

Minutes of the

REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

March 23, 2020

LOCATION: Metropolitan Council Chambers, Saint Paul, MN

Committee Members Present: Chair Deb Barber, Lynnea Atlas-Ingebretson, Reva Chamblis, Molly Cummings, Christopher Ferguson, Kris Fredson, Francisco Gonzalez, Phillip Sterner, Raymond Zeran

Committee Members Absent:

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum was present when Chair Barber called the regular meeting of the Council's Transportation Committee to order at 4:00 p.m. on Monday, March 23, 2020 in the Metropolitan Council Chambers, Saint Paul, MN.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Motion by Sterner, seconded by Atlas-Ingebretson to approve the amended agenda. Motion carried.

Aye: 9 Atlas-Ingebretson, Barber, Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

Approval of the minutes of the March 9, 2020 regular meeting of the Transportation Committee was deferred to a future meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no member of the public who wished to speak about anything not on the agenda.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR AND METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Nick Thompson reported:

Impact of COVID-19 on Contracted Transit Services

Ridership Changes

- Metro Mobility Ridership declines in range of 60 to 80%.
- Transit Link Ridership is down about 70%.
- At this point, all contractors have enough staff reporting to work to meet system demand for Metro Mobility, Transit Link, and contracted fixed route services

Changes in Operations to Provider Social Distancing

- Both Metro Mobility and Transit Link have stopped doing shared rides. All passenger trips are solo rides or rides with passenger assistant. This change results in a need for more drivers trips than if the same number of passengers are served with a shared ride model
- Metro Mobility and Transit Link are providing a new service of picking up and delivery food to customers. Metro Mobility started yesterday, and Transit Link starts Wednesday. The process at this point is the customer orders the food on-line from a local retailer. They then book a ride for the

delivery and provide an order number for the driver to have when the pick-up is made. This service can expand as needed based on available capacity with our drivers/buses. Trips also can pick up pet food if asked but cannot provide delivery of prescription medication.

Changes to Operations

- All contractors have increased cleaning, for Metro Mobility this includes cleaning after providing trips to customers in addition to daily cleaning.
- If there is any identified risk of a contact with a customer or driver that has symptoms of COVID-19, the buses are pulled from services and cleaned.
- At this time, contractors have sufficient cleaning supplies.

Coordination with Suburban Transit Providers

- The Council is in continuous communication with suburban transit providers to share information about service changes and operating procedures.
- All Suburban Transit Providers are reducing their services this week as demand has fallen, particularly for commuter/express services. Their ridership declines are like those on similar services of MTS and Metro Transit.

Regional Solicitation

TAB voted to extend the deadline for regional solicitation by one month at the request of several members who had staff redeployed to deal with the emergency and who had been working on applications. TAB will take up the issue again in April to determine if further extensions are necessary.

Metro Transit General Manager Wes Kooistra reported:

COVID-19 Update

There is an Incident Command Structure that reports daily that reports to the Council and then the State. Transit continues for essential workers: health care workers, care givers, pharmacy workers, grocery worker, and other essential workers. Transit continues for essential needs: getting groceries, filling prescriptions and other basic essential needs. Metro Transit is encouraging that essential errands be organized to reduce frequency.

When Riding

- Honor social distancing guidance with riders and operators
- Minimize touch on surfaces
- Cover coughs
- Wash hands

Ridership:

Bus and light Rail = 60% plus decline and growing.

Northstar = 90% plus decline with not much room to grow.

Service Reduction

- 60% services
- Similar to Saturday or day after holiday services with additional peak hour service
- 20 minute LRT headway
- Northstar down to two trips both ways weekdays - cut service on weekends
- Lines up with ridership
- Addresses operator shortage
- Provide flexibility to flood some high use routes with service
- Provide flexibility to honor ad hoc / specialized requests

Metro Transit has relaxed attendance discipline to encourage (require) stay at home if sick. Bus and rail disinfected 3 times per week and operators are given disinfectant wipes to wipe own area during the day. Metro Transit is prioritizing use of buses with barriers and transferring articulate buses to routes with greatest ridership to encourage social distancing. Metro Transit is reducing service which will allow extra buses to supplement busiest routes. Allowing use of masks, although Metro Transit is not allowed to issue these masks ourselves. Portapotties have been added to places where public restrooms are no longer available for operator relief.

Cummings asked who does the vehicle cleaning and if they've received technique information. Thompson answered that the drivers are involved and have been told CDC and MN Department of Health best practices and recommendations.

BUSINESS

Consent Items:

Motion was made by Atlas-Ingebretson, seconded by Gonzalez and carried, to approve the following consent items:

Aye: 9 Atlas-Ingebretson, Barber, Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

1. **2020-106 SW:** 2020-2023 TIP Amendment for Metro Transit: Route 63 Improvement

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council approve an amendment to the 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to reduce the length of Route 63, reduce the number of buses purchased, add Route 323, and split into two project years Metro Transit's Route 63 Service Improvement project.

2. **2020-107 SW:** 2020-2023 TIP Amendment for Metro Transit: Districtwide Pavement Marking and Cat-Tracks Projects Set-a-Side

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council approve an amendment to the 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to add a districtwide set-a-side for pavement marking and cat-track¹ projects.

3. **2020-108 SW:** 2020-2023 TIP Amendment for MnDOT: Temporary Signal Installation

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council approve an amendment to the 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to add a project installing temporary signals at Interstate 35 E and County Road J in Lino Lakes.

4. **2020-109 SW:** 2020-2023 TIP Amendment for St. Louis Park: Edgewood Road Reconstruction

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council approve an amendment to the 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to add roadway reconstruction to St. Louis Park's pedestrian bridge project.

Non-Consent Items:

1. **2020-89 SW:** Gold Line Environmental Decision

Metro Transit Environmental Lead Chelsa Johnson presented this item.

Atlas-Ingebretson asked if any members of the public or local officials have expressed concern. Johnson said there were comments in support, and questions.

Motion by Sterner, seconded by Zeran:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize its Chair to sign the Findings of Fact and Conclusions developed through the Environmental Assessment/Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EA/EAW) that the project does not have the potential for significant environmental effects and that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

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

Aye: 9 Atlas-Ingebretson, Barber, Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

2. **2020-95 SW:** Blue Line Enhancements Phase II Design and Construction Support Services Contract 19P281

Metro Transit Associate Engineer Ryan Heath presented this item.

Chamblis asked about lubrication costs. Heath said it is a small cost, each lubricator is about \$50,000 and it will reduce future maintenance costs and they anticipate installing four.

Motion by Cummings, seconded by Gonzalez:

That the Metropolitan Council authorizes the Regional Administrator to award and execute contract 19P281 with WSP USA, Inc., in the amount of \$6,426,423 for design and construction support services related to Blue Line Enhancements Phase II.

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

Aye: 9 Atlas-Ingebretson, Barber, Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

3. **2020-104 SW:** SWLRT (Green Line Extension) Franklin Operations and Maintenance Facility Modifications Contract Award

Metro Transit Assistant General Manager Jim Alexander presented this item.

Atlas-Ingebretson commented on the importance of including the different types of DBE goals.

Motion by Cummings, seconded by Atlas-Ingebretson:

That the Metropolitan Council (Council) authorize the Regional Administrator to award and execute the Franklin Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Facility Modifications Contract (19P272) for the Southwest LRT Project (SWLRT) to LS Black Constructors in an amount not to exceed \$38,650,000. The action is contingent upon receipt of a Letter of No Prejudice (LONP) from the FTA and approval of the LONP work from Hennepin County.

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

Aye: 9 Atlas-Ingebretson, Barber, Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

4. **2020-105 SW:** Orange Line BRT Stations Contract
Metro Transit Principal Engineer Derek Berube presented this item.

There were no comments or questions from Council Members.

Motion by Sterner, seconded by Atlas-Ingebretson:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize award and execution of a construction contract with Morcon Construction in the amount of \$15,911,493.00, for construction of the Orange Line BRT Stations.

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

Aye: 9 Atlas-Ingebretson, Barber, Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

5. **2020-112 SW:** Joint Powers Agreement: Metro Transit PD & MN Bureau of Criminal Apprehension
Metro Transit Sergeant Brooke Blakey presented this item.

Gonzalez asked what the protections are for stakeholders and passengers around being asked immigration status, is that information confidential or shared with BCA. Blakey said that is protected information and is not shared.

Motion by Chamblis, seconded by Sterner:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) between the Metro Transit Police Department and the MN Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) for the purpose of partnership on the Minnesota Human Trafficking Investigators Task Force.

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

Aye: 9 Atlas-Ingebretson, Barber, Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

INFORMATION

1. There were no information items on the agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Jenna Ernst
Recording Secretary