

Minutes of the

REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

March 9, 2020

LOCATION: Metropolitan Council Chambers, Saint Paul, MN

Committee Members Present: Chair Deb Barber, Reva Chamblis, Molly Cummings, Christopher Ferguson, Kris Fredson, Francisco Gonzalez, Phillip Sterner

Committee Members Absent: Lynnea Atlas-Ingebretson, Raymond Zeran

TAAC Chair Present: David Fenley

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 9, 2020 in the Metropolitan Council Chambers, Saint Paul, MN.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Motion by Cummings, seconded by Gonzalez to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Motion by Gonzalez, seconded by Chamblis to approve the minutes of the February 24, 2020 regular meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Teamsters Local 120 Director of Politics & Organizing Paul Slattery shared his concerns regarding item 2020-76.

TAAC REPORT

David Fenley reported that two resolutions were passed at TAAC: support for increasing the amount of priority/accessible seating on fixed route buses, and an awareness campaign on the uses of priority/accessible seating and its importance to people with disabilities, transportation, and the general public.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR AND METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Nick Thompson reported:

Regional Workshops

April 22, 2020 will be the first workshop to discuss with local policymakers, stakeholders, nonprofits, business leaders, etc. to present information and get feedback about transit values and performance measures. This will feed into the next TPP update.

Metro Transit General Manager Wes Kooistra reported:

COVID-19 Update

There is a commitment to communicate weekly to employees to keep them informed. Coronavirus has led the Council to take some initial, precautionary measures to help safeguard employees and customers. Staff began meeting with state public health experts earlier this year and continue to rely on their guidance as efforts are coordinated. The Metropolitan Council has set up a command structure to guide response efforts. Metro Transit is communicating with other transit agencies to understand best practices. Metro Transit continues to do everything possible to keep vehicles, support facilities, and public facilities as clean as possible. Vince Pellegrin, Metro Transit Chief Operations Officer, is leading this effort.

Transit Driver Appreciation Day is March 18

Council Members are invited to help celebrate Transit Driver Appreciation Day on Wednesday, March 18, 2020. Breakfast will be served at each of the garages beginning at 4 a.m., and lunch will be served beginning at 11 a.m. In addition, staff will be inviting customers to thank their operators at outreach events held at:

- Maplewood Mall Transit Center (6-8 a.m.)
- Brooklyn Center Transit Center (11 a.m. - 1 p.m.)
- Southdale Transit Center (4-6 p.m.)

Metro Transit staff are working with the Community Relations Specialists to support Council Member participation.

Legislative Session Update

Minnesota Management & Budget released the February Budget and Economic Forecast on February 27. The forecast showed a small increase to the General Fund revenue forecast along with a slight reduction in spending estimates. This results in a projected surplus of \$1.513 billion for the state fiscal year 2020-21 biennium – an increase of \$181 million from the November Forecast. MVST: Slight increase shown in Feb 2019 to November 2019 forecasts, most of it in the year we're in. Lawmakers will use the February Forecast to inform budgeting and policy decisions in the current legislative session.

St. Patrick's Day Free Rides on Transit

Free rides will be available on all routes on St. Patrick's Day beginning at 6 p.m. The promotion is underwritten by Miller Lite and supported by local law enforcement

Information Item on Highway 5 Construction and Plans for Transit

In response to Council Member questions, staff will present today on Highway 5 construction. As you will hear, Metro Transit is working closely with MnDOT, MAC, and other partners given how the construction project will impact access to the airport

Cummings commented on the importance of Metro Transit Operator Appreciation Day. Gonzalez asked if the seat replacement will be accelerated now with COVID-19. Kooistra said it may not be able to be accelerated to the extent that it will help with COVID-19 but it is going to happen as quickly as possible.

BUSINESS

Consent Items:

There were no items on the consent agenda.

Non-Consent Items:

1. **2020-92:** SWLRT (Green Line Extension) Third Amendment to the Hennepin County and Hennepin County Regional Authority Capital Grant Agreement for the LNTP Period
Metro Transit Budgets & Grants Manager Kristin Prescott presented this item.

There were no comments or questions from Council Members.

Motion by Cummings, seconded by Ferguson:

That the Metropolitan Council (Council) authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute the third Amendment to the Capital Grant Agreement with Hennepin County and Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority to extend the duration to June 30, 2020 and add \$49,338,784 bringing the total grant amount to \$602,795,681.

Motion carried.

2. **2020-64 JT:** 2020 Budget Amendment – 1st Quarter
Metro Transit Finance Director Ed Petrie and Metropolitan Transportation Services Finance & Administration Director Heather Aagesen-Huebner presented this item.

There were no comments or questions from Council Members.

Motion by Sterner, seconded by Gonzalez:

That the Metropolitan Council authorizes the 2020 Unified Budget as indicated and in accordance with the attached tables.

Motion carried.

3. **2020-97:** Contract with Motor Coach Industries Utilizing the AC-Transit Coach Contract 2020-1436
Metropolitan Transportation Services Fleet Services Manager Paul Colton presented this item.

Chamblis asked to hear more about the process being competitive. Colton answered that AC did a competitive RFP which included a boarding time for persons with disabilities. Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Nick Thompson added that FTA allows and certifies that the RFP was competitive which enables us to partner with another RFP.

Motion by Cummings, seconded by Gonzalez:

That the Metropolitan Council Authorize the Regional Administrator to exercise bus purchase options utilizing the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District (AC-Transit) Contract 2020-1436 with Motor Coach Industries (MCI), to purchase four (4) low-floor replacement buses in an amount not to exceed \$2,740,000 contingent upon approval of BI 2020-6-JT.

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

4. **2020-98:** Sole Source Procurement of AVL/MDT with Trapeze Software Group, Inc.
Metropolitan Transportation Services Fleet Services Manager Paul Colton presented this item.

Ferguson asked if these units will be compatible with 5G. Colton said he would check. Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Nick Thompson said that the 3G network is going to end in 2020.

Motion by Chamblis, seconded by Gonzalez:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to enter into a sole source agreement with Trapeze Software Group Inc. for replacement of Automated Vehicle Location/Mobile Data Computer (AVL/MDC) devices for the Metro Mobility and Transit Link fleet in an amount not to exceed \$1,590,000 contingent on approval of Business Item 2020-64-JT 2020 Budget Amendment – 1st Quarter.

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

5. **2020-76:** Metro Mobility On-Demand Services Pilot Contract
Metropolitan Transportation Services Metro Mobility Manager Christine Kuennen presented this item.

Chamblis asked how many of the taxi rides will be over the \$5 they pay. Kuennen said it will be relatively few, the vast majority of rides are delivered with the \$5 fare. Metropolitan Transportation

Services Director Nick Thompson added that it is over \$20 that would increase the amount the customer would pay since the customer pays the first \$5, then the next \$15 is covered. Chamblis asked if there is a weight limit with what the drivers will handle. Lyft Minnesota General Manager Chapin Hansen said he does not know but Kuennen and Thompson said they will find out and report back. Chamblis asked about door-to-door versus door-through-door service. Kuennen said this is not ADA paratransit and it is important to remember the distinction between the services, if the customer wants that level of service they should be booking with Metro Mobility. Cummings asked how many proposals there were. Kuennen said there were 6 proposals. Cummings asked about extensions. Kuennen said this is a response to the task force report and customer requests. Cummings asked if there would ever be a gap, Kuennen said there would not be. Fredson asked about Slattery's concerns. Thompson said the issues expressed by Slattery were addressed through the process and the Metro Mobility contract will continue to grow because the demand continues to grow, but there will be protections for background checks, insurance, etc. Barber said this was a key priority for the Metro Mobility Task Force. Fenley said this is about choice and the vast majority of people with disabilities know what is best for themselves and they want to be able to independently make that decision, so this gives them more options. Chamblis voiced her desire for transparency to customers. Thompson shared that when the Council adopted the 2020 budget \$700,000 of what was acted on will be going to this project.

Motion by Cummings, seconded by Gonzalez:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute a contract with Lyft, Inc. and Transportation Plus, Inc., to provide an on-demand hailing service and on-demand taxi service options to Metro Mobility customers for a one year pilot period beginning upon service launch, with two optional single year contract extensions, in an amount not to exceed \$4,752,537.

Motion carried.

6. **2020-84:** Master Contracts for Rail Systems Maintenance Services – Contract 19P147
Metro Transit Traction Power Manager Mike Erickson presented this item.

There were no comments or questions from Council Members.

Motion by Sterner, seconded by Gonzalez:

That the Metropolitan Council (Council) authorize the Regional Administrator to award and execute four master contracts for rail systems maintenance services to support Blue Line, Green Line Light Rail Systems and NorthStar Commuter Rail Systems maintenance projects as follows:

LTK Engineering Services, Inc.- \$1,000,000

WSP USA, Inc. - \$500,000

HDR Engineering, Inc. - \$250,000

Gannett Fleming Transit and Rail Systems - \$250,000

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

7. **2020-94:** Transportation Committee 2020 Workplan
Metro Transit General Manager Wes Kooistra and Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Nick Thompson presented this item.

There were no comments or questions from Council Members.

Motion by Fredson, seconded by Cummings:

That the Transportation Committee adopt the attached as its 2020 Work Plan.

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

INFORMATION

1. 2019 Regional Ridership Report

Metropolitan Transportation Services Contracted Transit Services Manager John Harper presented this item.

Cummings asked how things such as COVID-19 are factored into ridership and once riders are lost how are they brought back. Lind said school closures will impact transit as well as the national trend of telework, but it is important to run a safe system and provide rides to those who need it. Lind added that transit is able to move many people efficiently to where they want to go which can help bring people back to a system if they leave for a time. Metro Transit General Manager Wes Kooistra said there are reasons that transit use being down can be good reasons if they still reduce congestion. Chamblis brought up Vanpool and she asked what the future plans are for that service. Harper said it is being considered whether the process can be made simpler. Sterner asked about the Northstar, Lind said the weekday is stable and a lot of the variation year-to-year is due to weekend service.

2. 2018 Route Analysis

Metropolitan Transportation Services Planner Daniel Peña presented this item.

Chamblis asked how a new park & ride is decided it will meet standards. Metro Transit Service Development Director Harrington answered that estimating future park & ride ridership does have a methodology through generally looking at where they live and where they work. Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Nick Thompson brought up examples of past routes not meeting productivity and changes were made, in some cases the changes work and in others they simply cannot. Sterner commented on the price variation. Thompson said it's an operator by operator level decision what changes are made based on value and priorities.

3. Highway 5 Construction Transit Plans

Metro Transit Service Development Director Adam Harrington and Customer Service and Marketing Director Bruce Howard presented this item.

Ferguson asked how long someone can park in the park & ride, Howard said they could park there if they worked there but not overnight. Fredson asked if there is known construction on the rerouted areas. Harrington said MnDOT is trying to keep the other corridors open during this construction. Fredson commented on the current schedule accommodating flight departure times.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 6:06 p.m.

Jenna Ernst
Recording Secretary