

## **Minutes of the**

### **REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

September 24, 2018

LOCATION: Metro Transit FT Heywood Chambers, Minneapolis, MN

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

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

**TAB Liaison Present:**

#### **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, September 24, 2018 in the Metro Transit F.T. Heywood Chambers, Minneapolis, MN.

#### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES**

Motion by Munt, seconded by Commers to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Motion by Schreiber, seconded by Barber to approve the minutes of the September 10, 2018 regular meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

#### **Employee Recognition – Metro Transit:**

Metro Transit General Manager Brian Lamb introduced the following, who presented recognition awards to employees:

Metro Transit Light Rail Operations Director Mark Benedict who presented to Metro Transit Rail Transit Senior Supervisor Jacob Rooney.

Metro Transit Rail Transportation Assistant Manager Catrina Boucher who presented to Metro Transit Light Rail Operator Seth Muench-Thomsen.

Metro Transit Garage Manager Tony Harris who presented to Metro Transit Bus Operator David Micklin.

#### **TAB LIAISON REPORT:**

Chair Rodriguez reported the following from the September 19, 2018 TAB meeting:

The biggest discussion was regarding a project submitted by St. Paul/Hour Car. TAB had to decide to vote to consider the project in the unique project category (which was TAC Funding & Programming Committee's recommendation), disqualify the project or to have it considered in the Travel Demand Management category. The TAB ultimately decided to recommend the project be assigned to the unique project category and directed staff to bring back to TAB a plan for how to make this more a formal process with the unique projects. TAB also heard a report on the TPP public comments.

#### **Public Comment:**

Two members of the public, Charlene Edaferierhi and Chrystle Hayes, addressed the Committee regarding recent concerns with Metro Mobility.

### **METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR AND METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS**

Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Nick Thompson reported:

Travel Behavior Inventory (TBI)

Starting October 1, we will begin recruiting for the Travel Behavior Inventory. The goal is to have 7,500 households in the region take part in the survey to understand travel in our region. In order to get 7,500 participating households, we need to reach out to 300,000 households via postcards. Based on the sample- it will be likely that at least one Council Member and several Council staff will be contacted and it is okay for them to participate in the survey.

#### Agency

We are in the second of week of transition of customers for the Metro Mobility Agency service. This is the largest week for transitions as we are moving customers that were on the Agency to Demand service. The Opportunity Partner sites are impacted this week. One issue that has arisen with customers is that we now will require photo ID for everyone, which in the past Agency customers did not need. This is done for safety reasons to ensure the right passenger is picked up, but also to treat everyone fairly. We are giving some grace period to this policy this week but will enforce next week.

#### Metro Mobility Fixed Route Free Ride

This week we are sending out our invitations and promotional passes to 81 Metro Mobility customers for the new pilot of providing free rides on fixed routes. In August we provided a brief update on this program to this committee which is seeking ways to encourage those Metro Mobility customers who can ride on fixed route by providing incentives to use fixed route when they are able. If the pilot is successful and can be expanded we would see a reduction in demand for Metro Mobility and overall costs for the Council, and we are hoping that customers see benefits from using the fixed route service.

#### Transportation Policy Plan (TPP)

In the home stretch after 18 months of development, we presented the public comments and report to TAB last week. TAB unanimously approved the recommendation to forward to the Council for approval.

#### 2019 Committee Work Plans

Normally this committee approves the Committee workplan early in the calendar year, with a two-step process to provide input and approval by Committee members. This year we are advancing the timeline for all Committees at the Council to be completed by October 26<sup>th</sup>. This schedule will allow the workplans to be part of the transition process for the next Governor but also for the EAC to review the workplans as they develop their 2019 workplan. Because of the accelerated schedule, we will be asking for Committee input via email in October so that a final 2019 workplan can be approved at the October 22<sup>nd</sup> Transportation Committee.

Metro Transit General Manager Brian Lamb reported:

#### Safe Operators

Some of our buses are being outfitted with a safety reminder of another sort – interior cards celebrating some of our longest-serving safe operators. Four operators who were celebrated for having 20, 25 or 30 consecutive years of safe driving are featured on the interior cards, which went up last week. Our 2018 Bus Rodeo champion will be similarly featured after results from last week's competition are announced. We'll rotate in new operators following next year's Ovations ceremony. These operators are precisely the kind of role models we look to when new operators join our workforce. And now there's a program that recognizes the important role they play.

Last week, we were excited to join leaders from the ATU and DEED to announce our new bus operator apprentice program. In addition to kicking off the program this month, we're hosting a dozen transit agencies embarking on similar efforts this week.

#### Speed and reliability improvements

Two of our busiest bus routes should be a little faster and more reliable beginning next month. Several bus stops on the Route 2 corridor will be consolidated on October 13. By reducing the total number of stops, we expect to save a few minutes of travel time and improve on-time performance. About 80 percent of current boardings occur at bus stops that are not changing. Bus operators and community members provide input as the changes were being developed, and we'll collect feedback after the changes take effect.

On Route 5, we're in the final stages of installing Transit Signal Priority, which will allow buses to request green lights at around 30 intersections. The technology is expected to be utilized around the end of the month and reduce travel time on our busiest local bus route by at least several minutes. TSP could also be implemented next year on the Route 2 corridor and is among the many features of our rapid bus lines.

#### On-board Security Screens

On-board screens that show surveillance footage in real-time are being piloted to determine whether the technology should be more broadly used. One of the screens is positioned just above the operator's seat, showing a view of the boarding area. The other screen is just behind the operator's seat and shows four views of the seating area. A bus outfitted with the screens was put into service last week to give operators and customers an opportunity to provide feedback. Showing on-board surveillance footage in real-time is another possible way to help detract bad behavior on board our vehicles.

## **BUSINESS**

### **Consent Items:**

1. There were no consent items on the agenda.

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

1. **2018-254:** Maple Grove Service Agreement

Metro Transit Finance Director Ed Petrie presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council members.

Motion by Rodriguez, seconded by Schreiber:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to execute a three-year service agreement with the City of Maple Grove for the service period January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2021.

Motion carried.

## **INFORMATION**

1. Light Rail Fleet Overhaul Update

Metro Transit Light Rail Vehicle Maintenance Manager Chris Royston presented this item. Munt asked how long a light rail vehicle can last, especially with the regular overhauls. Royston responded that vehicle life is mileage based but the traction motor has bearings that need to be replaced at 300,000 miles – to get to the bearings, staff have to disassemble the entire truck, so might have well overhaul some of the components as needed. Metro Transit General Manager Brian Lamb added that these vehicles are forecasted for a 30-year life and with good preventative maintenance we should be able to meet and exceed that goal but several factors including vintage technology that may not be easily replicable in 20 years could deter that goal. Barber asked if we saw a cost saving from completing the overhaul work internally. Royston responded that there is usually a cost savings but while cost is a key component there are two other components that are a factor: schedule (the vendors that would do the work might have a schedule that is out a year or two) and quality (our vehicles are unique, and vendors might have a learning curve). Lamb added that it's more difficult to develop and maintain your own sub fleet when it's small because maintenance cycles are up and down but since we have a large enough fleet now, our plan is to have continuous maintenance overhaul, benefiting from grants and federal dollars that help keep the work inhouse. Dorfman asked if the overhaul maintenance that staff is doing, is what was expected or are we making repairs more frequently. Royston answered that with increasing ridership and mileage, we are hitting some milestones sooner than anticipated. Royston added that while this can pose a problem with parts (some vendors have a long lead time), staff is meeting and overcoming those challenges. Schreiber asked what happens to the old vehicles, to which Royston added that we haven't had to retire a vehicle yet – potentially another 16 years before doing so.

Dorfman asked what happens with the old parts we are replacing, to which Royston stated there is a parts bin which is then scrapped (recycled).

## 2. 35W South Construction Update

Metro Transit Field Operations Assistant Director Dave Hanson presented this item. Letofsky commented that she's impressed with how much it changes and that you can see the progress. Barber added that the construction has been handled well and that the communication coming from MnDOT about upcoming traffic changes, closures, etc. have made things much easier.

## 3. Annual Sustainability Update

Metro Transit Senior Project Coordinator Jeff Freeman and Metro Transit Associate Engineer Claire Warren presented this item. Letofsky asked what is one challenge that staff faces. Freeman answered that there a lot of projects so trying to get enough staff and resources to complete can be challenging. Metro Transit General Manager Brian Lamb added that one of the barriers we don't have is growing culture pride and awareness and that staff understands that we have a leading role and responsibility. Lamb stated that a challenge might be what is accepted technology versus trying to out race it, bus electrification as an example (we want to be intelligible about how we proceed – to be on the leading edge not bleeding edge). Munt expressed how impressive the projected \$30M by 2020 return was and thanked General Manager Lamb and staff for their work. Chair Rodriguez was curious about two charts (Mileage per Gallon and Building EUIs) and the dramatic improvement over a couple years, then subtle increases. Freeman responded that the Mileage per Gallon increase we can attribute to fleet changes that occurred, with newer buses having a better engine performance. Lamb added that 2007 is when we acquired most of the hybrid buses. Freeman continued that in 2008-2009 we worked with Xcel to do a system wide audit that helped pin point needed improvements within our buildings. Freeman explained that older buses' exhaust was down low, so we would take air out of the lower part of the garage and bring air into the top; whereas newer buses have exhaust at the top and therefore we recommissioned our buildings to switch the supply and return, while adding building automation control allowing us to use sensors to monitor the air quality. Lamb added that a year – year and a half from now, our new buildings will be a representation of where we want to go, Freeman adding the Police building will have a EUI in the 30s. Dorfman stated that seeing all this information at once, you get the sense we are really looking at our system in a very comprehensive way. Munt asked if the full Council crunches these numbers, to which Freeman answered yes and Metro Transit staff works with other divisions to report to the Governor as one.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 5:34 p.m.

Becky Davidson  
Recording Secretary