

Minutes of the

REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

January 25, 2021

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

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

Committee Members Absent:

TAB Liaison Present: Peter Dugan

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum was present when Chair Barber called the regular meeting of the Council's Transportation Committee to order at 4:02 p.m. on Monday, January 25, 2021.

AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Sterner, seconded by Chamblis to approve the minutes of the January 11, 2020 regular meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

Aye: 8 Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran, Barber
Nay: 0
Absent: 0

TAB REPORT

Dugan reported on December and January TAB meeting action items, sharing TAB Chair and Agency reports with the Transportation Committee.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR AND METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Nick Thompson reported:

CARES 2

With the latest round of COVID relief, our region will receive more federal dollars for transportation projects. We anticipate over \$19M, originally, I reported last committee we were anticipating \$50M. The change was identified after DOT posted more information about the funding distribution. This new federal funding will be allocated to our region for TAB and the Council to distribute. These new funds are separate from the transit funding the Council will receive.

COVID update

We are continue working with Metro Transit on coordination of vaccine for public transit workers, hopefully with it starting later this month. We are still waiting for details on the number of vaccines and when they will be available so we can establish a process to get the public transit workers quickly vaccinated. We have a vendor who will provide the vaccines for the public transit workers.

In our testing last week, we had 5 positive tests, down from 9 in the last report. To date we have identified 128 contract workers who have tested positive, or less than 1%.

Legislative Update

The Council has begun to make presentations at the House and Senate in the new legislative session. Last week we were among a panel of agencies giving updates on COVID impacts and responses. Next week we have a hearing at the Senate to cover Transit Operations and Transportation Planning overview, as well as the Governor’s budget for the Council which will be announced tomorrow. We have not testified on any bills yet.

Chamblis asked about anticipated impacts due to the funding decrease. Thompson said the Council will begin to work with MnDOT as administration takes place.

Metro Transit General Manager Wes Kooistra reported:

COVID Update

There have been 359 total diagnosis of COVID cases to-date, 9 new cases since the last Transportation Committee. This follows the pattern that Minnesota has seen. Metro Transit bus and rail services are not experiencing service impacts due to COVID leave, however our work unit who clean the rail cars are currently short-handed in part due to COVID school and childcare leaves. Starting today, a contractor is helping to supplement our staff efforts to keep the vehicles clean throughout the service day.

Vaccines

We continue to work with Metropolitan Council Incident Command and the State of Minnesota regarding vaccinations for public transit employees. As we all know from media reports, demand for vaccines far outstrips available supply. But we are doing everything we can at this stage to get our plans in place, so we can move quickly once we receive more information, including information on when we can expect vaccinations of public transit workers to begin.

Ridership

Ridership levels remains steady – hovering around 60% ridership loss compared to pre-pandemic levels. Mask compliance – our MTPD is seeing an increase in mask compliance on the system. Currently around 78% of riders are complying with wearing masks (I believe this is LRT specific data.) Providing fewer warnings because of the increase in compliance

Zeran asked for more information in the future about transit safety.

BUSINESS

Consent Items:

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

Aye:	8	Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran, Barber
Nay:	0	
Absent:	0	

1. **2021-28 SW:** 2021-2024 TIP Amendment for MnDOT: FTA Section 5310, Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council approve an amendment to the 2021-2024 TIP to include funding for 12 “Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities” projects, sponsored by MnDOT.

2. **2021-29 SW:** 2021-2024 TIP Amendment for MnDOT: CSAH 13 Roundabout

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council approve an amendment to the 2021-2024 TIP to extend the project limits of MnDOT's CSAH 13 roundabout project at Line Avenue in Elk River.

Non-Consent Items:

1. **2021-11:** Metro Mobility Demand West (20P192) and East Zone (20P199) Contracts

Metropolitan Transportation Services Metro Mobility Senior Manager Christine Kuennen presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council Members.

Motion by Chamblis, seconded by Gonzalez:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute a contract with Transit Team, Inc. to provide the Metro Mobility Demand West Zone service from July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2026 with an option to extend one additional year in an amount not to exceed \$203,188,899.

And, that the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute a contract with First Transit, Inc. to provide the Metro Mobility Demand East Zone service from September 1, 2021 through August 31, 2026 with an option to extend one additional year in an amount not to exceed \$163,578,272.

Motion carried.

Aye: 8 Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran, Barber

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

2. **2021-20:** Minneapolis Bus Garage Independent Testing Agency, Contract 18P430 Amendment

Metro Transit Principal Engineer Carrie Desmond presented this item. Sterner asked for information about water discharging. Desmond said that water quality determined where the water was discharged. Staff read the motion to include "total contract value of \$1,325,398.64".

Motion by Cummings, seconded by Fredson:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to execute a contract amendment with Braun Intertec Corporation not to exceed \$315,000 for additional independent testing agency services for construction of the Minneapolis Bus Garage.

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

Aye: 8 Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran, Barber

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

3. **2021-21:** Foley Boulevard Reconstruction – Anoka County Joint Powers Agreement, Contract #20I062

Metro Transit Senior Project Coordinator George Serumgard presented this item. Chamblis asked if greenery will be incorporated. Serumgard said part of the alignment will become part of the Park/Ride and the rest of it will join backyards of homes.

Motion by Zeran, seconded by Chamblis:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute Joint Powers Agreement #20I062 with Anoka County for locally requested roadway and signal improvements on Foley Boulevard (CSAH 11).

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

Aye: 8 Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran, Barber

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

4. 2021-22: Metro Transit Bus Battery Procurement-2020, Contract 20P272

Metro Transit Warranty, Contracts, and Analysis Manager Abel Mumbi presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council Members.

Motion by Zeran, seconded by Gonzalez:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute a contract with Batteries Plus to provide bus batteries and used battery disposal services in the amount not to exceed \$921,510.

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

Aye: 8 Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran, Barber

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

5. 2021-23: Southwest Light Rail Transit (Green Line Extension) Parcel 621 Condemnation Authorization, Resolution 2021-02

Metro Transit TSD Director Robin Cauffman presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council Members.

Motion by Cummings, seconded by Fredson:

That the Metropolitan Council (Council) authorize the Regional Administrator to acquire temporary easement on Parcel 621 necessary for the Green Line Extension LRT Project (Project) and pass Resolution 2021-02 that authorizes Council legal staff to initiate condemnation proceedings if staff cannot acquire by negotiation.

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

Aye: 8 Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran, Barber

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

6. 2021-26: Procurement of 26 Biodiesel Forty-Foot Transit Buses, Contract 19P122

Metro Transit Bus Maintenance Assistant Director Joe Reichstadt presented this item. Fredson asked about biodiesel buses made by competitors in Minnesota. Reichstadt said the FTA does not allow for a geographical preference. Sterner asked when electric vehicles will be considered. Reichstadt said buses needed to be replaced this year so the decision had to be made immediately.

Motion by Zeran, seconded by Chamblis:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute contract 19P122 with Gillig LLC, to provide 26 base order biodiesel forty-foot transit buses (including optional equipment) with options to purchase up to 149 additional replacement and expansion buses in an amount not to exceed \$13,648,091.

Motion carried.

Aye: 8 Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran, Barber

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

INFORMATION

1. 2021 Work Plans

Metro Transit General Manager Wes Kooistra and Metropolitan Transportation Services Nick Thompson presented this item. Chair Barber encouraged Council Members to send feedback to Kooistra, Thompson, or Chair Barber.

2. Orange Line Connecting Bus Concept Plan

Metro Transit Route Planning Manager Cyndi Harper and Senior Planner John Dillery presented this item. Chamblis mentioned the gap between where a job is and where people are located. Sterner requested that future studies include Burnsville and Dakota County as a whole. Barber expressed her appreciation.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 5:43 p.m.

Jenna Ernst
Recording Secretary