

Minutes of the

REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

March 22, 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:

Employee Recognition – Metro Transit

Metro Transit General Manager Wes Kooistra introduced the following, who presented recognition awards:

Metro Transit South Garage Transportation Manager Doyne Parsons who presented to Metro Transit South Garage Bus Operator Tony Fitzgerald.

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, March 22, 2021.

AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Cummings, seconded by Fredson to approve the minutes of the March 8, 2021 regular meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

Aye: 7 Chamblis, Cummings, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran, Barber

Nay: 0

Absent: 1 Ferguson

TAB REPORT

Dugan reported on new TAB members and COVID funding coming to Minnesota. Dugan also provided an update on Metropolitan Airports Commission statistics.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR AND METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Nick Thompson reported:

INFRA

Last week MnDOT and the Met Council partnered on the submittal of a funding request for the US DOT INFRA program. The application is requesting \$84M for the I-494 highway project in Bloomington, Richfield and Edina. This funding would supplement funding already secured for the project to add a MnPASS lane, improve the 35W/494 interchange and rebuild interchanges at Portland and 12th. This is a key project identified in the TPP and is expected to start construction later next year. The federal grant, if awarded, would allow more phases of the project to be completed.

COVID update

Last week we had only one reported positive test among the contracted transit workforce. Ridership, for Metro Mobility it continues its slow rebound with ridership now at about 55 to 60% of the pre-Covid levels, and some signs of the growth accelerating in the past two weeks as the vaccine roll-out has picked up. Our essential health care worker trip has been reduced to about half of peak demand since our implementation of the fare on March 1st. All of the operators for the contractors and suburban transit providers have now been offered vaccine appointments. Vaccine appointments have primarily been provided at the State's Mall of America site, but Ramsey County also provided 600 appointments for Metro Mobility Drivers

Metro Transit General Manager Wes Kooistra reported:

COVID Update

Metro Transit has had a total of 382 employees who have tested positive for COVID since the start of the pandemic one year ago. Since the last Transportation Committee meeting on March 8, we've had seven employees test positive for COVID. We are not seeing any patterns or hotspots by work location. And we are not experiencing any operational impacts due to employees having COVID or needing to quarantine.

Vaccine update

At this time, all Metro Transit 1B employees are eligible for COVID-19 vaccinations.

Last week, our vendor was able to deliver COVID-19 vaccinations to more than 500 bus and train operators at their Mall of America clinic site. We also know that hundreds of our operators have been vaccinated in other locations. In total, more than 800 have received at least one shot. Over the weekend, our vendor began contacting all other 1B Metro Transit employees to offer vaccine appointments this week at the MOA site. Beyond our work to vaccinate Metro Transit frontline essential workers, we continue to work with the Minnesota Department of Health to pilot mobile vaccination buses. The goal remains to have the first of these buses ready for deployment by mid-April.

COVID continues to affect ridership.

Latest ridership statistics show ridership is down 59% system wide

1. Bus down 58%
2. Blue Line down 61%
3. Green Line down 57%
4. Northstar down 96%

Metro Transit Trial Preparations

Metro Transit continues to monitor and plan for potential service impacts due to the trial of Derek Chauvin. Jury selection in the Chauvin Trial started March 8, the same date of our last Committee meeting. There were demonstrations in downtown Minneapolis on the first day and transit service experienced minimal service impacts. Since that date, there have been additional marches and demonstrations. Our planning efforts seem to be paying off as we are quickly able to make service adjustments and communicate in real time with our customers via Rider Alerts and social media. Transit Police and Operations remain connected with the Operation Safety Net unified command and will be fully engaged as the trial moves toward opening arguments on March 29.

Better Bus Stops

Later this week, our Engineering and Facilities Department will mail letters to Minneapolis and Saint Paul City Councilmembers regarding the 2021 Better Bus Stops planned work. Every spring, we send these letters as a courtesy at the start of every construction season. Metropolitan Council members who represent the districts where we have planned improvements will be copied on these letters to City Councilmembers. As you know, the Better Bus Stops program aims to improve the customer's waiting experience with shelter replacements or upgrades. In 2021, the program plans to add up to 25 new

shelters, replace up to 30 aged shelters, and construct up to 50 accessible boarding pads at bus stops without shelters.

Cummings asked about the INFRA grant. Cummings voiced her gratitude for the Transit Operator Appreciation Day video and Cummings and Barber thanked Transit operators for their work this past year.

BUSINESS

Consent Items:

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

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

1. **2021-71 SW:** 2021-2024 TIP Amendment for MnDOT: MN 95 Drainage Repair

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council adopt an amendment to the 2021-2024 TIP to increase the project length and cost of MnDOT’s drainage project on Minnesota Highway 95.

2. **2021-72 SW:** 2021-2024 TIP Amendment for MnDOT: FTA Section 5310, Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities

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

3. **2021-73:** Grant Agreements with Minnesota Valley Transit Authority

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council authorizes the Regional Administrator to enter the Council into grant agreements with Minnesota Valley Transit Authority (MVTA) for \$526,650 for payment of principal and interest for the Eagan Bus Garage expansion and \$640,000 for transportation facilities improvements.

Non-Consent Items:

1. **2021-57 JT:** First Quarter Budget Amendment

Metro Transit Finance Director Ed Petrie and Metropolitan Transportation Services Finance & Administration Director Heather Aagesen-Huebner presented this item.

There were no questions or comments from Council Members.

Motion by Chamblis, seconded by Fredson:

That the Metropolitan Council authorizes the 2021 Unified Budget as indicated and in accordance with the attached tables.

Motion carried.

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

2. **2021-49:** SWLRT (Green Line Extension) Civil Construction Change Order – Corridor Protection Wall

Metro Transit Assistant General Manager Jim Alexander presented this item.

Barber asked for clarification about the cumulative authority. Chamblis inquired about options that were explored. Alexander shared that there was a community-led input process. Cummings said the project staff have done an excellent job with this project. Ferguson asked about funding. Alexander said there will be half a contingency pot left over.

Motion by Cummings, seconded by Fredson:

That the Metropolitan Council (Council) authorize the Regional Administrator through the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) Council's Authorized Representative to negotiate and execute a change order for Contract 15P307A with Lunda McCrossan Joint Venture (LMJV) in an amount not to exceed \$82,604,905.17 for work related to the construction of a Corridor Protection Barrier (CPB); and that the Council authorize an additional 10.33% to the 10% cumulative cap of change order authority under Council Procedure 14-1a for Contract 15P307A with LMJV.

Motion carried.

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

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

3. **2021-65:** On-Call Track Maintenance, Contract 20P251

Metro Transit Track Manager Tony Klinger presented this item.

Fredson asked about outsourcing. Klinger said it does not outsource the current work. Cummings commented on the difference in the bids.

Motion by Fredson, seconded by Sterner:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to award and execute a contract with Railworks Track Systems, Inc., to provide on-call and preventative track maintenance to the Blue and Green Lines in an amount not to exceed \$1,375,000 for a period of five years, through December 31, 2025.

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. **2021-69 SW:** METRO D Line – Station Pylon Contract Award

Metro Transit BRT Project Manager Shahin Khazrajafari presented this item.

Cummings asked about the responsibility for maintenance. Khazrajafari said there is a 3-year warranty.

Motion by Cummings, seconded by Chamblis:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to award and execute contract 19P385A with ASC Acquisition Co./DBA Albrecht Sign Company for the fabrication and delivery of station pylons for BRT and enhanced bus stops at a cost not to exceed \$2,010,710, with options for future purchases.

Motion carried.

Aye: 7 Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran, Barber
Nay: 0
Absent: 1 Fredson

5. **2021-70 SW:** Federal Performance Measure Adoption, Resolution 2021-13 & 14
Metropolitan Transportation Services Senior Planner Dave Burns presented this item.

There were no questions or comments from Council Members.

Motion by Sterner, seconded by Zeran:

That the Metropolitan Council adopt the pavement and bridge condition, system reliability and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) performance measure targets.

Motion carried.

Aye: 7 Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran, Barber
Nay: 0
Absent: 1 Fredson

6. **2021-74:** Authorized Contract with Gillig Corporation for 30-Foot Buses

Metropolitan Transportation Services Fleet Services Manager Paul Colton presented this item.

Chamblis asked about Gillig's electrification plan. Colton said it could potentially be in the next purchase. Chamblis asked why the purchase couldn't be split. Colton said the buses have reached the end of their useful life. Cummings asked why the Council purchased off the Virginia contract. Colton said the procurement queue has been backed up and the opportunity of Virginia's provided competitive pricing. Cummings if purchasing through them cost more, Colton said it does not. Director of Procurement Jody Jacoby said it is a unique opportunity to leverage an existing contract and get competitive pricing that the Council would not have been able to get on its own. Sterner asked if there was a requirement to take all 26 buses. Colton said there would potentially be an option like that. Sterner asked about capacity differences. Sterner said the 30-foot bus is a better fit for community needs. Sterner asked about the fuel. Colton said they are bio-diesel buses and will have the newest EPA standard. Chamblis asked how many buses are close to the end of their life. Colton said there are 19 buses nearing the end of their life and a few other buses that are being converted from 40-foot to 30-foot buses. Sterner brought up the next procurement and Colton said MTS is looking at a high-level plan of how to electrify the fleet.

Motion by Cummings, seconded by Gonzalez:

That the Metropolitan Council Authorize the Regional Administrator to exercise bus purchase options utilizing the Commonwealth of Virginia's Contract E194-75548 MA2274 with Gillig LLC, to purchase up to twenty-six (26) replacement transit buses in an amount not to exceed \$12,820,000.

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

sAye: 7 Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran, Barber
Nay: 0
Absent: 1 Fredson

INFORMATION

1. Metro Transit Service Update

There were no questions or comments from Council Members.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 5:53 p.m.

Jenna Ernst
Recording Secretary