

Minutes of the

REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

October 26, 2020

LOCATION: Due to COVID-19 this meeting was held electronically.

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

Committee Members Absent: Raymond Zeran

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 4:00 p.m. on Monday, October 26, 2020.

AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Cummings, seconded by Fredson to approve the minutes of the October 12, 2020 regular meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

Aye: 6 Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Sterner, Barber

Nay: 0

Absent: 2 Gonzalez, Zeran

TAB REPORT

Dugan reported the following from the October 21st TAB meeting. Two streamlined TIP amendments were passed, which are on tonight's agenda. TAB discussed the TPP which will be brought to the November 9th Transportation Committee. There were substantive changes to the TPP due in part to all the public comments received which had three general themes: reduce roadway expansion, transportation improvements to improve equity and parking policy. TAB also discussed the Regional Solicitation funding scenarios. TAB would like the over-programming separated from the scenarios and have a discussion on using the over-programming dollars to meet specific needs, whether it is geographic balance, equity, additional funding for trails, or other direction. MnDOT provided a cautionary warning regarding availability of funds to provide a local match for projects due to COVID and the state budget. There was discussion on funding a project in Scott county, as that was the only county not to get awarded a project. Members asked for information on bikeway/trails that are affiliated with roadway projects.

Agency reports:

MnDOT – most projects are ahead of schedule; Highway 5 construction is completing striping and wrapping up

MAC – international flights down 95%, domestic flights down 41% and total passengers down 61%

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR AND METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Nick Thompson reported:

Regional Solicitation

TAB will have two more meetings before making a recommendation to Transportation Committee for the slate of projects. Staff will share information with Council members as it's developed for TAB.

Governor's Blue Ribbon Committee

The Committee heard presentations today from groups representing opinions on regional governance and/or regional transit. The groups included

- Mn Cities
- Citizens League
- League of Women's Voters
- Suburban Transit Providers
- Mn Intergovernmental County Association

Each presenter was given 5 minutes to cover their group's ideas for topics including appointment of council, allocation of funding, elected vs non-elected officials, etc. Next meeting will include initial position statements from members of the Committee so that they can start to form a list of recommendations.

TPP

Last Wednesday staff emailed links to the TPP to Council members in advance of the request for Council approval that will occur next month. The version that was sent includes all the changes that were made in response to public comments. The purpose of sending in advance is to provide ample time for Councilmembers to review changes before being asked to approve the 2040 plan.

COVID update

Report of good news from contractors. Last week there were no positive tests among contractor staff, and more importantly of the 58 contractor employees who have tested positive since March, all 58 have returned to work.

Metro Transit General Manager Wes Kooistra reported:

COVID Update

There has been an uptick in cases among employees.

- April: 6
- May: 27
- June: 11
- July: 11
- August: 27
- September: 18
- October: 44 (as of Sunday)

Starting to see clusters of positive cases and close contacts at East Metro and Ruter in Bus Maintenance, which is leading to more buses that are not able to be maintained and repaired for service. Bus Maintenance will be working on plans to put COVID shields into buses on the reserve fleet to make more buses available in the short term and staff will continue to review all the maintenance work to ensure that prioritization is given to tasks that keep as many buses available for service each day. Staff were able to shift resources today to ensure all trips were able to hit the street. Leadership is working to develop ideas on how we can further protect our employees and customers - looking at strategies to encourage more mask wearing.

MTT Virtual Celebration Tomorrow

Reminder that Council Members are invited to tomorrow's virtual celebration for our latest Metro Transit Technician cohort.

The event will take place 10AM-11AM and will celebrate 18 individuals who completed the program to become mechanic technicians.

Cummings asked if Metro Transit would be repeating the Technician training. Kooistra responded that he would obtain that information and report back.

BUSINESS

Consent Items:

Motion was made by Sterner, seconded by Chamblis and carried, to approve the following consent items:

Aye: 6 Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Sterner, Barber

Nay: 0

Absent: 2 Gonzalez, Zeran

1. **2020-285 SW:** 2021-2024 TIP Amendment for MVTA: Burnsville Bus Garage Renovation
Motion: That the Metropolitan Council approve an amendment to the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to add a project expanding and renovating MVTA's Burnsville Bus Garage.

2. **2020-286 SW:** 2021-2024 TIP Amendment for MnDOT: Railroad Signal System Replacement in Chanhassen

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council approve an amendment to the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to add a project replacing an antiquated signal system in Chanhassen.

Non-Consent Items:

1. **2020-275 SW:** Metropolitan Airports Commission Bus Garage and Facility Lease Agreement #20I010 (South Garage)

Metro Transit Engineering & Facilities Director Marilyn Porter presented this item. Cummings asked if we plan to store the same number of vehicles with this new lease or if we are looking to expand at this location. Porter responded that we would house the same number of vehicles, but it is fluid. Metro Transit General Manager Wes Kooistra added that the South Garage is an important location to us due to its ideally located for different routes, which is why Metro Transit tried to secure a 20 year lease but got a 15 year.

Motion by Fredson, seconded by Cummings:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the execution of a lease agreement with the Metropolitan Airport Commission for the South Garage facility.

Motion carried.

Aye: 6 Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Sterner, Barber

Nay: 0

Absent: 2 Gonzalez, Zeran

2. **2020-276:** Contract 20P040 - Solid Waste and Recycling Material Removal

Metro Transit Senior Project Coordinator Jeff Freeman presented this item. Sterner asked if recycling or organics was included in this program. Freeman responded that we currently have single sort recycling but have begun a three-bin system which includes organics at three locations – looking to expand to

more but with the pandemic it has slowed progress. Freeman added that there are already rates in the contract for those recycling and organic services.

Motion by Sterner, seconded by Chamblis:

That the Metropolitan Council (Council) authorize the Regional Administrator to award and execute a contract in the amount of \$575,000 for Solid Waste and Recycling Material Removal.

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

Aye: 7 Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Barber

Nay: 0

Absent: 1 Zeran

INFORMATION

1. Southwest Corridor Light Rail Transit Expansion Cash Flow

Metropolitan Council Chief Financial Officer Marie Henderson presented this item. Cummings asked what kind of interest rates are expected on the issuances. Henderson responded when the business item is brought forward, we will have to set perimeters, but it would not go above 2.25% - most likely 1 – 1.50%. Cummings asked what the 2020A & 2020B interest rates were. Henderson believed it was very low (less than a percent) when these were issued in May.

2. Listening and Learning Summary

Metro Transit Administration Director Robin Caufman and Metro Transit Analytics and Research Manager Eric Lind presented this item. Cummings commented that the data was fascinating and given the importance of this information, if staff was intending to do this work again and if so Council members could be good resources to connect with various groups. Caufman responded that staff will take a lot of what was learned and apply these methods as we do engagement for Network Next and other 2021 projects. Caufman added that staff would absolutely welcome any connections or resources that Council members may have. Chamblis noted the small number of community groups that allowed staff to attend their events. Caufman answered that most of the community groups weren't even holding meetings and when they final did, the agenda were usually too full to take on additional items. Caufman continued that staff learned to allow 2-3 months' time to reach out to community groups to make them aware of upcoming projects and get on an agenda. Caufman added that because relationships are important, changes were made recently to assign the outreach coordinators by geographic area instead of by project to allow staff to focus and build good relationships with the community. Several Council members were in favor of this change. Council members and staff discussed data modeling and setting targets for geographic and race ethnicities in responses.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Becky Davidson
Recording Secretary