

Minutes of the

REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

July 23, 2018

LOCATION: Metro Transit FT Heywood Chambers, Minneapolis, MN

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

Committee Members Absent: Edward Reynoso, Gail Dorfman

TAB Liaison Present:

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum was present when Chair Rodriguez called the regular meeting of the Council's Transportation Committee to order at 4:02 p.m. on Monday, July 23, 2018 in the Metro Transit F.T. Heywood Chambers, Minneapolis, MN.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Motion by Munt, seconded by Letofsky to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Motion by Barber, seconded by Elkins to approve the minutes of the July 9, 2018 special meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

Employee Recognition – Metro Transit:

Metro Transit General Manager Brian Lamb introduced the following, who presented recognition awards to employees:

Metro Transit Director-Bus Operations Christy Bailly who introduced Metro Transit Assistant Transportation Manager Monica Krueger who presented to Metro Transit Bus Operator Richard Bledsoe.

Metro Transit Analytics and Research Manager Eric Lind who presented to Metro Transit Data Scientist Kim Ky.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR AND METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Nick Thompson reported:

Equity Advisory Committee

Last week, I along with Michelle Fure from Communications presented the transportation planning process for input at the Equity Advisory Council. The focus of the discussion was on the TPP Update but more specifically on the Work Plan in the TPP and how important that is in shaping the region's investments. The discussion led to feedback on what work items the EAC would like to be involved in going forward as well as many other topics related to past and future investments and transit operations.

Regional Solicitation

We received 136 applications from 39 applicants in the 2018 Regional Solicitation with a total request of nearly \$420M for federal funding (approximately \$200 million is available to award). By category there were: 43 roadway projects, 33 Transit/TDM projects, and 60 bike and pedestrian projects. Next steps are to review the applications for qualifying, then scoring and ranking. As part of the process, if an application is deemed non-

qualifying the applicant has an opportunity to appeal the decision through the TAB Funding and Programming Committee. Project selection is scheduled for January 2019.

Metro Transit General Manager Brian Lamb reported:

Rail Ridership

As you may have seen last week, ridership on our rail lines has continued to grow this year. After setting annual records in 2017, Northstar ridership is up 5 percent, while the Green Line is up almost 3 percent and the Blue Line is up 1 percent. Systemwide, more than 39.6 million rides have been taken through the end of June. Overall ridership has declined around 3 percent, due to a nearly 5 percent drop in bus ridership.

We continue to focus on building bus ridership by focusing on speed and reliability. Examples include the new limited stop Route 54 service and bus stop consolidations that will speed up service on Route 2 beginning next month. We're also excited about the progress that's being made on Hennepin Avenue, where we continue to work with the City of Minneapolis on permanent bus-only lanes and other improvements that will pave the way for a future rapid bus line.

Save the Date: Technician Training Program Ceremony

Council members are invited to attend an upcoming celebration recognizing participants in our Technician Training Program. The program will celebrate the first group to go through the program, graduating this summer, and other bus maintenance interns who are working toward that goal. The ceremony will run from 2:30 to 4 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 7, at Hennepin Technical College in Brooklyn Park. Our workforce development unit also continues to focus on meeting our need to hire more bus operators. Applicant preparation classes began in June and will continue through the end of August. For a schedule, visit our website.

State Fair Express Bus Tickets

A reminder that discounted State Fair Express Bus tickets go on sale next week. Discounted single and group tickets can be purchased online and at our Service Centers from Wednesday, Aug. 1, through the start of the fair. Discounted tickets will also be available through our app through the end of the fair.

BUSINESS

Consent Items:

1. There were no consent items on the agenda.

Non-Consent Items:

1. **2018-197:** Northstar Corridor Funding Agreement with State of Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), Resolution 2018-10

Metro Transit Finance Director Ed Petrie presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council members.

Motion by Schreiber, seconded by Elkins:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to:

- Enter into an Agreement with the State of Minnesota Department of Transportation for Calendar Year 2019 to provide funding for public commuter rail service in Sherburne County, Minnesota for an amount up to \$1.5 million.
- Execute the Attached Resolution of the Governing Body (Metropolitan Council) to enter into an Agreement with the State of Minnesota Department of Transportation for Calendar Year 2019.

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

INFORMATION

1. 2019 Operating Budget

Metro Transit Finance Director Ed Petrie & Metropolitan Transportation Services Finance & Administration Director Heather Aagesen-Huebner presented this item. McCarthy asked for clarification on the MVST forecasting, to which Petrie answered that this is taken from the State of Minnesota forecast. Elkins was curious what we have been running over the past few years, knowing that the MnLARS issue injected some volatility into MVST and why the percentage of MVST budgeted couldn't be raised to 97%. Petrie stated that there were a couple years we hit 100% - 101% but the last couple years have been closer to 96% and that the percentage could be raised but if we hit a budget issue it takes a long time to make a change, so 95% is a conservative measure. Metro Transit General Manager Brian Lamb added that we intend to spend 100% but by budgeting 95%, it gives us a little more lead time should we need to make an adjustment to that budget and that we are required by state law to use the State of Minnesota forecast on MVST. Metropolitan Transportation Service Director Nick Thompson added that since the policy change, we give suburban providers 100% of their fair share of the forecast and suggest that they budget 95% but the suburban providers make their own budgeting decisions. Chair Rodriguez pointed out that we are balanced in years 18, 19 and 20 only with temporary funding and cost cutting measures, which is not sustainable for the future. Commers asked why the fare box recovery for Northstar is so low, compared to the other rail lines. Petrie answered that Northstar is essentially end-to-end service, while the other rail lines have continued turnover. McCarthy was curious how an express bus service fare box recovery compares to that of Northstar since both are end-to-end service. Petrie stated they don't have the information on hand but could do an analysis. Lamb pointed out that express bus service would have a higher fare box recovery because it shares its overhead costs with local bus service. Munt wanted to know what a fare policy review looks like when so much is fluid on what the Legislature will fund. Lamb clarified that it isn't so much a review but to promote best practice to determine what the trigger mechanisms a governing board should consider when determine when is the right time for a fare increase and that this will be completed by the end of this year.

2. Light Rail Training Department Update

Metro Transit Rail Training Development Manager Ona Pradhan presented this item. Munt asked if the skill set of a bus operator is transferable to a rail operator position, to which Pradhan answered that yes absolutely the skill set is transferable.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 5:24 p.m.

Becky Davidson
Recording Secretary