

Minutes of the Transportation Committee

REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Monday, February 24, 2014

Committee Members Present:

Adam Duinick, Lona Schreiber, Jon Commers, Jennifer Munt, Katie Rodriguez, Steve Elkins, Marie McCarthy, Edward Reynoso

Committee Members Absent: James Brimeyer

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Duinick called the regular meeting of the Council's Transportation Committee to order at 4:05 p.m. on Monday, February 24, 2014.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

It was moved by Schreiber, seconded by Munt to approve the agenda. Motion carried. It was moved by Elkins and seconded by Schreiber to approve the minutes of the February 10, 2014 regular Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

TAB LIAISON REPORT: Chair Duinick anticipates that Robert Lilligren will likely continue to be the liaison between TAB and the Transportation Committee. He gave a brief synopsis of the CMAQ grant process involving \$20 million of 2017 funds, for which a couple of projects of regional significance have been chosen. Arlene McCarthy added that this is a one-time process for the 2017 CMAQ because the new process is not complete, but that this proposal is in alignment with the way we're headed until we get the new regional solicitation package completed for 2018 monies. Duinick also welcomed newly elected TAB Coordinator Elaine Koutsoukos, who begins her tenure March 3rd.

METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER AND METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR REPORT.

Metro Transit General Manager Brian Lamb reported the following:

The President of the United States will be visiting the Green Line O & M Facility on Wednesday, February 26th, and will announce that \$600 million will be made available to transportation projects through TIGER grants. Lamb also mentioned that this winter has been the most challenging that he can remember, and how proud he is of the outstanding employee teamwork through it. Northstar has been a difficult problem as BNSF oil train backups have continually delayed the commuter line schedule, resulting in chronic frustration to 1,500 Transit customers.

Councilmember Reynoso asked if there were sanctions that could be imposed on BNSF. Lamb responded that we paid \$107 million for 12 permanent easements with BNSF, and that they are not meeting their commitments; the Operating Agreement we have with them does not allow us to impose penalties. Metro Transit is concentrating bus support in two locations, Elk River and Coon Rapids, to alleviate the problem; we need to continue to work on things that will make a difference, and communicate that to our customers. Clear path determination is what we will have to obtain from BNSF. Councilmember Schreiber suggested that a louder voice than ours may need to intervene. Lamb agreed that we need to think about leverage with them at the federal and state level, and as a customer, at the regional level as well.

Lamb announced a fantastic event to take place in the Heywood Driver's Room on February 28th in recognition of Black History Month: keynote speaker, Devean George, former L.A. Lakers player and Founder of Building Blocks Minnesota will discuss this year's event theme, "Rebuilding Community, One Block at a Time."

Lamb mentioned that the comment period for the Metro Transit Service Improvement Plan is drawing to a close. 3,000 surveys have been returned, which will help form a good long-term Transit plan for neighborhoods in the future.

Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Arlene McCarthy reported the following:

All business items before the Committee today are considered same-week because of the potential of the March 12th Council meeting being cancelled, and that they could not wait until end of March. She gave a report on the Motor Vehicles Sales Tax Revenues (MVST), stating that January was a very strong month, almost at 112%, and that the February forecast would be announced Friday, 2-28. She also reported that Red Line Rapid Transit was awarded the 2013 Special Project of the Year by the Minnesota County Engineers' Association (MCEA) at their annual banquet January 21st.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION, Metro Transit: John Levin, Director of Service Development, introduced Adam Harrington, Assistant Director, Route and System Planning, who has been the Lead Project Manager regarding safety and operational issues at the congested 7th & Nicollet downtown environment. Adam received a certificate from Brian Lamb in recognition of his accomplishments.

BUSINESS ITEMS

2014-43 SW: Authorization to Purchase 3 Option Coach Diesel Buses. Presented by Tom Humphrey, Metro Transit Deputy Director of Bus Maintenance Operations. Business Item was moved by Munt, seconded by Schreiber. That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to exercise existing contract options with Motor Coach Industries to purchase 3 diesel coach buses in an amount not-to-exceed \$1,662,000. **Motion carried.**

2014-50 SW: Authorization to Amend the 2014 Transportation Budget, Carryforward Amendment. Presented by Ed Petrie, Metro Transit Director of Finance, and MTS Principal Financial Analyst Sean Pfeiffer. Petrie delineated the capital portion and Pfeiffer the operating portion of the business item. Moved by Schreiber, seconded by Rodriguez. That the Metropolitan Council amend the 2014 Unified Budget – Capital Program (annual appropriation) and Authorized Capital Program (multi-year authorization) and that the Metropolitan Council amend the 2014 Unified Budget – Operating Budget as indicated and in accordance with the attached tables. **Motion carried.**

2014-48 SW: TIP amendment for TH 610: Presented by MTS Senior Planner Heidi Schallberg. Business item was moved by Rodriguez, seconded by Schreiber. That the Metropolitan Council concur with the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) action to amend the 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to add TH 610 (SP# 2771-37) from Hennepin Co Rd 81 to I-94 in 2015 with a total project cost of \$112,005,524, including \$4,346,172 in federal earmark funds, \$106,825,140 in Corridors of Commerce state-authorized bonds, and \$834,212 in local funds from the City of Maple Grove. **Motion carried.**

A question from Councilmember Commers about air emissions was answered by Arlene McCarthy's suggestion that a short presentation on air emissions analysis and how it applies on all of our projects could be scheduled for Council Members in the near future.

2014-45 SW: Amendment to 2014 UPWP. Presented by MTS Senior Planner Elaine Koutsoukos. Business Item was moved by Schreiber, seconded by Elkins. That the Metropolitan Council amend the 2014 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area to add \$400,000 to the budget for ongoing consulting studies and provide a complete work program. **Motion carried.**

2014-46 SW: Authorize Execution of Contract Options with Motor Coach Industries (MCI) on Behalf of Southwest Transit. Presented by MTS Fleet Manager Paul Colton. Business Item moved by Elkins, seconded by Munt. That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to exercise an existing contract option on Contract 08P114 with MCI to purchase thirteen coach buses in an amount not to exceed \$7,534,800. **Motion carried.**

INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Bike Walk Twin Cities 2013 Count Report, presented by Joan Passic and Barb Thoman of Transit for Livable Communities. Shared overview of their success in making strategic investments to increase bicycling and walking transportation through the \$28 million investment (over 7 years plus) by Non-Motorized Transportation Pilot Program legislated by Congress in 2005.
2. Offload Process for Delivery of New Light Rail Vehicles. Rick Carey, Metro Transit Asst. Director of Rail Vehicle Maintenance, presented information about revenue saving methods for delivery and offloading of Bombardier vehicles.
3. 2040 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) Update, presented by Amy Vennewitz, Transportation Deputy Director of Planning and Financing.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

Linda Thayer
Recording Secretary