

Minutes of the REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

April 11, 2016

LOCATION: Metropolitan Council Chambers, St. Paul, MN

Committee Members Present: Chair Lona Schreiber, Jennifer Munt, Cara Letofsky, Deb Barber, Katie Rodriguez, Steve Elkins, Jon Commers, Marie McCarthy, Edward Reynoso

Committee Members Absent: Gail Dorfman

TAB Liaison Present: None present

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum was present when Chair Schreiber called the regular meeting of the Council's Transportation Committee to order at 4:00 p.m. on Monday, April 11, 2016 In the Metropolitan Council Chambers, St. Paul, MN.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Schreiber made a change to the agenda. Information Item #1 will move to Information Item #3 on the agenda. Motion by Munt, seconded by Elkins to approve the revised April 11, 2016 agenda. Motion carried.

Motion by Elkins, seconded by Munt to approve the minutes of the March 28, 2016 regular meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

TAB LIAISON REPORT:

There was no TAB report this month. The TAB has not met since the last Transportation Committee meeting on March 28.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR and METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Arlene McCarthy reported:

1. MVST Revenues

In March 2016, the 9th month of the State Fiscal Year, Motor Vehicle Sales Tax (MVST) revenues were at 101.6% of the state forecast. Although there have been ups and downs, the average revenues are above 100%.

Metro Transit General Manager Brian Lamb reported:

1. Twins Opener

The Twins Opener is happening today. Last year, ridership to the Twins games was up 16% from the year before (including LRT, Northstar and regular Transit service). The goal this year is to increase ridership by 3%. The group Black Lives Matter is holding a protest in front of Target Field and Metro Transit is in the process of making service modifications.

2. Metro Transit Police Department Award Ceremony

Lamb thanked Council members who attended the MTPD award ceremony. Leonard Mitchell was named officer of the year. Other award recipients are listed on the website.

3. LRT Shutdown last weekend

LRT was shut down last weekend for repairs with buses replacing LRT service. There are no other scheduled shutdowns scheduled for the year.

4. Rail Rodeo two weekends ago

The Rail Rodeo was held two weekends ago. Rail Operators Carl Obermeyer and Peter Mooers placed first and second respectively. Obermeyer and Mooers will have another chance to test their skills when they represent Metro Transit in the American Public Transit Association (MPTA) International Bus Rodeo, to be held in Phoenix in June. Bus Rodeo delegates will not be going to North Carolina per the Governor's directive to ban non-essential travel.

BUSINESS

Consent Items:

There were no consent items on the agenda.

Non-Consent Items:

1. 2016-51: Authorization to Amend the 2016 Unified Budget – 1st Quarter Amendment
Metro Transit Director of Finance Ed Petrie and Metropolitan Transportation Services Administration Manager Heather Aagesen-Huebner presented the 1st Quarter budget amendments for their respective divisions. Reynoso asked for – and received from Lamb - clarification of the e-citation funds for RTC noted in the Metro Transit budget. At Rodriguez's request, Aagesen-Huebner explained that how the budget amendment is beneficial to the suburban transit providers. Aagesen-Huebner stated that federal funds carry with them an additional level of administration and compliance that both the suburban transit provider and the Council incur. By defederalizing projects and using other sources of funding, some of this can be avoided.

Motion by Rodriguez, seconded by Barber:

That the Metropolitan Council amend the 2016 Unified Budget – Capital Program (annual appropriation) and Authorized Capital Program (multi-year authorization) as indicated and in accordance with the Capital Program – Attachment #1 (Program Level).

That the Metropolitan Council amend the 2016 Unified Budget – Operating Budget as indicated and in accordance with the spreadsheet in Operating Budget – Attachment #2.

Motion passed.

2. 2016-68: METRO Blue Line Light Rail Transit (BLRT) Extension Project – Authorize Negotiation and Execution of a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment Consultant Contract Award with SEH, Inc.

Metro Transit Assistant Director Environment & Agreements Kathryn O'Brien presented this item.

There were no questions from committee members.

Motion by Elkins, seconded by Letofsky:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute a professional services contract with SEH for the completion of the Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) for the Blue Line LRT (BLRT) Extension Project through December 21, 2017 in an amount not to exceed \$1,300,000.

Motion passed.

3. 2016-70: Approval of Final C Line Station Plan

Metro Transit Project Manager BRT/Small Starts Katie Roth presented an update of Arterial BRT.

Metro Transit Planner BRT/Small Starts Scott Janowiak presented the business item. Schreiber asked for clarification on estimated project costs. Roth noted a total estimated project cost of \$30M to \$35M.

The project is seeking \$15M in remaining funding.

Munt asked Roth to explain the Penn Avenue Community Works project's benefits to the pedestrian realm. Roth responded that Hennepin County's project will add wider sidewalks and green boulevards.

Rodriguez asked Roth if a comprehensive transportation funding bill could change the C Line construction schedule. Roth responded that the 2018 construction season presents the best opportunity for construction coordination with other infrastructure projects on the corridor.

Commers commented on A Line construction practices that remove existing shelters at station areas and fence off new facilities during station construction. Customers have commented about a lack of shelter facilities. Commers suggested keeping shelter facilities open until BRT operations begin.

Motion by Commers, seconded by Munt:

That the Metropolitan Council approve the final *C Line Station Plan*.

Motion passed.

Hearing no objection, Chair Schreiber said that this item could proceed to the full Council as a consent item.

4. 2016-71: Cooperative Funding Agreement with Hennepin County for Engineering Costs in Coordination with C Line Bus Rapid Transit

Metro Transit Project Manager BRT/Small Starts Katie Roth presented this item. There were no questions from committee members.

Motion by Munt, seconded by Letofsky:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute Cooperative Funding Agreement 15I080 with Hennepin County, in an amount not to exceed \$1,846,000.

This agreement will allow the Council to receive County funds for Penn Avenue design and construction engineering in coordination with C. Line bus rapid transit (BRT).

Motion passed.

INFORMATION

1. Operator Hiring Initiatives

Metro Transit Assistant Director Business Administration Christine Kuennen presented this item. The presentation included hiring needs, marketing, communications, events, retention efforts, trends, etc. Kuennen answered a question from Letofsky that the marketing that works the best is employee referral. She also answered Letofsky's question about whether the dangers of driving is discouraging to applicants. Kuennen replied that the driver training covers skills to diffuse conflict and conflict de-escalation. In answer to Munt, Kuennen said that it takes approximately 6 months for drivers to go from part time to full time.

2. Hi-Frequency Bus Service

Metro Transit Director Service Development presented this item. Munt noted that the statement "buses are here to stay" is very important to customers. Commers asked about some routes that are labeled "proposed" in the presentation. Harrington replied that these routes are either implemented or ready to be implemented soon.

3. Multi-Year Planning Work Update

Metropolitan Transportation Services Deputy Director Planning and Finance Amy Vennewitz presented this item. The presentation listed some of the important studies that MTS staff are/or will be undertaking in the near future. In answer to Commers' question regarding information sharing on freight rail corridors, Vennewitz stated that this is primarily handled by the MnDOT Freight Rail Offices.

Schreiber shared an article from Better Government magazine regarding "A Better Way to Attack Inequality".

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the regular meeting of the Metropolitan Council Transportation Committee was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.