

Minutes of the

REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

March 12, 2018

LOCATION: Metropolitan Council Chambers, Saint Paul, MN

Committee Members Present: Chair Katie Rodriguez, Deb Barber, Jon Commers, Gail Dorfman, Steve Elkins, Cara Letofsky, Marie McCarthy, Edward Reynoso, Lona Schreiber

Committee Members Absent: Jennifer Munt

TAB Liaison Present: None

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum was present when Chair Rodriguez called the regular meeting of the Council's Transportation Committee to order at 4:02 p.m. on Monday, March 12, 2018 in the Metropolitan Council Chambers, Saint Paul, MN.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Motion by Letofsky, seconded by Barber to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Motion by Barber, seconded by Reynoso to approve the minutes of the February 26, 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:

TPP

MTS staff is presenting TPP to Minneapolis and Saint Paul this week, and Anoka County and Hennepin County next week. This will conclude the round of presentations and input solicitation, and we will have met with Commissioners from each of the 7 counties, the 7W region, and Councilmembers from Minneapolis and Saint Paul. The TPP has started its process to present to the Council for approval to release for public comment. Last week TAC Planning, who has been providing extensive input for the past year, voted unanimously to recommend approval of the draft. It now goes to TAC then TAB before coming before this Committee.

Governor's Executive Order

Governor Dayton announced formation of an Advisory Council on Connected and Autonomous Vehicles. The council will be comprised of state agencies and 13 at-large members. Chair Tchourumoff will be a member. Applications to be on the advisory council are being accepted through the Secretary of State's office until April 27, 2018. It is expected the Council will meet beginning in June and provide recommendations by December on steps the State should be taking to prepare for connected and autonomous vehicles.

Elkins asked if Councilmembers could apply, Rodriguez said she will ask Chair Tchourumoff.

Metro Transit General Manager Brian Lamb reported:

Transit Driver Appreciation Day

We'll celebrate bus and train operators on Thursday for Transit Driver Appreciation Day. Throughout the day, operators will be invited to share a meal at their respective garages. We're also encouraging customers to share thank-

you cards, submit commendations or simply say thank you as they board or exit. Train operators can be acknowledged with a wave or a thumbs-up as they enter the station. Council Members who are interested in meeting with operators at one of our garages are invited to do so.

St. Patrick's Day

Metro Transit will participate in the Minneapolis and St. Paul St. Patrick's Day parades this weekend. Council members interested in marching in the St. Paul parade are invited to meet at our Heywood Garage at 11:15 a.m.; anyone interested in marching in the Minneapolis parade is invited to meet at the Heywood Garage at 6:30 p.m. Each parade will last up to two hours. As usual, free rides will be available on all routes from 6 p.m. Saturday until 3 a.m. Sunday. The promotion is underwritten MillerCoors to encourage people to celebrate safely.

Metro Transit Police Awards

Council members are reminded that Metro Transit police will be recognized for their extraordinary efforts at the department's annual awards ceremony next week. The awards will be held at the Midpointe Event Center in St. Paul at 2:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 21. The department will also announce its Officer of the Year at the event.

Service changes take effect Saturday

Service changes will take effect on more than 30 bus routes beginning this Saturday. The changes primarily involve adjusting schedules to account for road construction. Several express routes traveling between downtown St. Paul and the eastern suburbs will also follow a new route that will help expedite afternoon rush hour trips. The next round of service changes will begin on June 9, including a limited stop extension of Route 54 and schedule changes to routes that operate on I-35W.

A Line displays

New digital displays that provide real-time transit information are being installed on our A Line buses this month. The signs will be used to communicate service alerts and predicted departure information for connecting routes, allowing customers the opportunity to adjust their travel plans as they ride. Customer feedback will help us determine how else the signs could be used going forward.

BUSINESS

Consent Items:

Motion was made by Elkins, seconded by Commers and carried, to approve the following consent items:

1. **2018-63:** 2018-2021 TIP Amendment: Minneapolis 6th Street Overhead Signals Project

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council concur with the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) action to amend the 2018-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to change the cost of the City of Minneapolis's 6th Street Overhead Signal Additions Project.

2. **2018-64:** 2018-2021 TIP Amendment: Minneapolis University of Minnesota Protected Bikeways Project

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council concur with the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) action to amend the 2018-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to amend the scope of the City of Minneapolis's University of Minnesota Protected Bikeways Project.

Non-Consent Items:

1. 2018-58: Final Airlake Airport 2035 Long Term Comprehensive Plan

Metropolitan Transportation Services Senior Planner Russ Owen and Metropolitan Airports Commission Airport Planner Neil Ralston presented this item.

Dorfman asked why the runway isn't being extended another 150 feet to the full 5,000 foot runway allowed under MN State Statute, since longer runways are safer and pilots prefer them. Ralston answered that extending the runway to the full 5,000 feet allowed would require moving either Cedar Avenue or the railroad.

Motion by Dorfman, seconded by Reynoso:

That the Metropolitan Council determine that the Airlake Airport Long Term Comprehensive Plan (LTCP) conforms to the metropolitan aviation system plan and is consistent with Council policy.

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

2. 2018-68: Coach Bus Purchase

Metropolitan Transportation Services Fleet Services Manager Paul Colton presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council members.

Motion by Schreiber, seconded by Elkins:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to enter into a contract with Prevost to purchase five coach replacement buses in an amount not to exceed \$2,760,000.

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

3. 2018-35 JT: Authorization to Amend 2018 Unified Budget

Metropolitan Transportation Services Finance & Administration Director Heather Aagesen-Huebner and Metro Transit Finance Director Ed Petrie presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council members.

Motion by Letofsky, seconded by Barber:

That the Metropolitan Council amend the 2018 Unified Budget – Capital Program (annual appropriation) and Authorized Capital Program (multi-year authorization) as indicated and in accordance with the Capital Program – Attachment #1 (Program Level).

That the Metropolitan Council amend the 2018 Unified Budget – Operating Budget as indicated and in accordance with the spreadsheet in Operating Budget – Attachment #2.

Motion carried.

4. 2018-67: Execution of Contract Options for C Line Shelters and Pylons

Metro Transit Small Starts Development Senior Engineer Shawn Walding and Metro Transit Small Starts Development Arterial BRT Manager Katie Roth presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council members.

Motion by Letofsky, seconded by Elkins:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to exercise contract options on Contract 14P084 with Duo-Gard Industries to purchase 22 shelters and 19 pylons for the C Line in an amount not to exceed \$990,000.

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

5. 2018-59 JT: Southwest Light Rail Transit (Green Line Extension) Joint and Cooperative Exercise of Powers Agreement with Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority

Metropolitan Council Deputy General Counsel Dave Theisen and Metro Transit SWLRT Project Director Jim Alexander presented this item.

Barber asked for clarification on the process regarding the Trackage Rights Agreements (TRAs) and Common Carrier responsibilities. Alexander answered that yes, they want the TRAs to remain the same, but the role of common carrier to transfer from Canadian Pacific to Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority.

Motion by Dorfman, seconded by Letofsky:

That the Metropolitan Council (Council): (1) authorize its Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute a Joint and Cooperative Exercise of Powers Agreement with the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority (HCRRA) related to common carrier freight rail obligations in the Kenilworth Corridor and Bass Lake Spur and performance of duties and responsibilities under the existing Trackage Rights Agreements (TRAs); and (2) authorize its Regional Administrator or the Regional Administrator's designee(s) to negotiate and execute ancillary agreements necessary to implement the Joint and Cooperative Exercise of Powers Agreement.

Motion carried.

6. 2018-60 JT: Southwest Light Rail Transit (Green Line Extension) Freight Rail Agreements, Surface Transportation Board Filings, and Any Settlement or Other Agreement with TC&W Railroad

Metro Transit SWLRT Project Director Jim Alexander presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council members.

Motion by Barber, seconded by Elkins:

That the Metropolitan Council (Council) authorize the Regional Administrator to:

- Negotiate and execute a Real Estate Purchase Agreement between the Council and Canadian Pacific (CP) related to the acquisition of the Bass Lake Spur for an amount not-to-exceed \$27.45M;
- Negotiate and execute a Property Transfer Agreement between the Council and Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority (HCRRA) related to the transfer of ownership of the Kenilworth Corridor as a permanent, in-kind property transfer for the SWLRT Project;
- Negotiate and execute ancillary documents necessary for closing on the Bass Lake Spur and Kenilworth Corridor
- Petition the Surface Transportation Board (STB) to acquire the rights-of-way and physical freight rail assets of the Bass Lake Spur and Kenilworth Corridor (collectively referred to herein as "Corridors") subject to the freight rail easements and existing trackage rights agreements; and
- Negotiate any settlement or other agreement with TC&W related to the acquisition of these properties or utilization for the construction of the SWLRT Project.

Motion carried.

7. 2018-65 JT: Third Amendment to the CTIB Capital Grant Agreement Southwest LRT (Green Line Extension)

Metro Transit SWLRT Project Director Jim Alexander presented this item.

Elkins asked what entity the negotiations would be with and Alexander answered that negotiations would be with Hennepin County.

Motion by Schreiber, seconded by Letofsky:

That the Metropolitan Council (Council) authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute the third amendment to the 2017 Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) Capital Grant Agreement to extend the grant activity period to May 31, 2018 and increase the amount of matching funds from Hennepin County by \$2,740,465.

Motion carried.

8. 2018-61 JT: Second Amendment to the Cooperative Funding Agreement with HCRRA for the Southwest LRT (Green Line Extension)

Metro Transit SWLRT Project Director Jim Alexander presented this item.

Rodriguez read a statement on behalf of Councilmember Munt who was unable to attend. Munt's statement read, "I strongly encourage all of you to approve the Southwest Light Rail freight agreements on today's agenda. Under these agreements, the Council will become the owner of the Bass Lake Spur and the Kenilworth Corridor. HCRRA will become the common carrier for both corridors. It keeps the Kenilworth Corridor in public ownership, an issue important to Minneapolis leaders and residents. IT also provides continuity and reliability for existing rail operators, an issue important to a healthy economy. Most importantly, a vote in favor will move SWLRT closer to construction by providing the right-of-way needed to begin civil construction later this year. Without fierce perseverance, no light rail would exist. Our region has been planning for SWLRT for more than a decade. Every time we're confronted by a challenge, we find a solution. It's proof that SWLRT will succeed. Now is the time to move forward, break ground this year, and deliver another rail line on time and on budget with ridership that surpasses all expectations. That's how we roll!"

Dorfman said she is pleased that we have found this solution of putting the Council in ownership and the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority as the common carrier without impeding Twin Cities and Western Railroad Company's operations. Rodriguez agreed that the proposed approach is clean and keeps the SWLRT on schedule and allows TC&W all of the same rights. Rodriguez thanked Metropolitan Council staff and Hennepin County staff for their work on these agreements. Dorfman echoed appreciation for Chair Tchourumoff's work on this item.

Motion by Dorfman, seconded by Elkins:

That the Metropolitan Council (Council) authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute the Second Amendment to the Cooperative Funding Agreement with HCRRA for the Southwest LRT (Green Line Extension) to extend the funding agreement to May 31, 2018 and increase the amount of HCRRA's share of project funding by \$3,969,282.

Motion carried.

9. 2018-57: 2018 Transportation Committee Work Plan

Metro Transit General Manager Brian Lamb and Metropolitan Transportation Services Nick Thompson presented this item.

Reynoso said he has received questions recently about the Metropolitan Council's involvement with autonomous buses. Reynoso stated that he would like it clear that the Metropolitan Council has no intention to replace bus drivers anytime in the near future. Rodriguez shared that current research shows that where Transportation Network Companies operate, an increase in light rail transit (LRT) ridership has been seen. Commers said that he wants an intentional discussion on the Arterial Transitway Corridor Study and how the LRTs have been prioritized. Lamb shared that the funding uncertainty impacts the prioritization.

Motion by Commers, seconded by Reynoso:

That the Transportation Committee adopt the attached as its 2018 Work Plan.

Motion carried.

INFORMATION

1. 2018 Commuter Choice Awards

Metro Transit Commuter Programs Specialist Kelly Morrell presented this item.

Elkins, Letofsky, and Rodriguez all commented on positive past experiences with the Commuter Choice Awards.

2. Fare Policy Update & Next Steps

Metro Transit Revenue Operations Senior Manager Nick Eull presented this item.

Elkins shared a screenshot of how he chooses his fares on his personal trips and how airline fare pricing has changed in the last few decades. Elkins stressed that we need fare flexibility in the future to have a competitive advantage. Reynoso brought up the Metropolitan Council's Transit Assistance Program (TAP). Letofsky said she would like to know if the people who are using TAP are filling capacity that would be empty otherwise, or are they taking capacity, making it more expensive to run the route. Eull said that most rides do take place when we have existing capacity. Rodriguez asked if the online program could start incorporating a pop-up that asks, "are your times flexible?" similar to the airline bookings to show different pricing based on peak travel times, to track if ticket purchases are changed based on that information. Eull said that a pop-up message could be easily created, and phones as an account system might be able to be tracked so maybe riding patterns could be tracked to see if a shift has occurred. Eull said he will follow-up with the project manager of the app. Dorfman asked if there has been a local comparison of annual transportation costs using a handful of regular commuters and illustrating their annual cost comparison if they chose to commute with their cars instead. Metro Transit General Manager Brian Lamb shared that it has been about a decade since this data was promoted but that he supports another promotional effort to share the current data.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 5:39 p.m.

Jenna Ernst
Recording Secretary