

Minutes of the

REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

September 23, 2019

LOCATION: Metropolitan Council Chambers, Saint Paul, MN

Committee Members Present: Chair Deb Barber, Reva Chamblis, Molly Cummings, Francisco Gonzalez, Phillip Sterner, Raymond Zeran

Committee Members Absent: Lynnea Atlas-Ingebretson, Christopher Ferguson, Kris Fredson

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 4:01pm on Monday, September 23, 2019 in the Metropolitan Council Chambers, Saint Paul, MN.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Chamblis proposed to move 2019-213 to be the last business item on the non-consent list. Motion by Chamblis, seconded by Gonzalez to approve the amended agenda. Motion carried. Motion by Sterner, seconded by Chamblis to approve the minutes of the August 26, 2019 regular meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

Employee Recognition – Metro Transit:

Metro Transit General Manager Wes Kooistra introduced the following, who presented recognition awards:

Metro Transit Street Operations Manager Antoinette Brasson who presented to Metro Transit Street Supervisor Lance Wallace and Metro Transit Street Operations Assistant Manager Demetris Bell who was not present.

Metro Transit Instruction Manager Dan Stoffer who presented to Metro Transit Bus Instructors CJ Camp, Henry Bridges and Scott Jester.

TAB LIAISON REPORT

Peter Dugan reported the following information from the September 18, 2019 TAB meeting: Provided overview of TAC scope changes and streamlined TIP amendments.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR AND METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Nick Thompson reported:

Regional Solicitation

TAB approved the draft regional solicitation for release for public comments. Public comments can be submitted through November 6th for the regional solicitation and highway safety improvement plan applications. There will be \$180M in federal funding for this round, with projects being selected at the end of next year.

Major changes to the Regional Solicitation are:

- An ADA transition plan must be adopted by an applicant’s respective agency in order to be eligible to apply. This includes the Council – which an ADA transition plan is in the works.
- Created a new ABRT category
- Created a new guarantee, that one new transit project must serve a new transit market, with a maximum award of \$4M
- Money was set aside for a unique projects category
- Transit category available money increased by \$5M
- Equity scoring was redone, including training for applicants this fall
- Created a new roadway category, *Spot Mobility and Safety*, for intersection improvements
- Trail projects category will change to a maximum award of \$4M for a project

Chair Barber asked if the Council ADA transition plan would be presented as an Information Item or if it will need Council approval. Thompson replied that it will first be an information, but he believed it would then receive Council approval. Chair Barber also thanked staff members for their support and work on this project.

Metro Mobility Forum

Fall convening will be held on October 29th, at 6:00pm at the Minneapolis Public Library. The forum will include a short presentation about updates but will mostly be a time to listen to customers and hear how the service is impacting them, what issues exist and improvements that could be made.

Metro Transit General Manager Wes Kooistra reported:

State Fair

Metro Transit provided 598,000 rides to and from the fairgrounds over the course of the fair, despite losing three park and ride lots and raising the fare to \$6 from \$5. The State Fair has said that 46% of all attendees took transit to the fair (includes privately-operated free shuttles, Metro Transit state fair express and regular route services, suburban providers and Metro Mobility rides). This year, riders purchased 17% of tickets through the Metro Transit app.

Ridership Update

A busy August brought thousands of people to the Minnesota State Fairgrounds, Target Field, U.S. Bank Stadium and Allianz Field, among many other destinations. METRO Green Line, METRO Blue Line and Northstar Commuter Rail Line each had their highest August ridership ever last month. Combined, there were more than 2.3 million rides on the Green and Blue lines in August, about 111,000 rides shy of the monthly light rail ridership record set in October 2018. Nearly 83,000 Northstar rides were provided last month. Ridership on Metro Transit’s rail lines is up 3% through the end of August compared to the same time last year.

BUSINESS

Consent Items:

1. There are no consent items on the agenda.

Non-Consent Items:

1. **2019-246:** Type 1 Light Rail Vehicle Automatic Couplers

Metro Transit Light Rail Vehicle Maintenance Manager Chris Royston presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council members.

Motion by Sterner, seconded by Gonzalez:

That the Metropolitan Council authorizes the purchase of 54 automatic couplers for the Type 1 Light Rail Vehicles (LRV's) in an amount not to exceed \$3.2 million.

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

2. 2019-248 SW: 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Metropolitan Transportation Services Senior Planner Heidi Schallberg presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council members.

Motion by Sterner, seconded by Chamblis:

That the Metropolitan Council:

1. Concur with the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) action to adopt the 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area.
2. Certify that the Twin Cities Metropolitan Planning Process is addressing major issues facing the metropolitan planning area and is being carried on in conformance with all applicable federal requirements of:
 - a. 23 U.S.C. 134 and 49 U.S.C. 5303, and this subpart;
 - b. Sections 174 and 176 (c) and (d) of the Clean Air Act as amended (42 U.S.C. 7504, 7506 (c) and (d)) and 40 CFR part 93;
 - c. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended (42 USC 2000d-1) and 49 CFR part 21;
 - d. 49 USC 5332, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, or age in employment or business opportunity;
 - e. Section 1101(b) of Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act (Pub L. 114-357) and 49 CFR Part 26 regarding the involvement of disadvantaged business enterprises in US DOT funded projects;
 - f. 23 CFR part 230, regarding the implementation of an equal employment opportunity program on Federal and Federal-aid highway construction contracts;
 - g. The provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) and 49 CFR Parts 27, 37, and 38;
 - h. The Older Americans Act, as amended (42 U.S.C 6101), prohibiting discrimination on the basis of age in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance;
 - i. Section 324 of title 23, U.S.C regarding the prohibition of discrimination based on gender; and;
 - j. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794) and 49 CFR 27 regarding discrimination against individuals with disabilities.
3. Certify the TIP conforms to the provisions of 49 CFR part 20 regarding lobbying restrictions on influencing certain federal activities.
4. Find that the TIP is consistent with the Transportation Policy Plan, which is in conformance with applicable federal transportation and air quality regulations.
5. Find that the TIP meets all applicable federal requirements.
6. Find that the TAB provided adequate opportunity for involvement from the public, agency and transit operators through its regular process and public comment period.
7. Transmit the 2020-2023 TIP along with these comments to the Minnesota and Wisconsin Departments of Transportation and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

Motion carried.

3. **2019-249 SW:** 2020 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), Resolution 2019-22
Metropolitan Transportation Services Senior Planner Dave Burns presented this item. Chamblis expressed concern with a work task associated with Category D of the proposed UPWP, which includes traveler data. Chamblis worried that data includes cell phone data, which could be used to identify specific individuals and their movements. Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Nick Thompson responded that the StreetLight data is anonymous, has proved to be a valuable planning tool, and has been used by the Council for more than two years. Chamblis questioned whether the data could be traced to the Census block level to determine the demographics of that block, which could be an invasion of privacy. Burns responded that the StreetLight data tracks origin and destination locations and does not contain demographic data tied specifically to the cell phone data. Burns continued that Streetlight uses publicly available demographic data from the U.S. Census Bureau to infer what the demographic makeup might be based upon the selected origin and destination locations. Thompson added that he understood Chamblis' concerns and that staff would be happy to meet with her and explain the data and processes used to ensure data privacy. Chair Barber said that there could be one-on-one sessions between Council members and staff to walk through the information. Chair Barber also noted that the data has been beneficial to counties to help assist them in modeling and determining if there is a need for improvements to their highway corridors. Cummings asked if the UPWP work is contingent on receiving these funds, to which Burns answered yes. Burns continued by stating that the exact amount of federal funds available to the Council is known but we have to submit the UPWP and resolution to MnDOT by the end of September. Gonzalez asked what the role of the Equity Advisory Committee was, or could be, related to work category C-3: Environmental Justice and Equity. Burns responded that he would follow-up with him and the OEO staff on this issue.

Motion by Cummings, seconded by Zeran:

That the Metropolitan Council:

- Adopt the proposed 2020 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) with a budget of \$7,286,830.
- Adopt the attached resolution (2019-22) authorizing the filing of an application with the Minnesota Department of Transportation for a planning grant under the FAST Act.
- Authorize the Regional Administrator to enter into an agreement with the State of Minnesota, Department of Transportation, for distribution of FHWA and FTA planning funds.

Motion carried, with Chamblis voting against.

4. **2019-213:** Minneapolis Bus Garage Construction, Contract 19P000

Metro Transit Engineering and Facilities Project Manager Robert Rimstad, Metropolitan Council Procurement Director Jody Jacoby and Metropolitan Council Associate General Counsel Dan Abelson presented this item. Sterner asked when the solar arrays would be scheduled to be on the building. Rimstad responded that the solar arrays are not in the base project budget but knowing that the best time to install those is when a new roof is installed, staff will be looking for funding (including grants) to be able to complete the solar arrays during the 28 month construction period.

Motion by Zeran, seconded by Gonzalez:

That the Metropolitan Council authorizes award and execution of contract 19P000 with Knutson Construction in the amount of \$114,482,840.00 for the construction of the Minneapolis Bus Garage (Heywood Expansion/Electric Bus Infrastructure – Project #62312).

Motion carried, with Chamblis voting against.

INFORMATION

1. E Line Staff Recommended Alignment

Metro Transit Arterial BRT Manager Katie Roth introduced Metro Transit Senior Planner Kyle O'Donnell Burrows who presented this item. Chamblis stated she was happy to see this proposal for ABRT, giving more people access to jobs and the potential to improve housing opportunities. Chair Barber suggested that when the future public engagements are scheduled, to let Council Members know the details so they could attend if available.

2. Gold Line Update

Metro Transit Senior Project Manager Chris Beckwith presented this item. Cummings asked for clarification on the \$6M CTIB funds. Beckwith answered that these funds were committed back in 2014-2015 and have already been fully expended. Gonzalez offered congratulations to staff and commented that he has heard from mayors who are excited about this project.

3. 2020-2025 Capital Budget

Metro Transit Finance Director Ed Petrie and Metropolitan Transportation Services Finance & Administration Director Heather Aagesen-Huebner presented this item. Zeran asked that if we are saving \$10M due to the driver shortage, has there been a proposal on how we could use that money to bolster our workforce development. Metro Transit General Manager Wes Kooistra stated we are putting that money in capital for future use pressures, but that idea could be considered. Kooistra continued that since transit does not have stable funding, this money reserves could be used if there is a future case of no operating budget. Petrie stated that when we move forward to use that \$10M, an item would be brought in front of the Council. Zeran asked where the funding could come from if we were to make an expansion of Northstar to St. Cloud. Petrie answered that there is no funding identified and a bill in the Legislature would need to be passed to fund. Sterner asked what experiences we have with buses older than 12 years. Petrie replied that Metro Transit found the buses and technology were able to operate for 14 years, and because of that recently changed to a 14-year bus life. Petrie continued that if there is a bus that is over 12 years but needs a new engine, etc. then there is a discussion to weigh the cost/value. Zeran asked if we are looking at non-revenue electric vehicles. Metro Transit Deputy Chief Operations – Bus Brian Funk responded that there are several electric pool vehicles in use, testing with Street Operations staff using hybrid and ongoing discussions with MTPD regarding their fleet. Kooistra wanted to emphasize the importance of extending the bus life to 14 years and the decision was made to help fund the new Minneapolis bus garage. Chamblis stated she understand the capital financial complaints but asked when we would increase transportation in the suburbs. Kooistra answered that the funding we have received is only one-time money to maintain the service we currently operate, which makes it very hard to make expansion goals – there is a need to determine a long-term funding source for transit. Chair Barber echoed Kooistra's comments and said the Network Next project will help identify how we want transit service to look. Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Nick Thompson added that most of the transitway plans (Gold Line, Orange Line, etc.) are one step forward in connecting services.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 6:30p.m.

Becky Davidson
Recording Secretary