

Minutes of the

REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

August 10, 2020

LOCATION: Due to COVID-19 this meeting was held electronically.

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

Committee Members Absent: Francisco Gonzalez, Phillip Sterner

TAAC Liaison Present: None

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum was present when Chair Barber called the regular meeting of the Council's Transportation Committee to order at 4:01p.m. on Monday, August 10, 2020.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Barber stated the TAAC representative was not able to join the meeting, so the TAAC Report will be skipped.

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

Aye: 5 Atlas-Ingebretson, Cummings, Ferguson, Zeran, Barber

Nay: 0

Absent: 4 Chamblis, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Zeran, seconded by Cummings to approve the minutes of the July 27, 2020 regular meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

Aye: 5 Atlas-Ingebretson, Cummings, Ferguson, Zeran, Barber

Nay: 0

Absent: 4 Chamblis, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR AND METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Nick Thompson reported:

Public Comment

Public comment on the Draft Update to the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan and the Draft 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) ends today at 5 PM. A summary of comments and responses will be provided at future meetings.

MTS Operations Update

This week the transition of food shelf goods delivery service from Metro Mobility providers to Transit Link Providers was completed. This transition is needed because Metro Mobility ridership is growing to a point where they cannot provide food delivery service at the demand needed, and because Transit Link has capacity. The demand for the services from Food Shelves remains strong and at constant levels, and it's anticipated this service will be able continued at least through the end of 2020. Last week there was one positive COVID tests among contractor employees. To date there have been 43 positive tests, and 34 have been able to return to work. Contractors are reporting no issues with staffing levels needed to meet service demands. Drivers are distributing masks to any customer who is attempting to board without a mask, and are reporting good supply of masks available

Metro Transit General Manager Wes Kooistra reported:

Southwest LRT

The FTA announced that the Southwest FFGA advanced to the 30-day Congressional review. It is appropriate to recognize that this is the result of years of tremendous staff work and perseverance and well as the leadership of Council and Hennepin County policy makers.

COVID Response Update

On August 1, Metro Transit returned to front door boarding on non-BRT buses. Staff continue to distribute masks to customers, about 50,000 so far. There has been a total of 62 cases at Metro Transit with a monthly breakdown of:

April: 6

May: 27

June: 11

July: 11

Aug: 6

Listening and Learning through Crises Effort

As noted in the Chair Daily Report and in the August edition of *Connect*, staff are engaging with riders on our busiest route and boarding areas during the month of August to understand how this year's crises are affecting our riders. It is important that we reach out to our customers to both demonstrate our in providing better services during this time and to better understand the changes in our riders' perspectives on transit. Also available is an online survey through August 27th.

Cummings stated she has received numerous positive comments and appreciation for staff's efforts with the mask distribution.

BUSINESS

Consent Items:

There were no consent items on the agenda.

Non-Consent Items:

1. **2020-201:** On Board Technology Contract Award
Metropolitan Transportation Services Systems Manager Jesse English presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council members.

Motion by Cummings, seconded by Atlas-Ingebretson:

That the Transportation Committee authorize the Regional Administrator to execute Contract 19P383A with Procellis Technology, Inc. to provide contracted maintenance, installation and repair services for technology equipment on the MTS fleet for a period of not more than five years, and in an amount not to exceed \$6,044,000.

Motion carried.

Aye: 6 Atlas-Ingebretson, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Zeran, Barber

Nay: 0

Absent: 3 Chamblis, Gonzalez, Sterner

2. **2020-219:** METRO D Line – Real Estate Acquisition and Condemnation, Resolution 2020-209
Metro Transit BRT Projects Assistant Director Katie Roth introduced Metro Transit BRT Project Manager Shahin Khazrajafari who presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council members.

Motion by Atlas-Ingebretson, seconded by Fredson:

That the Metropolitan Council pass Resolution 2020-9 authorizing acquisition of temporary and permanent easements necessary for the METRO D Line BRT Project and associated locally requested scope, as well as authorizing Council staff to initiate condemnation proceedings on behalf of the Council and local agency partners, for parcels that cannot be acquired by negotiation.

Motion carried.

Aye: 6 Atlas-Ingebretson, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Zeran, Barber

Nay: 0

Absent: 3 Chamblis, Gonzalez, Sterner

INFORMATION

1. TAP & Access Pass Updates

Metro Transit Revenue Operations Senior Manager Nick Eull introduced Metro Transit TAP Coordinator Andrea Kiepe and Metro Transit Events & Fare Program Specialist Nick Gorell who presented this item. Atlas-Ingebretson supported the work of TAP and stated the Council should continue to make concerted efforts towards moving to a \$0 fare, while continuing to think of ways to make transit more accessible and removing barriers. Chamblis asked about the organizations that would want to convert to Access Pass and how many passes would be added when Hennepin County converts. Gorell responded that there are 5 or 6 medical assistance organizations and that it would encompass all branches of Hennepin County but didn't have an exact number. Chamblis asked how an organization can understand their bill prior to end of the month. Gorell answered that through the Access Pass portal, organizations can generate reports at any time to monitor usage. Several Council members expressed gratitude for both these programs and thanked staff for their creativity.

2. 2021 Preliminary Operating Budget Info

Metro Transit Finance Director Ed Petrie, Metropolitan Transportation Services Finance Director Heather Aagesen-Huebner and Metro Transit Chief of Staff Lesley Kandaras presented this item. Ferguson asked what is going to be done differently to achieve equity goals. Metro Transit General Manager Wes Kooistra responded that equity must be part of how we do business and are currently having the tough discussion and work to be more intentionally about measuring our goals. Kooistra continued that he has asked Strategic Initiatives department to see how we measure our success and making that a key performance indicator; in addition, we will apply an equity lens to service development on a quarterly basis. Chair Barber added that we will plan to have staff bring information back measurement of equity goals as the process evolves.

Atlas-Ingebretson asked why the following three things were left out of the investments and programs

that have contributed to advancing equity: employee town hall meetings, community ambassador program and the work underway on tracking MTPD as it relates to stops by race and age. Kandaras responded that these weren't intentionally left out. Kandaras explained that the Metro Transit town hall was co-hosted by General Manager Kooistra and the Equity & Inclusion team and was a chance to share initial results of comments that had been received from staff regarding equity in the workplace, how to improve, etc. and that the E&I are supplementing the town hall with finding additional ways to engage staff to ensure all voices are heard. Atlas-Ingebretson stated she is hearing there is a culture of Sr. Leaders at Metro Transit who don't value our equity efforts and what happens when a leader indicates in their behaviors or words, they aren't interested in equity work. Chair Barber responded that she would connect General Manager Kooistra and Atlas-Ingebretson offline to ensure we are discussion personnel issues in the correct format.

Chamblis asked were the additional \$1M that MTS recently received came from. Aagesen-Huebner answered this was federal CARES Act funds that are being routed to us through MnDOT. Fredson appreciated the challenging of preparing for next year and asked if we consider planning for an uptick in COVID or even budgeting with the expectation that COVID would fade next year. Petrie responded that from a Metro Transit perspective the 2021 budget assumes the level of cleaning we are doing today, will become an expectation moving forward and have included that into the budget. Petrie continued that we have assumed an 80% service level for next year, but we have a quarterly review of service so will continue to monitor and edit has needed. Fredson expressed his concern for the impacts on the economy moving forward and would be interested to hear what other states/transit agencies are doing to fund transportation outside of sources that are so dependent on the economy. Chair Barber responded that staff might already have that information and if so can put a summer together.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 6:24p.m.

Becky Davidson
Recording Secretary