

Minutes of the

REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

August 26, 2019

LOCATION: Metropolitan Council Chambers, Saint Paul, MN

Committee Members Present: Chair Deb Barber, Reva Chamblis, Molly Cummings, Kris Fredson, Raymond Zeran

Committee Members Absent: Lynnea Atlas-Ingebretson, Christopher Ferguson, Francisco Gonzalez, Phillip Sterner

TAB Liaison Present: Peter Dugan

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum was present when Chair Barber called the regular meeting of the Council's Transportation Committee to order at 4:03p.m. on Monday, August 26, 2019 in the Metropolitan Council Chambers, Saint Paul, MN.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

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

Motion by Fredson, seconded by Cummings to approve the minutes of the August 12, 2019 regular meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

TAB LIAISON REPORT

Peter Dugan relayed the following agency reports from the August 21, 2019 TAB meeting:

MAC: Highway 5 construction from April to November 2020, with access in only one direction; three additional TSA lines will be open in the South checkpoint by Christmas 2019: Monday MSP airport passed the 40k passengers a day mark

MPCA: Currently working through public comment period of Phase II for the VW Settlement

MnDOT: Discussed functional classifications study

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR AND METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Nick Thompson had no report.

Metro Transit General Manager Wes Kooistra reported:

Universal College Pass

This is the tenth consecutive year Metro Transit has offered eligible high school students Student Passes that allow them to ride regular route transit to school, work and other destinations throughout the school year. More than 26 million rides have been taken with Student Passes since the small pilot that started in Minneapolis a decade ago. This year, more than 10,000 eligible students at 60 area high schools will get Student Passes. Metro Transit also has a new program with Augsburg College, where all undergraduate students are receiving an unlimited ride pass that can be used through next summer. Students at the college approved a small increase in their student fees to help offset the cost of the passes. This is the first time all undergraduates at a local college have automatically received transit passes.

Bus Lanes

The region's first bus lane opened last week on a stretch of southbound Chicago Avenue. The lane allows buses to bypass traffic as they approach the Chicago-

Lake Transit Center. Bus lanes are also opening this week on portions of East 28th Street and Lake Street to help buses move through the corridor as construction begins on our new transit center at I-35W and Lake Street. Next week, bus lanes are expected to open on stretches of northbound and southbound Hennepin Avenue. The Hennepin Avenue bus lanes will be created by restricting street parking during weekday peak periods. The lanes will be painted red and signs about parking restrictions will be posted. The bus lanes are being implemented in partnership with the City of Minneapolis as part of a continued effort to improve speed and reliability in congested corridors.

Kooistra introduced Metro Transit Deputy Chief Bus Operations Brian Funk who reported the following regarding the State Fair:

Mild weather led to record attendance at the Minnesota State Fair last Thursday and Friday, and ridership at Express Bus sites has been equally strong. More than 153,000 rides were provided between the fairgrounds and ten Express Bus sites served by Metro Transit through the first three days of the fair. Despite having fewer Park & Rides, ridership is up about 2 percent compared to the same time last year; Friday's ridership was up about 78 percent.

Kooistra introduced Metro Transit Customer Service and Marketing Director Bruce Howard who reported the following regarding Metro Transit's Fall campaign:

The campaign celebrates customers' ability to safely (and legally) use their mobile devices while operators do the driving, along with the app and a feature that allows customers to track the location of their bus in real time. The campaign includes online ads and videos and radio commercials. Ads will also appear on buses, light rail vehicles, waiting shelters and light rail stations. The campaign began last week and will continue through early November.

BUSINESS

Consent Items:

1. There are no consent items on the agenda.

Non-Consent Items:

1. **2019-181:** Southwest Light Rail Transit (Green Line Extension) SCADA Contract Award
Metro Transit SWLRT Manager of Contracts and Risk Nat Gorham presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council members.

Motion by Chamblis, seconded by Fredson:

That the Metropolitan Council (Council) authorize the Regional Administrator to award and execute a contract 17P085 for Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition for the Southwest LRT Project (SWLRT) to Collins Aerospace (formerly ARINC/Rockwell Collins) in an amount not to exceed \$15,303,023.

Motion carried.

2. **2019-240:** Anoka County Federal Funds Transfer Request

Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Nick Thompson presented this item. Chamblis asked how the tribal requirement by the Governor affects projects. Thompson responded that we as a Council do ongoing consultations for projects and that the Council recently adopted a tribal policy for our own internal projects. Chair Barber added there was a lot of good conversations taking place between the Council/MnDOT and Council/Anoka county and that Anoka county has proceeded in good faith to align everything for this item. Chair Barber continued that discussions led to needing to build framework for requirements for any future defederalization requests. Chamblis asked what the potential advantages of defederalization is to small businesses. Thompson answered that smaller projects and contractors benefit from not having federal money attached as it's an easier process but that if a project isn't federal there is a loss of the guarantees of things such as DBE goals. Cummings asked for clarification on what

TAB's role is in defederalization of these projects. Thompson responded that since TAB rewarded the federal funds, the county can't go through the defederalization process without getting TAB/Council approval because in reality they are asking to change an award.

Motion by Zeran, seconded by Fredson:

That the Metropolitan Council approve an action to move federal funds from Anoka County's County State Aid Road (CSAH) 22 bridge project and its Minnesota Highway 47/CSAH 116 intersection improvement to its CSAH 11 railroad grade separation project with the following stipulations:

- All projects will be delivered in their current program year and subject to the Council's Program Year Policy.
- All projects will be completed as proposed in their original applications and subject to the Council's Scope Change Policy.
- Should either or both of the defederalized projects not be completed, Anoka County will reimburse the region the amount of federal funding assigned to the project(s) at the time of defederalization.
- The county will work with MnDOT and the Metropolitan Council to satisfy the vacated Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) requirements.
- The county will complete a resolution agreeing to the above.

Motion carried.

INFORMATION

1. Regional Solicitation Work Group Update

Metropolitan Transportation Services Planning/Financing Deputy Director Amy Vennewitz presented this item. Chamblis asked to see a chart that shows how projects are scored today versus what is changing and possibly a scenario of how recommendations affect a project. Vennewitz stated that a chart can be provided. Chair Barber added it would hard to do a scenario but could look at how a project would be scored on different categories and said that we are continually looking at changes and improvements that could be made. Cummings commented that with the Equity scoring change, whether a project is funded or not, it changes the way people think about Equity in the application that will hopefully spill over into everything else – just not for projects. Fredson asked for clarification on the Bicycle/Ped recommendation and whether it's a cities vs counties situation. Vennewitz stated the workgroup offered a suggestion of lowering the amount of federal funds to 70% from 80% but asked for technical feedback, in which TAC did not like the idea that one category would have a lower federal match than the others and that city applicants might be taken by surprise and not planning on the higher level of local match. Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Nick Thompson added that the workgroup asked TAC to come back with some options where there could be mix of lower max but allow one or more larger projects too. Chamblis questioned what the impact to the other categories would be with the 2.5% of funding going to unique projects. Vennewitz answered that the 2.5% would be off the top, then the remaining funds would be spilt by the category breakdowns. Thompson added that if there were no unique projects submitted the money would go back into the other categories but this recommendation would allow money to be set aside, so it didn't become an issue with having to decide what money to take away from which category. Cummings asked if the amount of funding we receive every year varies. Vennewitz responded that the amount of funding we've received in the last two to three solicitations has been about \$180M but it really depends on how much we over program. Vennewitz continued that with the next solicitation we think we'll program the actual amount of money received. Cummings questioned if the ADA transition plan is something the applicant submits to the Council to confirm it meets certain requirements or if the applicant just has to state there is a plan in place. Vennewitz answered that the applicant simply has to agree they have a transition plan. Thompson added that since the Council is an applicant for Regional Solicitation, staff is working on our own ADA Transition plan.

2. 2nd Quarter Ridership Report

Metropolitan Transportation Services Senior Project Administrator Becky McBride presented this item. Chamblis asked if it's possible to take out special events from the report, to see what the rail growth would look like. Metro Transit General Manager Wes Kooistra responded that there are a lot of events that happen each year that are unique, but staff is currently gathering that information. Chair Barber added she was curious about what affect did opening the C Line have on the local bus ridership numbers. Cummings wanted to know what the cost and goal is when giving away the free downloaded transit passes for the various festivals, games, etc. Kooistra responded that the goal is to attract more riders to transit and let customers gain experience riding our services and that we try to get like value of those passes in sponsorship advertising opportunities. Fredson asked at what point in recent history were we peaking in terms of ridership. McBride responded that it was in 2016.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 5:53p.m.

Becky Davidson
Recording Secretary