

Meeting of the Transportation Committee
Monday, October 27, 2008

Members Present	Annette Meeks, Vice Chair Georgie Hilker Richard Aguilar	Roger Scherer Craig Peterson Natalie Haas Steffen	Peggy Leppik Kirstin Beach
Members Absent	Mary Hill Smith, Chair	Brian McDaniel	
Staff Presiding	Brian Lamb, General Manager Metro Transit	Arlene McCarthy, Director Metropolitan Transportation Services	
Others Present	David Gepner, TAB Liaison		

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Acting Chair Annette Meeks called the regular meeting of the Transportation Committee to order at 4:00 pm on October 27, 2008, at Metro Transit FT Heywood Chambers in Minneapolis.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The agenda was amended to place information item #3, Robert Street Corridor Update, before presentation of the business items. It was then moved by Beach, seconded by Scherer to adopt the amended agenda for the October 27, 2008 meeting. Motion passed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Leppik, seconded by Scherer to approve the minutes from the October 13, 2008 regular meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion passed.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION – Metropolitan Transportation Services

Steve McLaird, Assistant Director of Garage Operations, introduced the winners of Metro Transit's 2008 Rodeo competition: First Place – Duane Lundgren, Second Place – Idar Bilij, Third Place – Jack Berner. All three operators work out of Heywood Garage. The Rookie of the Year award went to Moussa Bejjani from Nicollet Garage, and Garage Champions were Duane Lundgren (Heywood), Michael Terry (East Metro), Deborah Sievers (Nicollet), Randy Finch (South) and Wayne Riddle (Ruter).

Chair Meeks and GM Lamb offered their congratulations and presented each employee with a certificate of achievement.

METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT and DIRECTOR METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES REPORT

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

- 1) Construction of the Northstar Elk River station continues, with a parking expansion completed in the last week and upgrades the existing lot in progress. Customers began using the new part of the lot last week, and platform construction has begun.
- 2) The 46th Avenue Hiawatha LRT station will soon have a solar panel installed for charging the HourCar vehicle based there as part of the partnership between Metro Transit and the Neighborhood Energy Connection, which sponsors the car sharing program.
- 3) Metro Transit's annual customer satisfaction survey is underway. There will be 20,000 surveys distributed to bus passengers and 10,000 to train passengers. Based on information from the 2007 survey, overall response is anticipated to be 20-30 percent. Results are expected to be available by the end of the year.
- 4) Thanks to a very successful effort by rail and bus staff, a large number of maintenance tasks were able to be

completed during the October 25 shutdown of the entire Hiawatha light-rail line. This accomplishment required extensive planning and coordination, for which all involved are to be commended.

- 5) The bus lane on I-35W out of downtown Minneapolis needs to be re-stripped to expand it to its correct width. Metro Transit buses are currently operating in regular traffic lanes in that area. Transit's Engineering & Facilities staff is working with Mn/DOT on a timeline to re-stripe the bus lane and restore the transit advantage.
- 6) Rail Operations has outfitted a staff vehicle with a Hiawatha LRT horn and bell to test their effect in the St. Paul business district. Minnesota Public Radio has expressed concern that the sounds may interfere with its programming and recording.
- 7) An assault on a Route 22 bus operator took place on October 23 which caused the operator to lose control of the bus and strike a traffic light. Two juveniles have been arrested, and the investigation is continuing

Arlene McCarthy, Director Metropolitan Transportation Services, reported on the following:

- 1) Metro Mobility ridership continues to grow, although the rate of growth has slowed since the October 1 fare increase. Ridership on express route 288 between Forest Lake and downtown Minneapolis has dropped approximately 35 percent since the increase; however, some 50-100 additional vehicles per day are using the 95th Avenue park-and-ride lot, bringing usage at that facility up to capacity.
- 2) MTS is currently looking at a new technology for use on Metro Mobility vehicles. The vendor, Eaton Corporation, has made a presentation to Council staff of its Hydraulic Launch Assist system, which is designed to help conserve fuel during startup from a stop. MTS has indicated an interest in testing the system and is awaiting a response from the vendor.

INFORMATION

1. Robert Street Corridor

Sam O'Connell, Transit Specialist with Dakota County, presented an overview of the results of a feasibility study of the Robert Street transit corridor. O'Connell outlined recommendations of the study's Steering Committee including potential strategies for growth, funding and short- and medium-term improvements, and responded to general questions from committee members.

BUSINESS – Non-Consent Items

2008-298 Northstar Fridley Station

Item was presented by Mark Fuhrmann of the Northstar Commuter Rail project. He answered questions from committee members regarding construction schedule and potential safety concerns and provided information regarding cities' ability to add stations not already in the approved plan.

Motion by Steffen, seconded by Peterson,

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to execute with BNSF Railway a Platform Lease Agreement and Underpass Easement Agreement for Fridley Station and furthermore negotiate and execute an interagency cooperation, delegation and funding agreement with the Anoka County Regional Rail Authority (ACRRA) and Mn/DOT to enable Metropolitan Council to be fully reimbursed for costs incurred of \$100 for a 100 year term for the BNSF agreements and fully reimbursed for Met Council incurred capital related expenses valued at \$331,000 during 2008 and 2009 in support of the Fridley Station Project.

Motion passed.

2008-299 Northstar Contingency Budget; Option for One Additional Commuter Rail Passenger Car with Bombardier

Mark Fuhrmann presented this item. He responded to questions from committee members regarding contingency fund use, prior authorizations and available alternatives.

Motion by Steffen, seconded by Leppik,

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator:

- To expend \$871,200 of Met Council Regional Transit Capital funds reserved in the last \$10.1 million of the Northstar contingency budget;
- To negotiate and execute an amendment to the existing funding agreement with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) for reimbursement of costs incurred by the Metropolitan Council in procuring commuter rail passenger cars; and
- To exercise an option for one additional passenger coach cab car with Bombardier Mass Transit Corporation, contingent upon execution of an amended funding agreement for reimbursement of costs from Mn/DOT, in the amount of \$2,587,985 for the Northstar Corridor Commuter Rail Project.

Motion passed, with Meeks voting no.

2008-258 2008-2013 Capital Improvement Program and Capital Program and Budget Amendment

Ed Petrie, Metro Transit Director of Finance, and Sean Pfeiffer, MTS Financial Analyst, presented this item. The proposed amendments were also discussed at the Management Committee meeting on October 22. There were no major issues or concerns.

Motion by Scherer, seconded by Peterson,
That the Metropolitan Council:

- Amend the 2008 Authorized Capital Program (Multi-year authorization) by adding or reducing authority to the Transportation Division as follows:

Metro Transit	\$ 11,787,098
Metropolitan Transportation Services	(\$ 432,319)
- Amend the 2008 Capital Budget (annual appropriation) by increasing or decreasing spending authority to the Transportation Division as follows:

Metro Transit	\$ 4,611,766
Metropolitan Transportation Services	(\$ 432,319)
- Approve new projects and transfers between capital projects as detailed in Attachment 1

Motion passed.

2008-257 4th Quarter 2008 Unified Operating Budget Amendment

Ed Petrie and Sean Pfeiffer presented the amendment. CM Haas Steffen asked if Minnesota Valley Transit Authority and Maple Grove were able to recoup all of their cost for supplying service related to the I-35W Bridge Collapse. Staff replied that they were not, because their contracts were not federally procured and did not contain the necessary federal regulations to allow those expenses to be reimbursed. Steffen asked if Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) money could be used to reimburse these agencies. Staff replied that the service might qualify for reimbursement but those agencies were not able to apply to CTIB.

Motion by Scherer, seconded by Hilker,
That the Metropolitan Council amend the 2008 Unified Operating Budget as indicated in and in accordance with the attached tables.

Motion passed.

2008-296 University of Minnesota U-Pass and Metropass Agreements

Ed Petrie presented this item and responded to general questions about pricing structure and requirements.

Motion by Scherer, seconded by Leppik,
That the Metropolitan Council authorizes the Regional Administrator to:

- Execute a renewal of a U-Pass Agreement with the University of Minnesota for student participants for the period of December 1, 2008 to August 25, 2013, and;

- Execute a renewal of a Metropass Agreement with the University of Minnesota for staff and faculty participants for the period of December 1, 2008 to September 30, 2013.

Motion passed.

2008-303 Interdivisional Transfer of Vehicles

This item was presented by Thomas Humphrey, Metro Transit Assistant Director Maintenance Administration. There was no discussion by committee members

Motion by Steffen, seconded by Beach,

That the Metropolitan Council approve the interdivisional transfer of four (4) buses that are greater than 12 years old, are fully depreciated, and are set for disposal from Metro Transit assets to Metropolitan Transportation Services regional fleet assets.

Motion passed. Hearing no objection, Vice Chair Meeks stated that this item could move forward to the full Council as a consent item.

2008-287 Approval of a Memorandum of Understanding for Transportation Planning Responsibilities for the Twin Cities (Minnesota) Metropolitan Area

Ann Braden, Senior Planner MTS, presented this item to the committee. There were no questions or comments from committee members.

Motion by Leppik, seconded by Hilker,

That the Metropolitan Council concur with the Transportation Advisory Board's (TAB) action to approve the attached Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding Metropolitan Transportation Planning; recommend it to the Council Chair for signature and forward it to the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Transportation for signature.

Motion passed. Hearing no objection, Vice Chair Meeks stated that this item could move forward to the full Council as a consent item.

2008-288 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment, Add Southwest Transit Station and Southwest Village Transit Debt Payment (TAB Action 2008-29)

Carl Ohrn, MTS Planning Analyst, presented this item to the committee; there were no further questions or comments from committee members.

Motion by Scherer, seconded by Beach,

That the Metropolitan Council concur with the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) action to amend the 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to add Southwest Transit Station and Southwest Village Transit Station Debt Payment.

Motion passed. Hearing no objection, Vice Chair Meeks stated that this item could move forward to the full Council as a consent item.

2008-289 ADA Transit Provider Assistance Agreements for 2009

Dana Rude, Metro Mobility, presented this item to the committee. There was no further discussion/questions from committee members.

Motion by Steffen, seconded by Beach,

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute contracts for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) paratransit service with ADA transit providers, not to exceed the

amounts listed in Attachment A. The agreements shall be effective for the period January 1, 2009 through December 31, 2009.

Motion passed.

INFORMATION (continued)

2. Performance Measures Report for September 2008

Julie Johanson, Metro Transit Deputy Chief of Operations – Bus, and Metro Transit Police Chief Dave Indrehus presented this item and answered general questions from committee members.

3. Monthly Ridership Report for September 2008

Finance Director Ed Petrie and Marketing Director Bruce Howard presented Metro Transit ridership data for September item and answered general questions from committee members. Howard also noted the upcoming Commuter Choice Awards to be held on November 20.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Meeks adjourned the meeting at 6:20 p.m., October 27, 2008.

Respectfully submitted,
Liz Maday, Recording Secretary