

# Minutes of the REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

May 23, 2016

LOCATION: Metropolitan Council Chambers, St. Paul, MN

**Committee Members Present: Chair Lona Schreiber, Jennifer Munt, Cara Letofsky, Gail Dorfman, Deb Barber, Jon Commers, Katie Rodriguez**

**Committee Members Absent: Marie McCarthy, Steve Elkins, Edward Reynoso**

## CALL TO ORDER

A quorum was not present when Chair Schreiber called the regular meeting of the Council's Transportation Committee to order at 4:08 p.m. on Monday, May 23, 2016 in the Metropolitan Council Chambers, St. Paul, MN. Chair Schreiber began the meeting with non-business items while waiting for a quorum. Once a quorum was reached later in the meeting the committee was able to act on business items of the committee.

## APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Motion by Dorfman, seconded by Barber to approve the May 23, 2016 agenda. Motion carried.

Motion by Commers, seconded by Dorfman to approve the minutes of the May 9, 2016 special meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

## EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION – Metro Transit

Metro Transit General Manager Brian Lamb introduced Metro Transit Manager LRV Overhaul Special Projects Chris Royston, who presented the employee recognition to Metro Transit LRT Overhaul Electro Mechanical Technician Tom Astedt. Astedt was recognized for his work on design and fabrication of conduit configuration on LRVs to alleviate stress placed on the conduit on tight corners.

## TAB LIAISON REPORT:

Rodriguez reported the TAB met on 5/18/16. The TAB approved bylaw changes which included allowing all TAB members to have an alternate. The bylaws will also come before the Transportation Committee and Council. The TAB approved a Hennepin County scope change and also heard from Scott McBride-MnDOT that there are only a few days left in the comment period for the Minnesota Statewide Multi-Modal Transportation Plan and the Minnesota Statewide Highway Investment Plan. McBride briefed the TAB on the specifics, priorities and investments/funding in the plans.

The TAB also heard an update on the Federal Fund Exchange (Defederalization) procedure being developed. Staff shared an informational handout, action is proposed for the June TAB meeting.

Rodriguez stated that it is her understanding that there is concern about the DBE requirements. There have been discussions about Metro Council's underutilized business program and the possibility of Metro Council assisting project sponsors to fulfill the DBE requirements.

## METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER and METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR REPORTS

Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Arlene McCarthy reported:

### 1. Red Line Interior Bicycle Rack System

Red Line buses were originally equipped with interior double bike racks where bikes were stored vertically, similar to light rail vehicles. The design proved to be cumbersome because of the limited space available and seating configuration of the buses. Bikers had trouble lifting their bikes into the rack and passengers had difficulty maneuvering around bicycle handlebars that protruded into the aisle. MTS hired a consultant to create

a custom interior bike rack system that would accommodate two bikes secured on the floor in order to eliminate handlebar hazards to customers. A prototype was created and installed in spring 2015. Customer and stakeholder feedback revealed that the design proved popular because of the functionality and ease of use. Three photos showing the progression of the first bike being installed were shared with the Transportation Committee. The Red Line custom interior racks demonstrate that the region's first rapid bus line continues to be an innovative and adaptive bus service.

## 2. Regional Solicitation

The Regional Solicitation was issued on May 19. Applications will be accepted for about two months. A workshop was held last week (45 attendees). Seven training sessions are scheduled and a video will be available online.

## 3. Modeling

In May, MTS staff attended the TRB Conference on Innovations in Travel Modeling in Denver. Staff presented on a model that was developed as part of the new transportation demand forecasting model that deals with estimating demand for and location of future new schools. Staff developed this because travel to and from a school represents 10% of regional trip-ends, and getting the length of the school commute correct is important for forecasting how, where, and when other household members travel in newly developed areas.. The analytical focus on this detail of school travel is new in the travel forecasting community and the work was celebrated at the conference as an example of creative innovation to be emulated. The model was developed by MTS Planning analyst Jonathan Ehrlich and Community Development Research Analyst Dennis Farmer.

## 4. Transit On Board Survey

The 2016 Transit On Board Survey is underway. Surveyors were on rail, BRT and high volume bus routes from early April through early May. The majority of that work is completed with only counts in the A-Line corridor to be completed after its June 11 opening. Origin-destination surveying will continue at low level over the summer on routes that have little expected seasonal variation in travel patterns. Major survey work on all bus and rail routes will pick up from September through November.

Metro Transit General Manager Brian Lamb reported:

### 1. Special Events

Big events are scheduled for the coming week. Beyonce performs tonight at TCF Bank Stadium and the Zac Brown Band will play at Target Field on Saturday. We're offering a special Northstar trip to Target Field for this weekend's concert and will have extra police and staff on hand at stations to help manage the crowds at both events.

Over the weekend, Metro Transit also helped the St. Paul Saints kick-off their second season at CHS Field. This season, we're offering a limited number of ticket packages for select games that include tickets, a ballcap and a round-trip fare. While the Twins have struggled on the field, we have continued to see strong ridership to their games. An average of 6,600 fans took transit to games in April, about 1,000 rides above last year's average. More than 86,000 total rides were taken by Twins fans last month, 18 percent above last year. Fans can ride free to all Minnesota Lynx home games this season as well. More than 1,000 people used a downloadable pass to ride to the team's home opener last week.

### 2. Street Harassment

Metro Transit is joining transit agencies across the country in taking a stand against street harassment. This week, a small group of operators, instructors and others will attend a training by the Minneapolis-based Sexual Violence Center to better understand the issue and how we can respond. As we identify effective strategies, this topic could be more widely addressed in future training. We're also planning to introduce a marketing campaign later this year and are looking into ways customers can discretely report instances of street harassment – unwanted, sexually-motivated comments and actions like

catcalling, whistling and shouting. Addressing this issue will help ensure our stations, waiting areas, buses and trains are safe spaces that all can enjoy.

### 3. Metro Transit Police Kudos

It's not often you see male police officers with long hair. But one of our officers, Bret Fraser, went 20 months without a haircut so he could donate his locks to an organization that creates wigs for cancer patients. Fraser got his hair cut earlier this month at a northside shop that he and his partner visit often as part of their work on the Northside Community Policing Team. Video of the haircut session was shown.

### 4. MAGC Awards

Lamb introduced Metro Transit Director of Customer Services and Marketing Bruce Howard, who recognized Metro Transit staff members who took home awards at the Minnesota Association of Government Communicators awards last week. Staff members are: Kelci Stones, Amy Dritz, Drew Johnson, Kathy Graul, Leah Janz, Sharon Feiner, Drew Kerr, Natalia Erling.

### 5. Northstar Train Vandalism

In response to a question from Schreiber, Lamb stated the graffiti "tagging" of a Northstar train car that took place was removed within an hour or so of discovery. The investigation continues to identify the person or persons responsible.

## **BUSINESS**

### **Consent Items:**

There were no consent items on the agenda.

### **Non-Consent Items:**

#### 1. 2016-100 SW: 38<sup>th</sup> Street Transit Oriented Development

Metro Transit TOD Development Analyst Michael Krantz presented this item.

Letofsky and Dorfman expressed favorable comments regarding the Lander Group and staff flexibility.

Motion by Letofsky, seconded by Munt:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator or his delegate to enter into exclusive negotiations for a ground lease to the Lander Group for the Council owned site located adjacent to the 38<sup>th</sup> Street Station on the Blue Line LRT, such lease to contain provisions that advance the Council's TOD Policy, and in compliance with all applicable Federal and State laws.

Motion carried.

#### 2. 2016-106: West End and Route 9 Transit Study Authorization to Reschedule Public Hearing of June 28, 2016

Metro Transit Senior Planner Steve Mahowald presented this item.

There were no questions from committee members.

Motion by Dorfman, seconded by Rodriguez:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the rescheduling of the public hearing to accept comments on proposed service changes outlined in the West End and Route 9 Transit Study concept plan.

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

## **INFORMATION**

Prior to the information items, Munt read aloud a statement that was issued from Metro Council Chair Adam Duinick to the media today regarding the legislative session.

#### 1. First Transit Driver Wages Update

Metro Mobility Senior Manager Andrew Krueger presented this item. The presentation included background, trends, recruiting efforts and future analysis for RFPs. Munt questioned the reasoning between \$14 and \$15 starting wage. A. McCarthy explained that First Transit had an alternative proposal of \$14 that enables MTS to increase the wages quickly in the near term. In the future the wages will be part of the competitive procurement. Munt stated she would like staff to look into a starting wage of \$15 for future contracts and said that driver continuity is important. Staff is also looking into whether there is a way to build in a mechanism for automatic increases in the RFPs if unemployment rates change.

## 2. Principal Arterial Intersection Conversion Study

Metropolitan Transportation Services Planning Analyst Steve Peterson presented this item. This study was co-funded and co-led with MnDOT. Munt questioned whether the projects can happen without a transportation bill. A. McCarthy stated that the idea of the study is to help recommend projects if and when funding becomes available through various programs.

## 3. Heywood Campus Update

Metro Transit Assistant Director Facilities Engineering Pat Jones introduced Senior Project Coordinator Cathy Nordin and Principal Engineer Robert Rimstad who presented this item. In response to a question from Dorfman, Rimstad said that the 400+ living wage jobs will consist of managers, mechanics, supervisors and operators on the various shifts.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Business completed, the regular meeting of the Metropolitan Council Transportation Committee was adjourned at 5:35 p.m.