

## Minutes of the

### REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

November 8, 2021

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

**Committee Members Present: Deb Barber, Reva Chamblis, Molly Cummings, Christopher Ferguson, Kris Fredson, Phillip Sterner, Raymond Zeran**

**Committee Members Absent: Francisco Gonzalez**

**TAAC Liaison Present: David Fenley**

### CALL TO ORDER

A quorum was present when Chair Barber called the regular meeting of the Council's Transportation Committee to order at 4:02p.m. on Monday, November 8, 2021.

### AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Cummings, seconded by Ferguson to approve the minutes of the October 25, 2021 regular meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

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

Nay: 0

Absent: 3 Chamblis, Gonzalez, Sterner

### TAAC REPORT

Fenley reported the committee heard an update from Lieutenant Ammend and Lesley Kandaras on the Metro Transit Police work group and expressed appreciation that there are two folks with disabilities serving on the work group which helps put those perspectives into consideration. The committee is willing to provide any assistance to the work group as needed.

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

Metropolitan Transportation Services Acting Director Amy Vennewitz reported:

#### Metro Mobility Community Conversations

Staff held two Metro Mobility community conversations on October 26<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>. These were held virtually which did allow for a big group session and then smaller group breakout sessions. Customers were asked to provide feedback on their experiences on a variety of subjects including the new services that were provided during the pandemic. 34 guests participated and there was a good discussion with staff and contractors. While the attendance wasn't as large as previous in person events, staff received good feedback and plans to host more similar events in the future.

#### TIP Amendments

There are several TIP amendments on tonight's consent list. This is due to staff holding the items after TAB approved them, waiting for the Federal approval on the 2022-2025 TIP. Some of these amendments were in front of TAB last August/September. Final approval on the 2022-2025 TIP was received last week, so these amendments can move forward for inclusion in the TIP.

Metro Transit General Manager Wes Kooistra reported:

COVID

To date there have 570 cases at Metro Transit, with 23 cases since last meeting.

Operator Hiring Update

As of this morning, Metro Transit is 78 operators below the ideal level with 22 full time students in training. The next hiring open house events are set for November 13<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>. As shared last meeting, Metro Transit is preparing to adjust schedules as part of the quarterly pick. The changes will take effect on December 4<sup>th</sup>. Communications to customers regarding these changes started last week.

Infrastructure Bill

The US House passed the Infrastructure bill last Friday, which now heads to the President. Nationwide the bill includes \$39B of new money for public transit. Metro Transit is waiting for more information from FTA to fully assess what this means for our agency. Generally speaking, the bill includes additional formula and state of good repair funds, adds funding for transit expansion and facility improvements and includes funding for LoNo emission grant programs, which Metro Transit has successfully competed for in the past to advance the electric bus and low sulfur diesel bus programs. Once more details are received, Metro Transit will join with MTS and come back to the committee with a region wide report.

**BUSINESS**

**Consent Items:**

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

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

1. **2021-283:** Authorize Execution of Contract Options with Gillig LLC Utilizing the State of Washington’s Gillig Bus Contract – 3 Thirty-Foot Buses (Expansion) 21P354  
Motion: That the Metropolitan Council Authorize the Regional Administrator to exercise bus purchase options utilizing the State of Washington’s Master Contract 06719-01 with Gillig LLC, to purchase three, thirty-foot expansion transit buses in an amount not to exceed \$1,525,000.
2. **2021-315 SW:** 2022-2025 TIP Amendment: Hennepin County Traffic Signal Scope Change  
Motion: That the Metropolitan Council adopt an amendment to the 2022-2025 TIP to remove planned improvements at the CSAH 35 (Portland Avenue) intersection with American Boulevard in Richfield.
3. **2021-316 SW:** 2022-2025 TIP Amendment: Ramsey County Lexington Parkway Extension  
Motion: That the Metropolitan Council adopt an amendment to the 2022-2025 TIP to change a terminus and add a trail and roundabout to the project description of Ramsey County’s Lexington Parkway extension.
4. **2021-317 SW:** 2022-2025 TIP Amendment: MnDOT MN 3 Trail Construction  
Motion: That the Metropolitan Council adopt an amendment to the 2022-2025 TIP to change the scope of MnDOT’s MN 3 project (SP# 1921-110) to reflect the construction of a trail.
5. **2021-318 SW:** 2022-2025 TIP Amendment: Orange Line Small Starts Grant Appropriation

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council adopt an amendment to the 2022-2025 TIP to add a new project for the apportionment of the Orange Line Small Starts Grant Agreement (SSGA).

6. **2021-319 SW:** 2022-2025 TIP Amendment: MnDOT US 10 Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation  
Motion: That the Metropolitan Council adopt an amendment to the 2022-2025 TIP to accommodate a total project cost decrease (and federal funding increase) to MnDOT's US 10 bridge replacement and rehabilitation project in Anoka.

7. **2021-320 SW:** 2022-2025 TIP Amendment: MnDOT Retaining Wall in St. Paul  
Motion: Metropolitan Council adopt an amendment to the 2022-2025 TIP to add a new project near the intersection of Concord St (MN 156) and Page St. in St. Paul.

8. **2021-321 SW:** 2022-2025 TIP Amendment: MnDOT US 952A Bridge Rehabilitation  
Motion: That the Metropolitan Council adopt an amendment to the 2022-2025 TIP to increase the cost and add installation of a clearform catchment system.

5. **2021-322 SW:** 2022-2025 TIP Amendment: Four TIP Amendments Approved for the 2021-2024 TIP  
Motion: That the Metropolitan Council adopt four amendments to the 2022-2025 TIP to:

- Add an installment of an automatic gate and associated crime prevention features for night closure at the Burns Avenue Overlook in St. Paul. (2021-268)
- Add a new project to fund start-up operating costs for electric carshare in Minneapolis and St. Paul. (2021-279)
- Add a new project to fund mobility hub equipment and community engagement in Minneapolis. (2021-280)
- Add a new project to fund the purchase of two battery electric buses and two charging stations with associated electrical upgrades for SouthWest Transit. (2021-281)

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

1. **2021-277 JT SW:** 2021 November Capital Budget Amendment  
Metro Transit Finance Director Ed Petrie and Metropolitan Transportation Services Finance and Administration Director Heather Agesen-Huebner presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council members.

Motion by Cummings, seconded by Zeran:  
That the Metropolitan Council authorizes the 2021 Unified Budget as indicated and in accordance with the attached tables.

Motion carried.

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

Nay: 0

Absent: 3 Chamblis, Gonzalez, Sterner

2. **2021-314:** Joint Powers Agreement: MN Department of Public Safety/Bureau of Criminal Apprehension  
Metro Transit Police Department Policy Analyst and Special Projects Coordinator Leah Palmer presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council member.

Motion by Zeran, seconded by Cummings:  
That the Metropolitan Council authorizes the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute a Joint Powers Agreement number 211030 on behalf of the Metro Transit Police Department with the State of

Minnesota’s Department of Public Safety – Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA). MTPD is also requesting that the Regional Administrator negotiate and executive an amendment to this JPA for Court Data Services.

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

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

**3. 2021-325: Rust Mitigation of Bombardier Light Rail Vehicles**

Metro Transit LRV Maintenance Director Ryan McTeague, Maintenance Rail Vehicle Manager Chris Royston, and LRV Maintenance Project Manager Jay Wesley presented this item. Cummings asked that since there was lower ridership during the pandemic, are we expecting longer use and less repair in the coming years. McTeague responded that the usage of vehicles has not declined to date as we have still been providing excess vehicles for spacing needs. Royston added that once the vehicle is exposed to the environment, they will be in a constant state of needing rust mitigation whether they are in service or not. Zeran asked if the work will be done here locally or if we have to ship the vehicle/parts. Royston responded that the LRV will be shipped to Louisiana via a heavy rail flatbed where the work will be performed. Chair Barber asked if the rust mitigation will extend the life of the LRVs. Royston answered that we are required to keep the vehicles in service for a minimum of 30 years and to keep the vehicles in a state of good repair, rust mitigation is required but we anticipate keeping the vehicles in service for 40 years.

Motion by Chamblis, seconded by Zeran:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute contract 20P035 with RailCar Corporation for rust mitigation/fleet improvement services on the Bombardier, Type 1, Light Rail Vehicles (LRV’s) in an amount not to exceed \$7,704,246.

Fredson stated that he had just received some questions and concerns from a constituent regarding the transportation of the vehicles down to Louisiana for this work and asked if there was a possibility to delay this item. Royston responded that the solicitation happened last spring and we have held off the vendor who made the bid since then to do as much due diligence as possible, but the vendor is needing to raise prices if we don’t move forward or delay any further. Council members discussed delaying the item, potentially having a same week item at the next meeting or using the time before the December 8<sup>th</sup> Council meeting to follow up on concerns/questions.

Motion carried.

Aye: 5 Barber, Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Zeran  
Nay: 0  
Absent: 2 Gonzalez, Sterner  
Abstained: 1 Fredson

**INFORMATION**

**1. Q3 2021 Ridership Report**

Metropolitan Transportation Services Contracted Transit Services Manager John Harper and Metro Transit Analytics and Research Manager Eric Lind presented this item. Cummings asked if the Saint Paul Public School students riding the buses had an effect on ridership. Lind responded that you can see some of the routes showing increased ridership and that at 7:00am and 3:00pm there are ridership

peaks which correlate with school start/end times. Harper added that contracted service is trying to figure out how to protect some trips as the buses are smaller and certain trips have large passenger loads. Harper asked Council members to pass along any requests for specific data that they would like to see in these presentations. Chamblis asked for pre-Covid bus ridership to compare and Chair Barber asked that staff continue to check on daily trends especially on commuter services.

## 2. December Quarterly Service Changes

Metro Transit Service Development Director Adam Harrington presented this item. Chair Barber asked if there will be additional customer support available on December 4<sup>th</sup> and after. Harrington answered that there will be staff on the streets along the Orange Line but also along routes that have significant changes for customers.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 5:12 p.m.

Becky Gorell  
Recording Secretary