high school. With a Summer Student Pass, students can take unlimited bus and light rail rides between June 1 and September 3. Last summer, 7,000 students from 150 area schools used Summer Student Passes to take nearly 500,000 rides.

Student Passes that allow high schoolers to take unlimited rides during the

school year are available at Minneapolis public high schools and more than 40 other area schools.

### Record Light Rail Ridership

In April, Metro Transit celebrated the fact that Blue and Green lines each set single-day ridership records when the NCAA men's championship game was held at U.S. Bank Stadium. The boost seen from Final Four activities also led each light rail line to have record-setting monthly ridership. There were more than 1.35 million Green Line rides and nearly 974,000 Blue Line rides in April, the highest April ridership each line has ever seen. April was also the first month in which total ridership surpassed the same month in 2018. Nearly 6.9 million rides were taken in April. Year to date, Metro Transit provided more than 24.86 million rides.

### Rail Repairs Continue

Buses will replace trains on sections of the METRO Green and Blue lines this weekend as there is continued repair of rail that cracked amid this winter's historically cold weather. Replacement buses will begin running on Friday evening and continue until early Monday morning. Buses are replacing trains between Target Field and Franklin Avenue on the Blue Line and between Target Field and Stadium Village on the Green Line. As usual, Metro Transit and partners will use this opportunity to get as much work done as possible. In addition to repairing rail, work will be occurring at station platforms, skyways and on the Washington Avenue bridge. Light rail stations will be power washed, as is done at the start of each spring. Fans attending Minnesota United's match at Allianz Field on Saturday, May 18, are encouraged to use the A Line or board at Stadium Village Station. Sections of the Blue Line are scheduled to be taken out of service at the end of this month to allow for additional rail maintenance and other construction activities at the airport.

Sterner asked about fuel sources. Kooistra said there is a plan for electrification over time but evaluation needs to happen as the procurement happens so that the technology can be tested.

## **BUSINESS**

### **Consent Items:**

There were no consent items on the agenda.

### **Non-Consent Items:**

#### **1. 2019-104: Elimination of Route 614 Service**

Metro Transit Senior Planner Steve Mahowald presented this item.

Sterner asked if there were certain times the service could have been adjusted where there was a spike in riders or if each ride averages two riders. Mahowald said there is only one that has a spike like that at 4:20pm and it is in the peak of the peak so there is no bus alternative. Atlas-Ingebretson asked if dial-a-ride would be an option. Mahowald said it is not guaranteed but standing orders can be done. Cummings asked for the closest route to this one being eliminated. Mahowald said there is peak period service from Minnetonka Heights to downtown and off-peak service has pickup in the Ridgedale and Hopkins area. Cummings asked about ridership security and Mahowald said those alternatives are secure, and the Green Line extension is being worked on as well.

Motion by Ferguson, seconded by Zeran:

That the Metropolitan Council authorizes the elimination of Route 614 service.

Motion carried. Hearing no objection, Chair Barber stated this item could proceed as consent to Council.

2. **2019-108:** Bus Rapid Transit (METRO Gold Line) Rights of Entry, Resolution 2019-6  
Metro Transit BRT Projects Director Charles Carlson and Metro Transit Environmental Lead Chelsea Johnson presented this item.

There were no questions or comments from Council Members.

Motion by Fredson, seconded by Gonzalez:

That the Metropolitan Council adopt Resolution 2019-6 that authorizes access to property for survey, environmental testing, geotechnical investigations including subsurface utility engineering, and archeological investigations in accordance with Minnesota Statutes Chapters 473 and 117.

Motion carried. Hearing no objection, Chair Barber stated this item could proceed as consent to Council.

3. **2019-111:** Bus Farebox Replacement and Equipment Upgrade  
Metro Transit Revenue Processing Manager Dennis Dworshak presented this item.

Chamblis asked if there are additional features that the current fareboxes do not have. Dworshak said there are features that can be turned on in the future, which were not included in this purchase. Chamblis asked if change can be provided. Dworshak said that would require change to be added each night and that task is insurmountable with over a thousand buses; the ticket vending machines that it is done for have about 20 to 30 thousand dollar coins gone through per week to give change to customers. Gonzalez asked about the current system being 27 years old. Dworshak said the system worked well and there was no need to upgrade it before now. Zeran asked how this will improve the experience for riders. Dworshak said there is a swipe capability so customers can move past the farebox much faster but it is a validating farebox which can take longer, unlike the current farebox which could take folded bills. Sterner asked if the durability should last as long, Dworshak said that is what is being anticipated.

Motion by Sterner, seconded by Chamblis:

That the Metropolitan Council authorizes the purchase up to 110 Fastfare bus fareboxes and auxiliary equipment for an amount not to exceed \$2,000,000, with four additional one-year options for additional fareboxes in an amount not to exceed \$11,000,000 (\$13,000,000 total).

Motion carried. Hearing no objection, Chair Barber stated this item could proceed as consent to Council.

## **INFORMATION**

### 1. Regional Solicitation

Metropolitan Transportation Services Highway Planning & TAB/TAC Manager Steve Peterson presented this item.

Chamblis asked about activated crosswalks and what makes it safe. Peterson said HAWK is for mid-block crossing that interacts with the lights once a button is pushed at the crosswalk to notify drivers that they need to stop. Atlas-Ingebretson asked for current measures used for equity and housing. Peterson said measures include: location being in an area of disadvantage, what are benefits and how are negative effects being mitigated, what public outreach has been done and what was the public

response. Peterson said regarding housing there is a housing score and that score is used. Cummings asked how these investments are evaluated and how that impacts current awards. Peterson said the current before-and-after study is being done right now with a consultant and that information has been presented to TAB and changes have been made based on those findings. Atlas-Ingebretson asked if information can be collected. Peterson said the last three cycles have seen an improvement. Atlas-Ingebretson asked if all communities have a Complete Streets policy. Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Nick Thompson said this will be looked into for additional information. Council Chair Nora Slawik talked about the TAB and the policymakers who serve on it and encouraged Council Members to reach out to the TAB members. Council Chair Slawik asked if an analysis has been done on the equity scoring. Thompson said that the equity criteria has shown to have an impact on projects and the scoring team is going to have recommendations for applicants moving forward into the next round. Council Chair Slawik asked if the Council will ever see these recommendations and Thompson said it can be brought to the Transportation Committee, Equity Advisory Committee, full Council. Fredson asked if 80% of federal funding is typical and about the local funds left on the table. Peterson said the federal funds depend on the modal type, interchange projects have it almost flipped with 80% local funding. Peterson said the leveraging of local dollars is something being considered if more points should be given for those who bring more funding, each cycle the merits of that approach is debated. Cummings asked about funding timing. Peterson said the TAB funding is usually the first funding in, which also means that the projects meet the goals of THRIVE and the TPP. Thompson said there are policies and processes for when a project does not receive the rest of their funding.

## 2. Metro C Line Update

Metro Transit Street Operations Assistant Manager Demetairs Bell and Metro Transit Customer Service & Marketing Director Bruce Howard presented this item.

Atlas-Ingebretson commented on air quality and a commitment to cleaner air. Atlas Ingebretson asked if BRT buses have charging and Wi-Fi on board. Bell said the C Line buses will. Fredson said living off the A Line he knows this will be a game changer as well and he asked for more information on the Quantum wheelchair securement and how it is different. Fredson also asked why charging stations are needed and overnight charging is not sufficient. Bell said the buses cannot get below a certain percentage and the corridor is 17 miles so a round trip will put them under the 20% standard. Bell said the Quantum seems quicker to get passengers on board. Gonzalez asked if these electric buses are the ones made in Saint Cloud and if that is being promoted, Bell answered in the affirmative. Cummings asked how the operators are chosen. Bell said work is picked based on seniority.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 5:31 p.m.

Jenna Ernst  
Recording Secretary