

Metropolitan Council

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

Meeting of the Transportation Committee

Monday, July 11, 2011

Members Present	Steve Elkins, Chair Lona Schreiber, Vice Chair Edward Reynoso	James Brimeyer Roxanne Smith	Jon Commers Adam Duininck
Members Absent	John Đoàn		
Staff Presiding	Arlene McCarthy, Director Metropolitan Transportation Services	Brian Lamb, General Manager Metro Transit	
Others Present	Metropolitan Councilmember Wendy Wulff		

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum was present when Committee Chair Elkins called the regular meeting of the Transportation Committee to order at 4:03 p.m. on July 11, 2011 at Metro Transit Heywood Chambers, Minneapolis.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Munt, seconded by Schreiber to adopt the agenda for the July 11, 2011 Transportation Committee meeting. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Commers, seconded by Duininck to approve the minutes from the June 27, 2011 Transportation Committee meeting. Motion carried.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR REPORT

Arlene McCarthy, Director, MTS, reported the following:

The regional solicitation that TAB runs has been delayed indefinitely due to the state government shutdown. The plan is that applications will be due approximately one month after the state shutdown ends and government operations resume. McCarthy noted that a number of MnDOT employees are involved in the application process as a resource to answer applicant questions and also serve on committees which evaluate and rank applications. Notice of the delay has been posted on the website and applicants were also notified via email.

METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORT

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

Customers have ridden Metro Transit buses and trains nearly 40 million times so far this year. This is 1.2 million more than the same period last year, an increase of more than 3 percent. Ridership this year is on pace to top figures from 2008, which was the highest regional transit ridership since the 1950s. Metropass holders account for more than 10 percent of ridership. There are nearly 250 companies enrolled in Metropass, and the top five of these have more than 14,000 employees participating in the program – 31 percent of their eligible employees. More detailed information about ridership will be released in the days ahead.

The annual Commuter Challenge promotion wrapped up on June 30. The 2011 Challenge boasted the highest participation of any year in the program’s near decade of existence. Nearly 16,000 people pledged to take buses or trains, or to bicycle, walk or rideshare instead of driving alone. Staff from Metro Transit and the regional Transportation Management Organizations worked with employers and other organizations at more than 300

commuter fairs throughout the region to sign people up. In follow-up surveys, 86 percent of participants have said that they continue taking trips without driving alone after the Challenge, and nearly 20 percent say they take these trips almost every day. Complete results will be presented at a future Transportation Committee meeting.

Hiawatha Light Rail staff report that a scheduled service disruption over this past weekend went very smoothly. Service was suspended at four downtown light-rail stations beginning July 8 at 10:00 am in order to allow Xcel Energy to conduct maintenance work in front of its corporate headquarters located adjacent to Nicollet Mall station. The work was initially scheduled to finish at about 3:30 am on Monday, July 11, but Xcel and Metro Transit crews were able to beat that estimate by nearly 24 hours and trains were running for the entire service day on July 10. Replacement buses ran instead of trains during the disruption, and staff helped customers use the special bus service over the weekend.

The Greater Minneapolis Building Owners and Managers Association released the July issue of its newsletter, which highlights the advocacy of the organization for transportation including transit. The Council was invited to submit an article and Metro Transit and Council staff worked together to pull together information that was featured in the issue. Copies of the newsletter have been provided to committee members.

BUSINESS

Consent Items

None.

Non-Consent Items

2011-186: I-35W Transit / Access Project – Interagency Agreement with Hennepin County

Pat Jones, Metro Transit Assistant Director, Facilities Engineering, presented this item. In response to committee member questions Jones confirmed that the proposed participation essentially equates to Preliminary Engineering and that Hennepin County's consultant plans to complete its work in 2013. It was noted the project is a critical component to realizing bus rapid transit service along a key corridor.

Motion by Brimeyer, seconded by Munt:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute an Interagency Agreement with Hennepin County to participate in the 30% design of improvements along the I-35W corridor between approximately 31st Street and its intersection with I-94 at a cost of \$135,000.

Motion passed.

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

2011-188: Central Corridor Light Rail Transit: Initiate Eminent Domain Proceedings for Acquisition of Parcel 5Q (Central Presbyterian Church) for Civil East Construction

Mark Fuhrmann, Metro Transit Deputy General Manager, presented this item and responded to a procedural question from committee members.

Motion by Commers, seconded by Duininck:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the initiation of eminent domain proceedings for the acquisition of the property rights for Parcel 5Q (Central Presbyterian Church) in Minneapolis for the Central Corridor Light Rail Transit (CCLRT) Civil East Construction.

Motion passed.

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

INFORMATION

1. Draft Regional Transitway Guidelines – Part 1

MTS Planners Mary Karlsson and Cole Hiniker presented the item and answered questions from committee members. They provided an overview of the purpose, schedule, organization and process for developing the guidelines. They then presented in more detail the draft guidelines for the service operations, station spacing and siting and stations and support facilities components of transitway operations. Part 2 of the draft guidelines will be presented at the next meeting of the Transportation Committee.

2. Metro Transit Website Update

John Siqveland, Metro Transit Manager of Media and Community Relations, presented historical data on the development and usage of the metrotransit.org website. He provided a demonstration of the extensive interactive features available to customers and listed planned future enhancements to the website.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Elkins adjourned the Transportation Committee meeting at 5:40 p.m. July 11, 2011. Committee members proceeded to a tour of the Transit Information Center.

Respectfully submitted,
Liz Maday, Recording Secretary