

Metropolitan Council

Metro Transit Heywood Chambers, 560 Sixth Avenue North, Minneapolis MN 55411

Meeting of the Transportation Committee Monday, September 13, 2010

Members Present	Bob McFarlin, Chair Peggy Leppik	Craig Peterson, Vice Chair Kirstin Sersland Beach	Roger Scherer Natalie Haas Steffen
Members Absent	Richard Aguilar	Annette Meeks	Georgie Hilker
Staff Presiding	Arlene McCarthy, Director Metropolitan Transportation Services	Brian Lamb, General Manager Metro Transit	
Others Present	Robert Lilligren, City of Minneapolis		

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum was not present when Committee Chair McFarlin called the regular meeting of the Transportation Committee to order at 3:30 pm on September 13, 2010 at Metro Transit Heywood Chambers, Minneapolis. Chair McFarlin stated that the meeting would proceed with staff reports and information items.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR REPORT

Arlene McCarthy, Director, MTS, reported the following:

An update on the telecommuting component of Minnesota's Urban Partnership Agreement was published by eWorkPlace, a program developed by a partnership of Mn/DOT, the UofM's Hubert Humphrey Institute and the Metropolitan Council to offer employers services to help ensure the success of telework within their companies. McCarthy requested the update and provided committee members with a printed copy of the publication in response to a question that arose at their August 23, 2010 meeting regarding the promotion of telecommuting as a part of Metro Transit's Commuter Challenge.

Motor Vehicle Sales Tax (MVST) receipts for July 2010, the first month of state fiscal year 2011, came in at 92 percent of the state forecast. August's receipts were at 85 percent of forecast. McCarthy noted that the shortfall is due to a rise in the forecasted amounts in anticipation of growth, while actual revenues remained flat.

METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORT

Brian Lamb, General Manager, Metro Transit, reported the following:

A Letter of No Prejudice was received last week from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) on Central Corridor's Civil West contract, allowing construction to begin this month on the Washington Avenue bridge piers. FTA has also received the Council's application for Southwest Light Rail to enter Preliminary Engineering and has assigned an oversight consultant to begin the review. Lamb noted that the consultant for this project is the same one that consulted on the Central Corridor project.

Transit service for the University of Minnesota students ramped up on September 7 on 15 local, limited-stop and express routes. In addition, a new demonstration program was launched with Minneapolis Public Schools. The school system purchased 1,280 Go-To cards for use by a select group of high school students. These students are allowed to continue at their current schools even though they live outside new transportation boundaries; therefore, the school system is no longer required to bus the students. Instead, Minneapolis Public Schools is providing them with all-you-can-ride Go-To cards. For 8 days through September 6, these students used their Go-To cards 13,666 times, including nearly 2,000 rides over the Labor Day weekend.

Revenue from advertising on Metro Transit buses and trains, which has suffered because of the recession, is picking up now. Two new contracts have been added, the first with the National Hockey League and one of its TV partners,

generating \$100,000, and the second with Target Corporation, which bought bus advertising, train wraps, and all of the ad space at the Metrodome and Target Field for eight weeks, generating \$286,000. Metro Transit receives 63.5% of this advertising revenue.

Metro Transit service met a special challenge on September 2, when the Twins and the Vikings played concurrent games (and State Fair service was in full operation). All 27 light-rail cars and 40 buses were used post-game, and thanks to excellent coordination among bus and rail resources, the Downtown East/Metrodome platform was cleared of waiting customers in 46 minutes after the Vikings game ended. The Twins game went into extra innings, so fans came out gradually, allowing light rail to take most home. A Twins/Vikings double-hitter will happen again on September 19, when games are scheduled to start an hour apart.

The Metro Transit Rodeo bus driving competition is scheduled for Tuesday through Thursday, September 21, 22 and 23 at the Como turnaround across from the State Fairgrounds. Council Members are, as always, invited to take a turn behind the wheel of one of Metro Transit's buses. Any who want to be on the list to try their driving skills are asked to contact Emily Anleu to reserve a time and location.

A research study at the University of Minnesota of the Hiawatha corridor concludes that the presence of the light-rail line has increased the value of commercial and industrial land in the corridor. The study by the Humphrey Institute and the U's applied economics department complements an earlier study that showed residential property values also increased thanks to Hiawatha.

INFORMATION

1. 2011 Capital Budget Presentation

Brian Lamb and Arlene McCarthy presented a review of the 2011 Capital Budget for Metro Transit and Metropolitan Transportation Services, which will go before the full Council on September 22. They responded to questions from committee members concerning funding sources, vehicle replacement schedules and prioritization of goals.

A quorum now present, the meeting continued.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Leppik, seconded by Scherer to adopt the agenda for the September 13, 2010 Transportation Committee meeting. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Scherer, seconded by Peterson to approve the minutes from August 23, 2010 Transportation Committee meeting. Motion carried.

BUSINESS

2010-319 Authorization to Award Contract for Rush Line Express Coach Bus Demonstration Route
MTS Project Administrator Bruce Dreier presented this item. Councilmember Steffen asked if the Council had any dollars involved in this project. Staff responded that the Rush Line Task Force was awarded federal funds for capital facilities. Those funds were transferred to the Council to fund a park and ride facility along the Rush Line Corridor and in turn the Council transferred funds to the Task Force that could be used toward operating expenses. In addition, Washington County is contributing CTIB funds and the other counties are contributing local funds.

Motion by Leppik, seconded by Peterson:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to execute a one-year contract with two additional one-year options with First Transit, Inc. to provide regular route express and local transit service in the Rush Line Corridor area beginning in October 2010 in an amount not to exceed \$1,127,516.

Motion passed.

2010-314 Authorization to Execute Grant Agreements with Dakota County, Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority and City of Hastings

MTS Financial Planner Cole Hiniker presented this item. There were no questions from committee members and no further discussion.

Motion by Peterson, seconded by Leppik:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to execute grant agreements with Dakota County, Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority (RCRRA), and the City of Hastings for the following projects and amounts:

Agency:	Project:	Agreement Amount:
Dakota County	Cedar Avenue BRT State Bonds – Bus-shoulder lane construction	\$4,094,500
RCRRA	Red Rock State Bonds – East Metro Railroad Capacity Analysis	\$400,000
City of Hastings	Red Rock State Bonds – Hastings Park-and-ride Construction	\$600,000

Motion passed.

2010-302 Authorization to Execute Grant Agreement with SouthWest Transit

MTS Financial Analyst Sean Pfeiffer presented this item. Chair McFarlin asked what operating measures would be used to identify a successful launch of the region's first double-decker bus. Staff requested that Len Simich, Chief Executive Officer of SouthWest Transit, respond to the question. Mr. Simich stated that operations savings would be realized at the outset through the need for one less bus to operate during certain peak services and that this savings would continue throughout the first year of operation. He also noted that monitoring the vehicle's maintenance history over several years would be necessary to determine the costs involved with running the new vehicle and to set up appropriate measures for maintenance. Arlene McCarthy added that it would be appropriate after a full year of operations for SWT to put together its own analysis in conjunction with the Council to determine the vehicle's operating effectiveness.

Motion by Peterson, seconded by Leppik:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to execute a grant with SouthWest Transit (SWT) for up to \$800,000 for the purchase of one double-decker bus.

Motion passed.

2010-294 Master Contracts for Design Services

Tom Thorstenson, Metro Transit Director of Engineering and Facilities, presented this item. Chair McFarlin requested additional information as to the funding and the average amounts of work orders issued under the master contracts. Staff responded that the master contracts are not funded in and of themselves, but that individual projects seeking design services fund individual work orders, within the maximum cumulative value of the master contract. For those master contracts now expiring, staff reported issuance of 142 work orders having an average value of about \$19,000 each over the past thirty months.

Motion by Leppik, seconded by Scherer:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to execute seven Master Contracts for Design Services, each valued at up to \$350,000.

Motion passed.

2010-311 Central Corridor Light Rail Transit: Systems Contract

Metro Transit Deputy General Manager Mark Fuhrmann presented this item and responded to a question about allocation of the requested funding.

Motion by Beach, seconded by Peterson:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to:

- Award and execute a contract with the lowest responsive and responsible bidder, Aldridge/Collisys (Joint Venture) for the Central Corridor Light Rail Transit (CCLRT) Systems contract in Minneapolis and St. Paul at a cost of \$87,850,350.
- Issue a Limited Notice to Proceed in an amount of \$8,000,000.
- Award of this contract and issuance of a Limited Notice to Proceed are contingent upon the receipt of a Letter of

No Prejudice (LONP) from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) expected prior to the end of September.
Motion passed.

2010-312 Central Corridor Light Rail Transit: Authorization to Proceed with the Acquisition of Parcel 5D (Former Bremer Bank Building)

Mark Fuhrmann presented this item. At the request of the committee the proposed action was amended to include the dollar amount of the site acquisition. A motion incorporating the additional language was then made.

Motion by Peterson, seconded by Beach:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Central Corridor Light Rail (CCLRT) Project Office to proceed with the acquisition of Parcel 5D (Former Bremer Building) for the CCLRT Project contingent on the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) concurrence, in the amount of \$2,650,000.

Motion passed.

2010-331 Indemnification Agreement with City of Minneapolis for Loss of Access on Washington Avenue

Mark Fuhrmann presented this item. In response to a committee member question Fuhrmann provided details of the planned work and clarified what entities would be party to the agreement.

Motion by Steffen, seconded by Leppik:

That the Metropolitan Council (Council) authorize the Regional Administrator to execute an Interagency Agreement Regarding Removal of Motor Vehicle Traffic from a Portion of Washington Avenue in the City of Minneapolis for the Central Corridor Light Rail (CCLRT) Project with the city of Minneapolis (City), that allocates responsibilities between the City and the Council as a result of removing traffic from a portion of Washington Avenue between Pleasant and Walnut Streets in Minneapolis.

Motion passed.

2010-276 Adopt Proposed Regional Transit Policies and Procedures

MTS Director Arlene McCarthy and Metropolitan Council Chief Financial Officer Wes Kooistra presented this item. In response to questions from committee members they identified which changes to the policies are new since the August 9, 2010 Transportation Committee, and noted that private contract providers are responsible for vehicle insurance, that the Regional Allocation Committee will be a new committee and that the Regional Service Improvement Plan process will be implemented shortly after adoption of the procedures by the Council. James Clark, Suburban Transit Association (STA) lobbyist with Messerli & Kraemer, expressed appreciation for changes and clarifications made in response to the STA's comments. He added that while the STA continues to have philosophical differences on the need for these policies and procedures, the STA will work cooperatively to implement them if adopted by the Council. Mr. Clark requested that adoption of the policies be deferred until after the legislative audit on transit governance is issued. Commissioner Will Branning, MVTA Board Chair, shared that he has been involved in transit for many years and that transit has continued to evolve with many stakeholders seeking to participate. He suggested the proposed policies and procedures be used as a working model rather than being cast in stone. Nancy Tyra-Lukens, SouthWest Transit Board member, noted that she initially sat on the Policy Advisory Committee and found the process frustrating. She expressed appreciation for the changes made in response to STA input but noted that she disagrees philosophically with the breadth of these policies and procedures. She stated that the STA will work cooperatively for their successful implementation if adopted by the Council. Chair McFarlin expressed appreciation to the STA for their considerable participation and input to the proposed policies and procedures. He noted that there will be consideration for changes to these policies and procedures in the future in response to the new federal transportation bill, potential legislative actions in response to the audit and other actions. Committee member Peterson suggested that a staff review of the efficiencies and/or inefficiencies created by these policies and procedures be conducted. Chair McFarlin suggested a review be initiated in January 2012 and reported to the Council in March 2012. A motion incorporating the 2012 review was then made.

Motion by Scherer, seconded by Peterson:

That the Metropolitan Council adopt the following attached proposed regional transit policies and procedures with a Council staff review of the efficiencies and/or inefficiencies created by these policies and procedures initiated in January 2012 with a report to the Council in March 2012:

- Regional Transit Policy and Procedures
- Fleet Management Procedures

- Procurement Procedures
- Facilities Ownership Procedures
- Regional Operating Revenue Allocation Procedures
- Regional Service Improvement Plan Procedures

Motion passed.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Chair McFarlin adjourned the Transportation Committee meeting at 5:55 p.m. September 13, 2010.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Maday, Recording Secretary