

Metropolitan Council

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

Meeting of the Transportation Committee Monday, August 23, 2010

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

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair McFarlin called the regular meeting of the Transportation Committee to order at 4:00 pm on August 23, 2010 at Metro Transit Heywood Chambers, Minneapolis.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Peterson, seconded by Hilker to adopt the agenda for the August 23, 2010 Transportation Committee meeting. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Hilker, seconded by Leppik to approve the minutes from August 9, 2010 Transportation Committee meeting. Motion carried.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION – Metro Transit

Steve Jaeger, Manager of Metro Transit's East Metro Garage, introduced bus operator Marshall Freeman, first-place winner of the 2010 Minnesota Bus Rodeo, beating out nine other competitors in the large bus category. Mr. Freeman is a 16-year employee who has won safety awards in each year of his tenure. Mr. Jaeger noted that Mr. Freeman's father was also a Metro Transit bus operator for many years. Chair McFarlin and GM Lamb offered their thanks and congratulations and presented Mr. Freeman with a certification of achievement.

METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORT

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

A vote by the members of the Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1005 (ATU) is scheduled today on the proposed 2010-2012 labor contract. Negotiations have been ongoing, most recently with the participation of the Bureau of Mediation Services. If the contract is not accepted, negotiations will resume next week between Met Council/Metro Transit management and ATU. The previous contract expired on July 31, 2010. Both parties continue to work together in a spirit of cooperation to achieve a mutually beneficial outcome.

Six of every 10 buses now carry Metro Transit's new brand identity: a solid blue stripe, a slash of yellow, the transit "T" and the web address *metrotransit.org*. According to information from bus maintenance, 307 new low-floor buses sport the new livery with the brand ID above the windows. Another 224 older buses have been repainted – mostly as part of a broader midlife overhaul – swapping the narrow blue stripe in favor of the bolder identity. The current active fleet is 887 buses.

Northstar trains achieved a 96.3 percent on-time performance in July. Of the 11 late trains last month, six of them were due to heavy loads to and from Twins games at Target Field. Thanks to three Saturday Twins games in July, Saturday ridership averaged 2,373, just slightly lower than the July weekday average of 2,530. Additionally, Northstar last week boarded its 500,000th customer since revenue service began in November, 2009.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR REPORT

Arlene McCarthy, Director, MTS, reported the following:

Metro Mobility drivers often receive commendations from their customers. McCarthy read a sampling of these letters for the committee members and stated that they are forwarded to the contract providers, who then share them with the employees.

McCarthy attended a recent meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee of the Transportation Advisory Board to address questions on behalf of MTS regarding the operating budget. During the meeting a concern was expressed regarding State Fair bus service, specifically that not all of it was ADA-accessible. McCarthy explained the impact of the changes in federal charter regulations on this service. The State Fair was not represented at the meeting, but McCarthy will forward her notes for their information.

BUSINESS

2010-278 SW Resolution of Support for Draft 2010 Cedar Avenue Transitway Implementation Plan Update
Cole Hiniker introduced Sam O'Connell, staff from Dakota County Regional Railroad Authority (DCRRA). O'Connell presented an overview of the Cedar Avenue Implementation Plan Update. Hiniker and O'Connell answered questions about the Cedar Avenue Implementation Plan Update and the purpose of the resolution of support. Dakota County Regional Rail Authority has requested a resolution of support from all implementation partners in the Cedar Avenue transitway.

Motion by Aguilar, seconded by Leppik:

That the Council approve the Resolution supporting the draft 2010 Cedar Avenue Transitway Implementation Plan Update.

Motion passed.

2010-297 SW Central Corridor Light Rail Transit: Civil West Construction

Metro Transit Deputy General Manager Mark Fuhrmann presented this item. He responded to questions from committee members about funding of betterments, the contract award process and the status and terms of the Letter of No Prejudice.

Motion by Scherer, seconded by Aguilar:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to:

- Award and execute a contract with the lowest responsive and responsible bidder, Ames Construction/C.S. McCrossan (joint venture), for the Central Corridor Light Rail Transit (CCLRT) Civil West Construction in Minneapolis, Minnesota at a cost of \$113,804,000.
- Issue a Limited Notice to Proceed in an amount of \$10,000,000.

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 August.

Motion passed.

2010-298 Central Corridor Light Rail Transit: Initiate Eminent Domain Proceedings for the Acquisition of Parcel 5B (Hellervik Parking Lot) for Civil East Construction

Metro Transit Deputy General Manager Mark Fuhrmann presented this item. There were no questions from committee members.

Motion by Leppik, seconded by Hilker:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the initiation of eminent domain proceedings for the acquisition of the property rights for Parcel 5B (Hellervik Parking Lot) in downtown St. Paul for the Central Corridor Light Rail Transit (CCLRT) Civil East Construction.

Motion passed.

2010-260 2010 Unified Operating Budget Amendment

Ed Petrie, Metro Transit Director of Finance, and Sean Pfeiffer, MTS Financial Analyst, presented this item. There were no questions from committee members and no further discussion.

Motion by Beach, seconded by Scherer:

That the Metropolitan Council concur with the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) action to amend the 2010-2013 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for Mn/DOT SP#6280-308RW1: I-35 E from I-94 through Maryland Avenue including Cayuga Bridge Right of Way Purchase.

Motion passed.

2010-261 2010 Unified Capital Program Amendment

Ed Petrie, Metro Transit Director of Finance, and Sean Pfeiffer, MTS Financial Analyst, presented this item. In response to a committee member question, GM Lamb clarified specific items in the amendment. Petrie noted that all elements were included in the previously approved Capital Improvement Plan.

Motion by Peterson, seconded by Scherer:

That the Metropolitan Council concur with the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) recommendation to accept the Travel Demand Management (TDM) Evaluation and Implementation Study.

Motion passed. Item will move forward to the Management Committee.

2010-279 Concurrence with Approval of the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) Bylaws (TAB Action 2010-50)

Kevin Roggenbuck, MTS Transportation Coordinator, presented this item. There were no questions from committee members and no further discussion.

Motion by Scherer, seconded by Leppik:

That the Metropolitan Council concur with the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) action to adopt the revised TAB Bylaws and public participation process.

Motion passed.

Hearing no objection, Chair McFarlin stated that this item could proceed to the Council as a Consent Item.

2010-295 2010-2013 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment: City of St. Paul SP#164-595-10AC, 164-595-02AC, 1614-595-04AC: Mississippi River Enhancement s Projects AC Payback (TAB Action 2010-51)

James Andrew, MTS Senior Planner, presented this item. There were no questions from committee members and no further discussion.

Motion by Leppik, seconded by Hilker:

That the Metropolitan Council concur with the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) action to amend the 2010-2013 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to include SP#164-595-01AC, 164-595-02AC, 164-595-04AC: Mississippi River Enhancements projects AC Payback.

Motion passed.

Hearing no objection, Chair McFarlin stated that this item could proceed to the Council as a Consent Item.

2010-296 Authorization to Apply for Section 5311 Nonurbanized Area Formula Program Funds

John Harper, MTS Supervisor of Contracted Services, presented this item. There were no questions from committee members and no further discussion.

Motion by Leppik, seconded by Hilker:

That the Metropolitan Council approve Resolution 2010-26 authorizing the Regional Administrator to apply for 2011 Section 5311 Non-urbanized Area Formula Program funding from the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT).

Motion passed.

2010-300 Authorization to Exercise Contract Options to Purchase Coach Buses

Alex Curtiss, MTS Fleet Manager, presented this item. There was a comment/question regarding whether exercising the option had required negotiation with both MCI and suburban providers. Curtiss responded that the Council's contract options were being used at the request of the suburban providers.

Motion by Scherer, seconded by Leppik:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to exercise an existing contract option with Motor Coach Industries (MCI) to purchase eight coach buses in an amount not to exceed \$4,040,000.

Motion passed.

Hearing no objection, Chair McFarlin stated that this item could proceed to the Council as a Consent Item.

2010-302 Authorization to Execute Grant Agreement with SouthWest Transit

Sean Pfeiffer, MTS Financial Analyst, presented this item. Chair McFarlin asked whether the use of a double-decker bus was strictly for its extra capacity or if there was a marketing aspect involved. Pfeiffer replied that SouthWest Transit maintains that capacity is the predominant consideration, although they do note that the novelty and exposure of the double-decker could inspire more people to try riding the bus. Councilmember Leppik asked what the difference is in capacity over an articulated bus. Lamb said that the double-decker bus has approximately 17 more seats, depending on the configuration of the articulated bus. McCarthy noted that while double-decker buses are common abroad, they are becoming recognized as a new option in the U.S. SouthWest has indicated that they believe this first bus will be a good pilot program. Councilmember Scherer said he would like more specific information about the actual cost of the double-decker bus. Staff replied that further information is still being received. Several committee members noted the difference in estimated price between the double-decker bus and an articulated or coach bus. They asked what will happen to the authorized dollars in excess of the purchase price. Staff responded that SouthWest will be reimbursed only for the actual cost of the double-decker bus; the remaining funds will be returned for use in other areas. Chair McFarlin asked whether there are measures in place against which to evaluate the effectiveness of the double-decker service. McCarthy responded there were not, but there are existing vehicle guidelines as to what kinds of buses are appropriate for what kind of service. Chair McFarlin asked that three or four measurements be established specifically for the double-decker bus service and that staff obtain concurrence on those measurements from SouthWest.

The committee agreed to table the business item pending receipt of further information to be compiled by staff.

2010-303 Authorization to Execute Grant Agreement with the City of Ramsey

Sean Pfeiffer, MTS Financial Analyst, presented this item. There were no questions from committee members and no further discussion.

Motion by Hilker, seconded by Aguilar:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to execute a grant with the City of Ramsey for up to \$824,818 for reimbursement of previously provided Ramsey Star Service.

Motion passed.

Hearing no objection, Chair McFarlin stated that this item could proceed to the Council as a Consent Item.

2010-305 TIP Amendment for CMAQ Funded LRV Vehicles

Amy Vennewitz, MTS Deputy Director Planning and Finance, presented this item. She explained that the decision was made to rescind the request for an amendment to the 2010-2013 Transportation Improvement Program (Business Item 2010-270, approved by the committee at its August 9, 2010, meeting) and instead include the LRV funding in the 2011-2014 TIP which is currently before the committee for approval.

Motion by Leppik, seconded by Hilker:

That the Metropolitan Council rescind Business Item 2010-270, 2010-2013 Transportation Improvement Program Revision: Vehicle Mode Reassignment Request for Metropolitan Council CMAQ Award SP#TRS-TCMT-10C and SouthWest Transit CMAQ Award SP#TRS-SMTC-10A, Bus Purchases, to provide four LRV vehicles (TAB Action 2010-44).

Motion passed.

Chair McFarlin noted that Item 2010-270 would be removed from the September 8, 2010, Metropolitan Council agenda.

2010-306 Adopt 2011-2014 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

James Andrew, MTS Senior Planner, presented this item. In response to a committee member question, staff clarified information about funding processes. Staff also noted that the 2011-2014 TIP will be consistent with both the current and draft Transportation Policy Plan.

Motion by Aguilar, seconded by Leppik:

That the Metropolitan Council:

1. Adopt the 2011-2014 Transportation Improvement Program.
2. Certify that the Twin Cities Metropolitan Transportation Planning Process is being carried on in conformance with all applicable federal requirements of:
 - Section 134 of Title 23, U.S.C., Section 8 of the Federal Transit Act (49 U.S.C. app. 1607);
 - Sections 174 and 176 (c) and (d) of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7504, 7506 (c) and (d)).
 - Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of the 1964 and Title VI assurance executed by each state under 23 U.S.C. 324 and 29 U.S.C. 794;
 - Section 1101 (g) of the Transportation Equity Act of the 21st Century (Pub. L. 105-178) regarding the involvement of disadvantaged business enterprises in FHWA and FTA funded planning projects (Pub. L. 97-424, Section 105 (f); 49 CFR part 23); and
 - The provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (Pub. L. 101-336, 104 Stat. 327, as amended) and U.S. DOT regulations (Transportation for Individuals with Disabilities (40 CFR parts 27, 37 and 38)).
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 public, agency and transit operators involvement through its regular process and special public meetings and hearing.
7. Transmit the 2011-2014 TIP along with these comments to the Minnesota Department of Transportation and Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

Motion passed.

INFORMATION

1. Central Corridor Light Rail Transit Systems Contract
Mark Fuhrmann, Metro Transit Deputy General Manager, presented the item. He responded to committee member questions regarding project budget, placement of systems and status of federal funding.
2. Commuter Challenge
John Siqveland, Marketing Development Specialist for Metro Transit, reported on the results of the Commuter Challenge that was held from April 5 to June 28, 2010. He provided a breakdown of the pledges received by source and transit mode and highlighted several web-based features of the campaign. Staff responded to questions regarding the promotion of telework as an alternative to driving.

OTHER BUSINESS

Chair McFarlin stated that the agenda for the September 13, 2010, meeting was expected to be lengthy and asked committee members whether they would prefer to begin 30 minutes earlier than usual. It was agreed that the September 13, 2010, meeting of the Transportation Committee would convene at 3:30 p.m. rather than at 4:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair McFarlin adjourned the Transportation Committee meeting at 6:03 p.m. August 23, 2010.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Maday, Recording Secretary