

Minutes of the

REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

November 22, 2021

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

Committee Members Present: Reva Chamblis, Molly Cummings, Christopher Ferguson, Kris Fredson, Francisco Gonzalez, Raymond Zeran

Committee Members Absent: Deb Barber, Phillip Sterner

TAB Liaison Present: Peter Dugan

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum was present when Vice Chair Chamblis called the regular meeting of the Council's Transportation Committee to order at 4:01p.m. on Monday, November 22, 2021.

AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Fredson, seconded by Cummings to approve the minutes of the November 8, 2021 regular meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

Aye: 6 Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Zeran

Nay: 0

Absent: 2 Barber, Sterner

PUBLIC COMMENT

The committee heard public testimony from ATU President Ryan Timlin and ATU Union Rep/Stewards Ron Kammueler and John Hawthorne regarding opposition for business item 2021-325: *Rust Mitigation of Bombardier Light Rail Vehicles, Contract 20P035* which passed at the November 8th Transportation Committee and will be before Council on December 8th.

TAB REPORT

Dugan shared agency reports and stated most of the discussion at TAB was regarding the business items on today's agenda. There are three items to be brought to Council members attention:

- Updated Regional Truck Corridors for regional solicitation grants – the technical work group that did the original study and local agencies participated in the recent study and the results are: 46.9% of the truck corridors are tier 1, 26% tier 2, 26% tier 3 for a total for 1288 miles of regional truck corridors; there were several proposed additions to the regional corridors primarily in southeast and east metro and all bring tier 3
- Approval of the functional classification map of roadways within the metro; this is done so we can qualify for federal transportation funds
- Discussion on how to distribute approximately \$5M in CMAQ funding which has been returned because it was not used for a park n ride at I94 & Manning; CMAQ grants are primary used on transit, travel demand management and travel technologies. There were three options on how to distribute: future regional solicitation, bus rapid transit and any transit corridor projects. Staff suggested the primary option should be moving the funds to the 2022

regional solicitation and the TAC also had unanimously recommended that.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR AND METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

Metropolitan Transportation Services Acting Director Amy Vennewitz reported:

RAISE Grants

US DOT announced the awards of almost \$1B nationwide in 2021 RAISE grants. These grants are competitive grants, formally known as BUILD grants. Minnesota received three grants, all of them in the metro area totaling \$16M. The three grants awarded were: \$1.4M to the City of St. Paul for the Rondo neighborhood street improvement study, \$8M to Scott County for the US 169 trunk highway 282 interchange project, and \$6.5M to MnDOT for trunk highway 5 and trunk highway 61 improvement project.

Metro Transit General Manager Wes Kooistra reported:

COVID

To date there have been 613 cases at Metro Transit, with 36 cases since last meeting. So far in November there has been 55 cases in comparison to 129 cases in November 2020. Some work units have had to modify schedules and offer additional overtime due to overlapping leaves. 78% of Metro Transit employees have reported as fully vaccinated and since the start of the Council's weekly testing requirement for unvaccinated employees there have been 40 positive cases.

Operator Hiring Update

As of this morning, Metro Transit is 72 operators below the ideal level with 19 full time students in training. The November hiring events were lightly attended, with about 10 total prospective applicants. Based on today's figures, Metro Transit is projected to start the December service changes about 14 operators below planned levels but think it can be managed to provide reliable service.

Orange Line

Orange Line opening is on December 4th. Service begins at 6:00am and operates every 30 minutes on weekends and every 15 minutes on weekdays. Council members and the public are invited to attend the ribbon cutting and opening ceremony at 1:00pm, outside on street level of the I-35W & Lake Street station. There will be food vendors, entertainment, and partner information tables from 2:00 – 4:00pm. Following the ribbon cutting, public officials will ride an Orange Line bus to Burnsville Heart of the City station where another event will be happening from 2:00 – 4:00pm. Rides on Orange Line only will be free the entire weekend and through Monday, December 6th. Staff ambassadors will be riding buses to assist customers. Fare collection will start on Tuesday, December 7th and staff ambassadors will be at stations to assist customers with fare technology and answer questions.

BUSINESS

Consent Items:

Motion was made by Fredson, seconded by Cummings and carried, to approve the following consent items:

Aye: 5 Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Zeran

Nay: 0

Absent: 3 Barber, Gonzalez, Sterner

1. 2021-334: 2022-2025 TIP Amendment: MnDOT MN 3 Railroad Bridge Funding

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council adopt an amendment to the 2022-2025 TIP to increase the cost of MnDOT's railroad bridge rehabilitation project.

2. **2021-335:** 2022-2025 TIP Amendment: MnDOT I-94 Maintenance

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council adopt an amendment to the 2022-2025 TIP to adjust the funding and length of MnDOT's I-94 maintenance project in the East Metro.

3. **2021-336:** 2022-2025 TIP Amendment: US 169 Noise Wall Project

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council adopt an amendment to the 2022-2025 TIP to increase the scope, cost and length of MnDOT's US 169 noise wall project in Edina.

Non-Consent Items:

1. **2021-240:** Approve the 2021 Title VI Service and Facilities Standards Monitoring Study
Metro Transit Route Planning Manager Cyndi Harper presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council members.

Motion by Cummings, seconded by Fredson:

That the Metropolitan Council approve the results of the 2021 Title VI Service and Facilities Standards Monitoring Study, which shows no disparate impact on communities of color and no disproportionate burden on low-income communities.

Motion carried.

Aye: 6 Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Zeran

Nay: 0

Absent: 2 Barber, Sterner

2. **2021-306:** SWLRT (Green Line Extension) Civil Construction Change Order – Kenilworth Sheet Pile Installation, Contract Number 15P307A

Metro Transit SWLRT Project Director Jim Alexander presented this item. Zeran asked why there continues to be cost overruns and asked if there was a plan to mitigate the soil conditions. Alexander responded that sheet pile delays and the need for this change order were brought to Council Members' attention earlier this year when the Secant Pile Wall was added to the Project. The sheet piles serve as the support of excavation to allow the tunnel to be built within the excavated area. It was determined during design that a press-in pile method be used to install the sheet piles due to concerns with vibrations with nearby properties. Alexander stated that as the work got underway the sheet piles, which are up to 65 feet in length, did not go in as easily as originally intended. This required the contractor to use a supporting method to assist sheet pile installation by drilling ahead of the sheet piles with an auger as the sheets were pushed into the ground with the press-in piler; as a result, settlement was observed at the ground surface adjacent to the sheet piles. This required the Project Team to reassess the approach as such settlement was determined to be unacceptable where the sheet piles were planned immediately adjacent to residential structures. This unforeseen condition led to delays in sheet pile installation. Out of an abundance of caution it was determined that an alternative support of excavation method be used for an approximately 500-foot segment of the roughly one-half mile long tunnel where it runs immediately adjacent to the residential structures. The alternative support method consists of a Secant Pile Wall, in which the Council approved a change order earlier this year. Zeran asked if the press and pile is a new or unproven technology and if going forward if there is a way to mitigate the vibration and noise pollution to get this in without a cost overrun. Alexander responded that the technology has been in use around the world for several years. It was also noted that all of the sheet piles have since been now installed. Cummings encouraged all Council members to tour this segment of the line as it gives an in depth understanding of the challenges working in the corridor which is so narrow. The abundance of caution is reflected in taking these extra, while expensive, steps. Cummings thanked project staff for their work on mitigating the challenges while being fiscally responsible. Ferguson asked where we are at for total funding for the project; and do we have enough funding to complete the project. Alexander responded that recently \$200M was added to the project

from Hennepin County, bringing the total budget to \$2.2B. With the two significant issues (unforeseen conditions in the Kenilworth corridor related to the tunnel construction and the introduction of the corridor protection wall) there will be a delay in the overall project schedule, which will require additional funding. Alexander added that we are working with the contractors to update the Civil and Systems construction schedule to account for the Corridor Protection Barrier and Secant Pile Wall. The updated schedules will inform the revenue service date, which will in turn inform what additional budget is needed.

Motion by Cummings, seconded by Fredson:

That the Metropolitan Council (Council) authorize the Regional Administrator through the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) Council Authorized Representative to negotiate and execute a change order for Contract 15P307A with Lunda McCrossan Joint Venture (LMJV) in an amount not to exceed \$3,671,582.67.

Motion carried.

Aye: 6 Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Zeran
Nay: 0
Absent: 2 Barber, Sterner

3. **2021-311:** METRO Blue Line Extension – Amendment 7 to the HDR Contract (#14P156)
Metro Transit Community Affairs Assistant Director Sam O’Connell presented this item. Ferguson asked if the environmental work includes impact on people as it relates to displacement of people, businesses, etc. O’Connell responded that yes in addition to the anti-displacement work that will be occurring, the environmental work will include this particularly as it relates to environmental justice. Ferguson asked if we’ve learned from our past projects and updated our methodology for more accuracy, as the original assessment of the Green line indicated there would be no impact on business but we know now that there were business that had 40-60% drops in revenue as a results of construction. O’Connell answered that this is the exactly the work that the anti-displacement group will be doing, and part of that work is establishing what was done and that research will help inform our environmental work.

Motion by Ferguson, seconded by Fredson:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute Amendment No. 7 to Contract 14P156 with HDR Engineering, Inc. to add \$2,500,000 for a total contract amount not to exceed \$6,445,113.

Motion carried.

Aye: 5 Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Zeran
Nay: 0
Absent: 3 Barber, Gonzalez, Sterner

4. **2021-328:** Gold Line Master Utility Agreement #21M085 with Northern States Power Company
Metro Transit BRT Projects Assistant Director Chris Beckwith presented this item. Zeran asked that even those the FTA rules on procurement don’t apply here, can we still ask that they find and bid parts of the work to a DBE. Beckwith responded that we can certainly ask but not enforce as they are exempt from the FTA procurement requirement.

Motion by Zeran, seconded by Fredson:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute a METRO Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit (Gold Line) Master Utility Agreement (MUA) #21M085 with Northern States Power Company in an amount not to exceed \$4,800,000.

Motion carried.

Aye: 5 Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Zeran

Nay: 0

Absent: 3 Barber, Gonzalez, Sterner

5. **2021-330:** Purchase of Additional Bus Mobile Validators

Metro Transit Revenue Operations Manager Dennis Dworshak presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council members.

Motion by Fredson, seconded by Cummings:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the sole-source purchase of 163 additional bus mobile validator (BMV) devices for Metro Transit and Metropolitan Transportation Services vehicles from Cubic Transportation Systems for an amount not to exceed \$540,000.

Motion carried.

Aye: 5 Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Zeran

Nay: 0

Absent: 3 Barber, Gonzalez, Sterner

6. **2021-331:** MOU MnPass E-Z Pass Revenue Use and Distribution Agreement 21I068

Metro Transit Finance Director Ed Petrie presented this item. Cummings asked what the revenue has been in the past. Petrie responded that back in 2019, the revenue was approximately \$800k. Petrie added that since car capacity has gone down, we are anticipating the revenue in 2022 to about \$500 – 600k but once the capacity goes back up, we'd hope to see revenue in excess of \$800k.

Motion by Cummings, seconded by Fredson:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) per state statute for the revenue use and distribution of MnPASS (E-Z Pass) revenues.

Motion carried.

Aye: 5 Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Zeran

Nay: 0

Absent: 3 Barber, Gonzalez, Sterner

7. **2021-332:** Regional Transit Safety Performance Targets and 2022-2025 TIP Amendment to Incorporate Targets

Metropolitan Transportation Services Planner Daniel Pena presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council members.

Motion by Cummings, seconded by Fredson:

That the Metropolitan Council adopt the Regional Transit Safety performance targets and approve an amendment to the 2022-2025 TIP to incorporate the targets as shown in the attachment.

Motion carried.

Aye: 5 Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Zeran

Nay: 0

Absent: 3 Barber, Gonzalez, Sterner

8. **2021-333:** Release for Public Comment Draft Amendment #1 to the *2040 Transportation Policy Plan* to Amend in the Arterial Bus Rapid Transit Network Next System and Amend in the Six MnDOT Freight Project Selections

Metropolitan Transportation Services Transportation Planning Manager Cole Hiniker presented this item. Cummings and Vice Chair Chamblis thanked staff for the great work and their effort to continuing to work with the City of Bloomington on their concerns.

Motion by Cummings, seconded by Ferguson:

That, for the purposes of holding a public hearing and receiving public comment, the Metropolitan Council:

- Release the attached draft amendment #1 to the *2040 Transportation Policy Plan* to amend in the arterial bus rapid transit Network Next system and amend in six MnDOT freight project selections; and
- Authorize a public comment period from December 9, 2021, to January 24, 2022 on the draft document, including a public hearing to be held on January 10, 2022, at 4:00 PM.

Motion carried.

Aye: 5 Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Zeran

Nay: 0

Absent: 3 Barber, Gonzalez, Sterner

INFORMATION

1. Public Art Program Update

Metro Transit Public Arts Administrator Mark Granlund presented this item. Several Council members expressed their appreciation for this work and stated how it helps reflect the community in which it exists. Zeran asked what happens to the artwork when it's decommissioned. Granlund responded that there is criteria around deciding if we are going to decommission a piece including the cost of repair but before decommission the artwork is first offered back to the original artist.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 6:10p.m.

Becky Gorell
Recording Secretary