



**Southwest Light Rail Transitway (SWLRT)
Business Advisory Committee Meeting
September 28, 2016
Southwest Project Office
6465 Wayzata Blvd, Suite 500
St. Louis Park, MN 55426
7:30 AM – 9:00 AM**

Meeting Summary

In Attendance:

BAC Members/Alternates: Co-chair Dan Duffy, Stuart Ackerberg, Rick Weiblen, Dave Pelner
Agency Staff and Guests: Victoria Nill, Dan Pfeiffer, Jim Alexander, James Mockovciak; Guests; St. Louis Park's Gregg Hunt, Eden Prairie's Marissa Bayer

I. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order by BAC Co-chair Duffy. May 25, 2016 meeting summary approved.

II. Project Readiness

Jim Alexander provided a summary of SWLRT Project Readiness. Topics included a funding update, project milestones achieved and the timeline for those that lay ahead; and, an overview of the scope of the 5 construction contracts (Civil, Systems, Operations & Maintenance Facility, Fare Collection, and Light Rail Vehicles). Co-chair Duffy asked if it matters to the FTA who are the local funding partners. Only so much as the local funding partners are able to provide the funding and make the commitment to funding. Dave Pelner asked that if there is left over money after the project is built could it be used first to pay off the Certificates of Participation. Funds remaining after completion of the project would be returned to the funders based on the percentage originally committed. Rick Weiblen asked about contingency amount and if it is reflected in the project budget. The project contingency is approximately 20.7% and this amount will be evaluated with the FTA through a risk workshop this fall. Stuart Ackerberg asked about construction phasing. The project has identified critical path items, such as freight rail, structures, and the Operations and Maintenance Facility, that will set the construction phasing. Dave Pelner asked if the BAC members could provide expertise and input into maximizing the project's competitive advantage in procurements. Jim Alexander replied that the projects will follow state and federal rules in procurement and the project is interested in the BAC member's expertise and input.

III. Right-of-Way Acquisition Process Overview

Tori Nill provided a high level overview of the Right-of-Way process. The project acquisition process affects 153 properties including temporary easements, partial and full acquisitions. Offers are anticipated to begin in October and the goal is to complete all offers by July 2017. Properties related to critical path construction activities will be first. There are three possible processes after offers are made: they are accepted, negotiated, or enter into condemnation. Stuart Ackerberg asked who does the condemnation. The Metropolitan Council has eminent domain authority. Rick



Weiblen asked if MnDOT was involved. Jim Alexander noted that Tori and other MnDOT staff are working on the project. Co-chair Duffy noted the short time period for the process. Tori Nill overviewed the state's quick take process which allows the Metropolitan Council to take title and possession through the courts while price negotiations continue.

IV. Construction Outreach and Communication

Dan Pfeiffer presented an overview of the upcoming SPO Career Fair on October 18, the communication and outreach plan during construction, and a list of outreach best practices gleaned from previous projects. Dave Pelner asked how long will the jobs last. Dan Pfeiffer and Jim Alexander responded that the jobs are for the project, however, a number of staff from the METRO Green Line project now work on other projects or in other departments of Metro Transit and the Metropolitan Council. Co-chair Duffy noted that hiring that many people in a short timeframe will be challenging and asked whether the project has explored a construction management consultant. Jim Alexander acknowledged the challenge and the project is exploring a construction management consultant to augment project staff. Co-chair Duffy asked about the length of testing prior to opening. The testing phase is approximately six months.

V. Member and Committee Reports/Public Forum

Co-chair Duffy provided an overview of the Governors Round Table last month. He mentioned there were supporters and opponents at the meeting and everyone who wanted was given an opportunity to share their views. But in the end it appeared clear there was overwhelming support for the project, particularly from the business community. Rick Weiblen expressed vexation with the opposition. Despite the submission of facts and data supporting it, opponents continued to share misinformation in opposition to SWLRT. Dan Pfeiffer shared that the presentation at the governor's meeting included a slide that there were approximately 870 meetings with an attendance of around 28,000 people since 2008. Stuart Ackerberg asked if federal funding is secured. Jim Alexander noted that the project continues to work with the FTA and is confident that federal funding will be secured next year. Stuart Ackerberg asked at what point the FTA fully commits. Jim Alexander replied that the Full Funding Grant Agreement, anticipated July 2017, commits the federal funding. Stuart Ackerberg asked what would happen to properties already acquired if the project doesn't go through for some reason. Jim Alexander responded that the project would work with local funding partners on disposition of the properties. Jim Alexander also stated that the project is confident in its relationship with the FTA, continues to meet regularly with both FTA and local funding partners.

V. Meeting Adjourned