

Minutes of the

REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

October 25, 2021

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

Committee Members Present: Deb Barber, Christopher Ferguson, Kris Fredson, Francisco Gonzalez, Phillip Sterner, Raymond Zeran

Committee Members Absent: Reva Chamblis, Molly Cummings

TAB Liaison Present: None

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum was not present when Chair Barber called the regular meeting of the Council's Transportation Committee to order at 4:03p.m. on Monday, October 25, 2021. A quorum was present when the Committee discussed and approved action items.

AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Fredson, seconded by Gonzalez to approve the minutes of the October 11, 2021 regular meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

Aye: 6 Barber, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran

Nay: 0

Absent: 2 Chamblis, Cummings

TAB REPORT

Metropolitan Transportation Services Transportation Planning Manager Steve Peterson shared agency reports and reported that TAB approved several streamline TIP amendments at its October meeting. TAB also heard an item that certified the use of funds for a Metro Transit project (I-94 / Manning Avenue Park and-Ride Lot from a past Regional Solicitation) and recommended to allow Metro Transit to keep about \$2.2M for the buses that were purchased and used for express service in the I-94 corridor with the remainder of about \$5M to be returned to the MPO for redistribution. The committee heard presentations on the allocation of CRRSAA federal Fund and major projects.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR AND METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

Metropolitan Transportation Services Deputy Director, Contract Services Gerri Sutton reported:

MPO Transportation Safety Peer Exchange

MTS planners will be convening a MPO Transportation Safety peer exchange starting tomorrow through the 28th. The exchange will include safety experts from the Federal Highway Administration, Portland, Philadelphia, San Francisco Bay area and Denver. The results of the effort will help inform MTS's 2022 regional safety study.

Equity Projects

MTS has two equity related projects out for bid. The first is for a master contract for engagement with BIPOC communities on an as needed basis for planning

studies. The second is for the equity evaluation of transportation investments. Questions on either of those two can be directed to Amy Vennewitz.

Metro Mobility Community Conversations

Staff will be holding Metro Mobility community conversations this week. During the pandemic staff held some smaller meetings with specific groups but until now hasn't had the opportunity to reach the broader customer base. There will be two sessions (tomorrow 10:30am – 12:00pm and Thursday 4:00-5:30pm), which will be held virtually over the Teams platform. The agenda will include a brief opening session on Metro Mobility program updates followed by breakout groups where attendees will participate in facilitated discussion on topics related to safety, service during the pandemic and customer experiences with scheduling and services.

Metro Transit General Manager Wes Kooistra reported:

Lake Street Station

Due to the tragic accident that occurred on October 16th at the Lake Street station, the opening celebration that was scheduled for last Monday was cancelled out of respect. Service did start at the station on Thursday. While the opening celebration will not be rescheduled, Metro Transit looks forward to the larger Orange Line opening event to be held in early December.

COVID

To date there have been 548 cases at Metro Transit, with 17 cases since last meeting and currently aren't experiencing any operational disruptions due specifically to COVID. Currently are in week two of the implementation of the Council's vaccination or weekly test requirement and have had strong compliance rates among employees and customers haven't experienced any service reductions due to implementation of this program. Metro Transit is continuing the mobile vaccine bus partnership with the State.

Masks are a Must Campaign

Metro Transit recently updated the *Masks are a Must* marketing campaign. Beginning in mid-October, many elements of the campaign were refreshed including onboard audio/reader board announcements and social media efforts. Posters on bus sides, shelters and rail kiosks were tagged with a sticker that reads 'extended until January 2022'. Media messages will be translated to Spanish, Hmong and Somali and placed in appropriate outlets. Metro Transit continues to distribute masks to customers, with a total of 1.2M masks distributed since the start of the pandemic. Recently staff repackaged 91k bulk masks into single use packages for bus operators, street supervisors and special event use.

Operator Hiring Update

As of this morning, Metro Transit is 77 operators below the ideal level with 25 full time students in training. The next hiring open house events are set for November 13th and 16th. As shared last meeting, Metro Transit is preparing to adjust schedules as part of the quarterly pick. The changes will take effect on December 4th and staff are planning to present an information item on those changes at the next Transportation Committee meeting.

BUSINESS

Consent Items:

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

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

Nay: 0

Absent: 3 Chamblis, Cummings, Sterner

1. **2021-272:** Signature Authority – MVTA Orange Line Connector CMAQ Grant Agreement

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council authorizes the Regional Administrator to execute a grant agreement with Minnesota Valley Transit Authority for operating assistance on the Orange Line Connector expansion bus route. in the amount of \$1,920,000.

2. **2021-279 SW:** 2021-2024 TIP Amendment: MnDOT Electric Carshare Startup Costs

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council adopt an amendment to the 2021-2024 TIP to add a new project to fund start-up operating costs for electric carshare in Minneapolis and St. Paul.

3. **2021-280 SW:** 2021-2024 TIP Amendment: MnDOT Minneapolis Mobility Hub and Engagement

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council adopt an amendment to the 2021-2024 TIP to add a new project to fund mobility hub equipment and community engagement in Minneapolis.

4. **2021-281 SW:** 2021-2024 TIP Amendment: SouthWest Transit Electric Buses and Charging Stations

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council adopt an amendment to the 2021-2024 TIP to add a new project to fund the purchase of two battery electric buses and two charging stations with associated electrical upgrades for SouthWest Transit.

5. **2021-282:** 2022 Metro Mobility Bus Purchase

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to execute a purchase agreement with North Central Bus Sales for up to 91 replacement buses and 20 expansion buses in an amount not to exceed \$9,812,000.

Non-Consent Items:

1. **2021-248:** METRO Purple Line Bus Rapid Transit – Subordinate Funding Agreement No. 01 with MnDOT

Metro Transit Purple Line Project Director Craig Lamothe presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council members.

Motion by Sterner, seconded by Fredson:

That the Metropolitan Council (“Council”) authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute Subordinate Funding Agreement (“SFA”) No. 01 (#211147A) with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (“MnDOT”) for the METRO Purple Line (formerly Rush Line) Bus Rapid Transit Project (Project) for an amount not to exceed \$1,015,000, contingent upon Council approval of the 4th quarter Budget Amendment and changes to the Authorized Capital Budget for the Project on November 10, 2021.

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

Aye: 6 Barber, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran

Nay: 0

Absent: 2 Chamblis, Cummings

2. **2021-249:** METRO Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit – Subordinate Funding Agreement No. 07 with MnDOT

Metro Transit Assistant Director, BRT Projects Chris Beckwith presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council members.

Motion by Fredson, seconded by Zeran:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute METRO Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit (Gold Line) Subordinate Funding Agreement (SFA) No. 07 with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) for an amount not to exceed \$1,472,060.

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

Aye: 6 Barber, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran

Nay: 0

Absent: 2 Chamblis, Cummings

3. **2021-299:** Gold Line Master Utility Agreement #21M086 with Qwest Corporation
Metro Transit Assistant Director, BRT Projects Chris Beckwith presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council members.

Motion by Fredson, seconded by Sterner:

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) #21M086 with Qwest Corporation in an amount not to exceed \$6,590,809.

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

Aye: 6 Barber, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran

Nay: 0

Absent: 2 Chamblis, Cummings

4. **2021-250:** Southwest Light Rail Transit (Green Line Extension) Subordinate Funding Agreement No. 15 with MnDOT
Metro Transit SWLRT Project Director Jim Alexander presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council members.

Motion by Fredson, seconded by Zeran:

That the Metropolitan Council (Council) authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute Subordinate Funding Agreement (SFA) No. 15 to the Master Funding Agreement (MFA) #121021 with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) for 2022 SWLRT staff support in an amount not to exceed \$1,924,101.

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

Aye: 6 Barber, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran

Nay: 0

Absent: 2 Chamblis, Cummings

5. **2021-274:** Northstar and Sherburne County 2022 Subordinate Funding Agreement
Metro Transit Finance Director Ed Petrie presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council members.

Motion by Fredson, seconded by Gonzalez:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to execute a three-year service agreement with the City of Maple Grove for the service period of January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2024.

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

Aye: 6 Barber, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran

Nay: 0

Absent: 2 Chamblis, Cummings

8. **2021-284:** Execute Contract Options with Gillig LLC, Contract 19P122
Metropolitan Transportation Services Fleet Services Manager Paul Colton presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council members.

Motion by Ferguson, seconded by Fredson:

That the Metropolitan Council Authorize the Regional Administrator to exercise existing contract options on Contract 19P122 with Gillig LLC to purchase up to 2 forty-foot buses in an amount not to exceed \$1,030,000.

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

Aye: 6 Barber, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran

Nay: 0

Absent: 2 Chamblis, Cummings

INFORMATION

1. Statewide Multimodal Plan

Metropolitan Transportation Services Transportation Planning Manager Steve Peterson introduced Haley Turner with MnDOT who presented this item. Several Council members thanked Turner for this work and expressed its importance. Chair Barber stated rural and urban needs differ and asked how the application of the equity lens is defined for the two different areas of the State. Turner answered that this yet to be determined but will circle back once there is more information to share.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 5:00p.m.

Becky Gorell
Recording Secretary