

Minutes of the

REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

June 22, 2020

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

Committee Members Present: Chair Deb Barber, Lynnea Atlas-Ingebretson, Reva Chamblis, Molly Cummings, Christopher Ferguson, Kris Fredson, Francisco Gonzalez, Phillip Sterner

Committee Members Absent: Raymond Zeran

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 4:03 p.m. on Monday, June 22, 2020.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Motion by Cummings seconded by Gonzalez to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

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

Nay: 0

Absent: 3 Atlas-Ingebretson, Sterner, Zeran

Motion by Gonzalez seconded by Chamblis to approve the minutes of the June 8, 2020 regular meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

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

Nay: 0

Absent: 3 Atlas-Ingebretson, Sterner, Zeran

TAB REPORT

Dugan reported on agency reports from the Transportation Advisory Board meeting, including an update from the airport.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR AND METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Nick Thompson reported:

Regional Solicitation Scoring

Scoring started today. Each category has separate scoring teams and the scoring team is led by a Chair who is from City, County, or MnDOT

Operations

Metro Mobility and Transit Link Special Services continues for essential workers, Food Delivery, Grocery/Pharmacy, as well as solo-rides. This will continue until Metro Mobility capacity gets used up. Big question mark is opening of Adult Day

Training and Habilitation/Day Care centers where Metro Mobility is the transportation service. They are opening but very slowly.

Contract Changes

Met Mo East Contractor had to unexpectedly move locations from Roseville to St. Paul. This St Paul location opened today. Staff worked closely with them to develop a plan and utilized emergency procurement processes so that there was no disruption to the customer. Today went well and the plan is working.

Metro Mobility South

Transit Team was awarded the next 5-year service contract for Metro Mobility South Zone in March. The Transportation Committee had asked for an update when this was approved, specifically an update on the impact to those who were working with the existing contractor. The service is currently operated by First Transit in Burnsville. The current contract expires next month. Transit Team will begin service out of their new facility on August 1st. Since this contract awarded to Transit Team, First Transit has won a new Transit Link Contract. Some of the First Transit drivers on Metro Mobility will shift to Transit Link. Also Transit Team interviewed and made offers to 69 First Transit drivers so far. Between these offers and the new Transit Link contract as well as other work First Transit has, there is an anticipation that all First Transit South employees will have jobs – just in new service or with new provider. Importantly, for the customer in South Zone, many will have the same drivers as the contractor changes which was an important input we received.

Chamblis asked about pay equity. Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Thompson said the Council sets the minimum wage in these contracts and it has increased. Thompson added that an analysis can be done after the fact as well. Fredson voiced his appreciation for consistent or increased pay.

Metro Transit General Manager Wes Kooistra reported:

COVID Update

Ridership (from June 19)

System ridership down 69%

- Bus down 62%
- Blue Line down 82%
- Green Line down 80%
- Northstar down 98%

There has been a slight increase (4-5%) in bus ridership, with minimal changes on the other modes. Total number of Metro Transit employees who have tested positive stands at 41 employees. This includes people who have recovered and are already back to work. Bus operations sick list is down to 141 operators compared to over 460 operators on the sick list at this point last month. Service and capacity have been added to our routes, focusing on core local routes that are seeing less ridership decline. Employee temperature testing continues to expand. On-site temperature testing for employees is rolling out to operational facilities today and tomorrow:

- Today included Hiawatha LRT, Overhaul Base and South Garage.
- Tuesday includes St. Paul LRT, Transfer Rd, Nicollet, MJR.
- Wednesday will be FTH, East Metro, Northstar and the Rail Support Facility.

Rail and bus operations are joining Metro Transit Police Department, TCC, and RCC in on-site testing. Installation of sneeze guards on buses is in process – this will provide a plexiglass barrier between operators and customers in buses that don't have operator barriers installed. Metro Transit operations staff is finalizing plans to distribute thousands of re-washable fabric face coverings to customers at our highest-volume boarding locations later this week. PPE Tote Bag “refresh kits” have been distributed to all operating facilities for bus and train operators. Each kit includes

- the branded “In This Together” tote bag
- hand sanitizer gel
- fabric and disposable masks
- gloves
- and a face shield

Saturday’s Donation Drive

The Metro Transit Donation Drive with non-profit We Push For Peace was a big success on Saturday. Metro Transit staff and community members donated needed household items, diapers, formula, personal hygiene items, and non-perishable food. The items were distributed Saturday afternoon at Peavey Field Park in Minneapolis. We also distributed face masks. Attendees were also encouraged to sign up for the Transit Assistance Program (TAP) to receive \$1 rides on transit for qualified lower income individuals and families. TAP staff are working to confirm a final enrollment count, but they said it was probably the biggest single day registration event of the year.

Cummings asked if there are plans to have another donation drive. Kooistra said it is a good start and the team will learn from it. Chamblis asked when facemasks will begin to be distributed to customers, Kooistra said the plan was for it to start this week. Atlas-Ingebretson brought up disinvestment happening in communities.

BUSINESS

Consent Items:

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

- Aye: 8 Atlas-Ingebretson, Barber, Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner
- Nay: 0
- Absent: 1 Zeran

1. **2020-178:** Metro Freeway Project Approval: MN 36 at CSAH 15 (Manning Avenue), Washington County

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council approve a request by Washington County and the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) to convert a signalized intersection at MN Highway 36 and CSAH 15 (Manning Avenue) to a grade separated interchange, subject to further review and approval by the Metropolitan Council if there are any significant changes in the design of the proposed project.

2. **2020-181 SW:** 2020-2023 TIP Amendment for the City of Anoka: US 10 / 169 Interchange

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council approve an amendment to the 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to add right-of-way acquisition to Anoka’s US 10/169 interchange project.

Non-Consent Items:

1. **2020-167 SW:** Recommend Release of the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan Update for Public Comment and Set Public Hearing Date

Metropolitan Transportation Services Planning & Finance Deputy Director Amy Vennewitz and Metropolitan Council Outreach Coordinator Sara Maaske presented this item.

Atlas-Ingebretson asked about informal and formal partners and outreach during COVID-19. Maaske shared that additional engagement is happening on social media. Chamblis asked about the focus on access to destinations goal. Vennewitz said there can be mixed messages with reducing travel and allowing folks to travel more easily. Atlas-Ingebretson encouraged clear “asks” in the social media posts. Atlas-Ingebretson asked about the cost of fare-free travel. Vennewitz said there is a white paper being developed about other regions who have a fare-free system.

Motion by Sterner, seconded by Cummings:

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

- Release the 2020 draft update to the *2040 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP)* for public review and comment; and
- Authorize a public comment period from June 25, 2020 to August 7, 2020, including a public hearing on the draft document to be held on July 27, 2020 at 4:00 PM.

Motion carried.

Aye: 8 Atlas-Ingebretson, Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Barber

Nay: 0

Absent: 1 Zeran

2. **2020-174:** Northstar Locomotive HEP Genset Overhaul, Contract 19P216
Metro Transit Commuter Rail Maintenance Supervisor Ryan Stellmach presented this item.

There were no questions or comments from Council Members.

Motion by Gonzalez, seconded by Cummings:

That the Metropolitan Council authorizes award and execution of Contract 19P216 with Ziegler Inc., in the amount of \$506,839.55 for the teardown and rebuilding of five (5) Locomotive Caterpillar C27 HEP Gensets to extend their operational lifespans.

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

Aye: 8 Atlas-Ingebretson, Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Barber

Nay: 0

Absent: 1 Zeran

3. **2020-175:** Amendment to Contract #14R038, Transit Advertising Sales
Metro Transit Customer Service & Marketing Director Bruce Howard presented this item.

Chamblis voiced appreciation for the information on why the contract was modified. Cummings concurred.

Motion by Cummings, seconded by Fredson:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to approve an amendment to the Intersection Media LLC contract based on the attached term sheet providing temporary relief for the contractor from the monthly minimum annual guarantee (MAG) payments owed the Council.

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

Aye: 8 Atlas-Ingebretson, Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Barber

Nay: 0

Absent: 1 Zeran

4. **2020-176 SW:** Southwest Light Rail Transit (Green Line Extension) Fourth Amendment to the Hennepin County and Hennepin County Regional Authority Capital Grant Agreement for the LNTP Period

Metro Transit Budget & Grants Manager Kristin Prescott presented this item.

There were no questions or comments from Council Members.

Motion by Gonzalez, seconded by Sterner:

That the Metropolitan Council (Council) authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute the fourth Amendment to the Capital Grant Agreement with Hennepin County and Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority to extend the duration to August 31, 2020 and add \$74,969,769 bringing the total grant amount to \$677,765,449.

Motion carried.

Aye: 8 Atlas-Ingebretson, Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Barber

Nay: 0

Absent: 1 Zeran

5. **2020-141 JT SW: AMENDED:** 2020 Budget Amendment – 2nd Quarter – AMENDED

Metro Transit Finance Director Ed Petrie presented this item.

There were no questions or comments from Council Members.

Motion by Chamblis, seconded by Fredson:

That the Metropolitan Council authorizes the 2020 Unified Budget as indicated and in accordance with the attached tables.

Motion carried.

Aye: 8 Atlas-Ingebretson, Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Barber

Nay: 0

Absent: 1 Zeran

6. **2020-177:** Southwest Light Rail Transit (Green Line Extension) Cooperative Construction Agreement with St. Louis Park
Metro Transit Assistant General Manager Jim Alexander presented this item.

There were no questions or comments from Council Members.

Motion by Fredson, seconded by Atlas-Ingebretson:

That the Metropolitan Council authorizes the 2020 Unified Budget as indicated and in accordance with the attached tables.

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

Aye: 8 Atlas-Ingebretson, Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Barber

Nay: 0

Absent: 1 Zeran

INFORMATION

1. COVID-19 Update

Metropolitan Transportation Services Travel Modeling & Research Manager Jonathan Ehrlich and Data Scientist Ashley Asmus presented this item.

Atlas-Ingebretson said because of community diversity she worries about having such a low number and weighting it for the non-white respondents. Barber reiterated that the survey was reaching out to those who had responded to the previous Travel Behavior Inventory. Chamblis commented on the COVID-impacted group.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 6:04 p.m.

Jenna Ernst
Recording Secretary