

Minutes of the

MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

August 13, 2018

LOCATION: Metro Transit F.T. Heywood Chambers, Minneapolis, MN

Committee Members Present: Chair Katie Rodriguez, Gail Dorfman, Jon Commers, Steve Elkins, Marie McCarthy, Jennifer Munt, Lona Schreiber

Committee Members Absent: Cara Letofsky, Deb Barber, Edward Reynoso

TAB Liaison Present: None

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum was not present when Chair Rodriguez called the regular meeting of the Council's Transportation Committee to order at 4:07pm on Monday, August 13, 2018 in the Metro Transit F.T. Heywood Chambers, Minneapolis, MN. The committee began with division reports while waiting for a quorum. A quorum was reached prior to action on any business items.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Motion by Schreiber, seconded by Elkins to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Motion by Commers, seconded by Elkins to approve the minutes of the July 23, 2018 regular meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR AND METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Nick Thompson reported:

Transportation Policy Plan (TPP)

Today marks the end of the TPP public comment period. Next steps will be to compile the comments and come back to Transportation and other committees to provide an update on the public comments before adoption.

Motor Vehicle Sales Tax (MVST)

Looking through the first half of the year; MVST has come in a little over forecasted at about 101%.

Metro Transit General Manager Brian Lamb reported:

TMO Update

Move Minneapolis, the downtown Transportation Management Organization, recently signaled its intent to merge with the Minneapolis Regional Chamber of Commerce. The two organizations are now in negotiations with the hope that a merger will take place in the next 60 to 90 days. As you know, Move Minneapolis receives CMAQ funds through the Council to do employer outreach and other TDM activities in downtown Minneapolis. The organization has struggled to find the local match needed to use the federal CMAQ funds and it appears a merger with the Chamber would help. It also could strengthen ties to key Minneapolis business leaders to help advance TDM efforts in downtown.

Service changes

If you recall, we made the difficult decision to suspend about 1 percent of weekday bus trips on July 31. The goal was to improve predictability in our operations and to give customers more confidence in our service as we continue working to address our operator shortage.

The next regularly scheduled service changes take effect this Saturday. To maintain the improved reliability, we've seen over the past few weeks, we'll maintain this level of service in the next round of changes. Some of the trips that were suspended in July will be reinstated, but others are being eliminated. Like the July 31 trip suspensions, we sought to minimize the impact on customers by eliminating trips where alternatives are available. Our online schedules and trip planner have been adjusted accordingly, and customers on affected routes will receive text and e-mail alerts. We'll also be posting updated information in our shelters. Unfortunately, because of the sequence of events, our printed schedules will have some outdated information. Updated printed schedules will be distributed in December, when the next round of service changes take effect. To support our hiring efforts, we are offering a \$500 referral bonus to all employees. The bonus will be provided to any employee who refers a bus operator candidate who gets through their probationary period.

Minnesota State Fair

We are less than ten days away from the Minnesota State Fair, an event we look forward to serving every year. As you know, we will provide express bus service from Park & Rides throughout the region, with varying levels of service. Discounted group and individual fares will continue to be sold through our website and at our service centers until the start of the fair and will be available through our app until the fair ends.

We are also looking forward to serving several other large events in the coming weeks, including pre-season Vikings games and a pair of large concerts at U.S. Bank Stadium. As you'll recall, overlapping activities at the end of last summer led to a single-day ridership record on our light rail lines. As before, we'll do our best to match our service levels to accommodate increased demand.

BUSINESS

Consent Items:

Motion was made by Elkins, seconded by Schreiber and carried, to approve the following consent item:

1. **2018-214:** Controlled Access Approval: US 169 at MN 41/CH 78 and CH 14, Scott County

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council approve a request by Scott County and the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) to convert a portion of US 169 to a freeway in Jackson and Louisville Townships (see Figures 1 and 2). The proposed project includes conversion of the existing intersection on US 169 at MN 41/County Highway (CH) 78 to a diverging diamond interchange (see Figure 3), frontage road construction, the closure of numerous direct access points along US 169 and a non-traditional interchange on US 169 at CH 14 (see Figure 4), subject to further review and approval by the Metropolitan Council if there are any significant changes in the design of the proposed project.

Non-Consent Items:

1. **2018-182:** Heywood Garage Modernization Construction Contract

Metro Transit Engineering and Facilities Lead Project Manager Robert Rimstad introduced Metro Transit Principal Engineer Carrie Desmond (who will be taking over the project) and then presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council members.

Motion by Munt, seconded by Elkins:

That the Metropolitan Council authorizes award and execution of a construction contract with Rochon for the amount of \$9,409,490.50 for the construction of the Heywood Garage Modernization project at the Heywood Bus Garage.

Motion carried.

2. **018-198: METRO Blue Line Extension - Bassett Creek Tunnel Realignment Additional Change Order Authority**

Metro Transit System Development BLRT Assistant General Manager Dan Soler presented this item. McCarthy asked if there were any grants that we could apply for to offset the cost. Soler responded that you would see that more in a development project but not in a public works project and that this work is an eligible project cost.

Motion by Munt, seconded by Commers:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize an additional 2% (\$48,431) above the currently authorized construction contract change order authority of 10% (\$242,157) to a revised change order authority of \$290,588 for the Bassett Creek Tunnel Realignment (Bassett Creek) construction contract.

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

INFORMATION

1. Ridership Report

Metropolitan Transportation Services Contracted Transit Services Manager John Harper presented this item. Munt asked if there are industry trends of decreased use of vanpooling/carpooling. Harper stated staff hasn't done comparisons among other regions but could bring back an answer to the Committee. Munt followed up that while we are talking about shared mobility and planning for the future, we need to think about our parking lots that might be overbuilt. Metro Transit General Manager Brian Lamb stated that we are moving into a mobility era and transit/transportation options need to be executed in new and different ways, including modernizing vanpooling/carpooling and re-bundling transportation options. Chair Rodriguez said that vanpooling is increasing in other regions. Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Nick Thompson stated that there were some Regional Solicitation proposals that look at different passes that blend transit and parking into one (including the ABC ramps) and that there are opportunities to modernize policies around vanpooling. Lamb followed up that this week staff is in the process of finalizing finalists for the Mobility Manager position, which will help solidify actions associated with these strategies.

2. Metro Mobility Update

Metropolitan Transportation Services Metro Mobility Senior Manager Christine Kuennen presented this item.

Dorfman asked what percent of riders that use Metro Mobility have the capability to use fixed route service. Kuennen responded that this is best answered by the percentage of customers who have a conditional eligibility, which is up to 40%. McCarthy asked what happens to the vehicles that were given to the previous transit provider to which Kuennen answered that these vehicles were set for retirement at the end of the contract. Munt wanted to know if customers will still be able to call and talk with an agent to book their ride. Kuennen stated that yes, what we are doing is essential reintroducing what had been available two years ago with a better product.

3. MN State Fair Marketing & Service Update

Metro Transit Assistant Manager Street Operations Greg Tuveson and Metro Transit Market Development Specialist Adam Mehl presented this item. Dorfman asked how we manage the State Fair service, with the shortage of operators. Tuveson responded that the 9am service start time will help significantly, allowing operators to get through morning rush and then operate State Fair service. Munt and Chair Rodriguez expressed their thanks to staff. Chair Rodriguez also asked if we are doing any social media about the late added Newport service. Mehl stated that yes staff will be posting on social

media, along with rider alerts to regular route customer of Newport and Cottage Grove and fliers on cars at those two park and ride locations.

4. Bus Barrier Pilot Update

Metro Transit Bus Transportation Director Christy Bailly and Metro Transit Bus Maintenance Director Matt Dake presented this item. Munt asked if we have to pick one style of barrier. Dake responded that from a maintenance perspective less variety is easier on costs, training, etc. and it can get operationally complicated when you start assigning operators to vehicles, as vehicles are shared along most local routes. Dake added that if there is a consensus that makes sense, we would not be opposed to it. Munt also questioned if we outfit one bus with a barrier, do we have to outfit the whole fleet. Bailly answered that is yet to be determine. Bailly continued that if the drivers feel there is an option to use the barrier or not, we would have success going fleetwide and that we should know more once the two additional barrier styles are received and put into service.

5. MTPD Operations Update

Metro Transit Police Chief John Harrington presented this item. Dorfman asked if the calls received related to people experiencing homelessness are from other riders or the homeless themselves. Chief Harrington responded that the calls include both. Munt asked Chief Harrington what he would say if a rider asked if it's safe to ride transit. Chief Harrington answered that the more people you have out and about, the safer it is but when it's 1 or 2am and riders are by themselves, it can feel scary. Chief Harrington added that victimization isn't that high but the feeling of unease that you don't see enough cops and/or other riders makes people very uncomfortable.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 6:00pm.

Becky Davidson
Recording Secretary