

Metropolitan Council

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

Meeting of the Transportation Committee

Monday, August 10, 2009

Members Present	Annette Meeks, Chair Craig Peterson Peggy Leppik	Kirstin Sersland Beach Natalie Haas Steffen	Roger Scherer Richard Aguilar
Members Absent	Robert McFarlin, Vice Chair		
Others Present	Met Councilmember Polly Bowles		
Staff Presiding	Brian Lamb, General Manager Metro Transit	Arlene McCarthy, Director Metropolitan Transportation Services	
TAB Liaison	David Gepner		

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Chair Meeks called the regular meeting of the Transportation Committee to order at 4:00 pm on August 10, 2009, at Metro Transit Heywood Chambers in Minneapolis.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion by Steffen seconded by Aguilar to adopt the agenda for the August 10, 2009, Transportation Committee meeting. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Scherer seconded by Leppik to approve the minutes from the July 27, 2009, regular Transportation Committee meeting. Motion carried.

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

Arlene McCarthy, Director MTS, reported that public open houses are scheduled to be held the week of August 10 to solicit citizen input on the development of the Southwest Transitway, in order to determine locally preferred alternatives. The Policy Advisory Committee for the project will then make a recommendation to Hennepin County, which will in turn make a recommendation to the Metropolitan Council. Hennepin County Commissioner Gail Dorfman will be making a presentation to the Transportation Committee at its August 24 meeting to provide an update on the Southwest Transitway. McCarthy also offered to arrange a tour of the corridor for any interested Councilmembers.

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

- Metro Transit has a partnership with the summer youth workforce development program called EMERGE StreetWerks and recently hosted 36 teenage students and staff supervisors who visited our bus garages, overhaul base, and Hiawatha rail to learn about transit careers. They toured by bus and were met at each location by union and management staff. Next week they will work with Hiawatha Rail Facilities on landscaping projects and be paid an hourly wage through a state grant.
- The Minneapolis school district purchased 2,000 Go-To Cards for use by its summer school students during their three-week class cycle in July. The students could use their Go-To Cards for trips on buses and trains to school and other destinations. This effort resulted in more than 54,000 rides between July 6 and July 26. Transit staff will be meeting with school officials to discuss future opportunities for our Go-To Cards to be used by all students.

- Metro Transit took part last Saturday (August 1) in a moment of silence to mark the second anniversary of the collapse of the I-35W bridge in which 13 people died and 145 others were injured. Bus operators were asked to pull over – if safe – at 6:05 p.m. and inform passengers that they would pause for 30 seconds to commemorate the tragedy.
- The Metropolitan Council and three Hmong organizations will hold a business and workforce opportunity session next week featuring the Central Corridor light-rail project. This is the Council's fourth large community meeting in less than a year for minority-owned, women-owned and small businesses or job seekers to learn about job opportunities on the biggest public works project in state history. The meeting will begin at 6 p.m. August 12 at the Lao Family Community of Minnesota Inc. at 320 W. University Avenue in St. Paul.
- The fourth weekend shutdown of Hiawatha resulted in the completion of the following work:
 - Pre-cast platform sections placed for extensions at four stations
 - Sections of steel placed for shelter canopies
 - Sections of rail cut to upgrade the railroad signal system for the extended platforms
 - Switch points replaced on crossover tracks between Warehouse and Nicollet stations
 - Yellow tactile warning strips replaced at 46th Street station
 - Power shut down in the downtown area to accommodate skyway window washing
 - Testing begun on the Hiawatha light-rail extension to the Northstar commuter rail.

BUSINESS – Non-Consent Items

2009-265 35W BRT Lakeville Express Service

Bruce Dreier, Met Council Project Administrator, presented this item to the committee, explaining the history of the Lakeville 35W BRT service to and from downtown Minneapolis from the new Kenrick Avenue Park and Ride. He explained the RFP process and that it was structured for the possibility of Metro Transit submitting a cost proposal. Dreier also explained that the Council will ask CTIB for 50% of the operating costs associated with operating the 35W BRT Lakeville Express Service.

Dreier stated that the evaluation panel came to consensus that all proposers were qualified and that Metro Transit submitted the lowest cost proposal and therefore the evaluation panel recommends directing Metro Transit to operate the 35W BRT Lakeville Express Service. He answered questions from committee members about details of CTIB funding commitment and the respective amounts of the other bids received.

Motion by Leppik, seconded by Beach:

That the Metropolitan Council, having taken into consideration the evaluation panel report of findings and conclusions, determine that:

1. It is not more advantageous to contract with a private vendor for the 35W BRT Lakeville Express Service;
2. No further consideration will be given to the two private vendor proposals; and
3. The Council's transit operations division is directed to provide the 35W BRT Lakeville Express Service described in the Request for Proposals.

Motion passed.

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

2009-178 Northstar Commuter Rail Fare Approval

Adam Harrington, Assistant Director of Route and System Planning for Metro Transit, presented this item. He stated that over the next several months staff will develop a family or group discount program with a goal of implementation prior to April 2010 when the Minnesota Twins will begin their first season at the new Target Field ballpark. There were no further questions from the committee.

Motion by Steffen, seconded by Leppik:

That the Metropolitan Council approves the recommended temporary and permanent Northstar Commuter Rail Fares for (1) Saturday and Sunday/Holiday Adult Fares; (2) Saturday and Sunday/Holiday Senior, Youth and Medicare Social Fares and (3) Fares for Persons with Disabilities as set forth in the business item.

Motion passed.

2009-264 Request Change to Transit Fare Policy and Procedure

This item was presented by Adam Harrington and Ed Petrie, Metro Transit Director of Finance. They explained that this change brings Council policy and procedures in line with those of the federal government. There were no questions from committee members.

Motion by Steffen, seconded by Hilker:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to amend the Transit Fare Policy (3-2-6) and Transportation Service Fare Policy Changes Procedure (3-2-6a) in accordance with the attached revised policy and procedure changes.

Motion passed.

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

2009-251 SW Construction of Storage Tank Additions at Overhaul Base and South Garages, Project 62710

Tom Thorstenson, Metro Transit Director of Facilities and Engineering, presented this item. He responded to questions from committee members regarding funding, construction materials and the level of bids in relation to initial estimates.

Motion by Peterson, seconded by Leppik:

That the Metropolitan Council Authorize the Regional Administrator to award and execute a contract with the lowest responsive and responsible bidder, Morcon Construction, for the construction of Storage Tank Additions at the Overhaul Base in St. Paul and the South Garage in Richfield at a cost of \$1,296,070.50.

Motion passed.

2009-263 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Transit Security Grant

Metro Transit Police Chief Dave Indrehus presented this item to the committee. In response to questions from committee members he provided more information how the funds may be applied and what Council obligation would be.

Motion by Scherer, seconded by Hilker:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to approve the acceptance of the award of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds to support the Transit Security Grant awarded by the Department of Homeland Security on July 31, 2009 to the Metropolitan Council Metro Transit Police.

Motion passed.

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

INFORMATION

1. Quarterly Regional Ridership Report

Becky McBride, MTS Project Administrator, presented an overview of the ridership figures for the second quarter of 2009. Numbers were broken down by provider and type of service and also compared to 2008 figures.

2. Forest Lake/Columbus Route 288 Fare Surcharge

Arlene McCarthy outlined a proposal for the Council to allow the \$1.75 surcharge to the Route 288 fare to expire October 1, 2009. The committee discussed advantages and disadvantages of various fare structures for long-distance routes. In response to a question from a committee member about the capacity of farebox technology for handling customized fare structures, Brian Lamb stated that upgrades are in progress although not imminent. He will provide a status update to the committee at a future meeting.

3. State Fair Update

Maria Cone, Metro Transit Market Development Supervisor, presented an overview of marketing initiatives to promote ridership for the 2009 Minnesota State Fair. She provided a recap of 2008 results and showed a breakdown of staffing and equipment resources dedicated to Metro Transit State Fair Service.

4. Northstar Bus Service Plan Update

Adam Harrington outlined the plan for changes in bus service once service begins on the Northstar Commuter Rail line. He displayed maps showing future routes and connections for local and express service and listed upcoming public informational meetings for customers. Harrington also noted that a Northstar page has been added to the metrotransit.org website.

5. Central Corridor Light Rail Transit Federal Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) Adequacy Determination and Fourth Street Utility Construction Contract Update

Mark Fuhrmann, Metro Transit Deputy General Manager, and Kathryn O'Brien, Principal Contract Administrator for Central Corridor, reported on the approval status of the FEIS and the contract for relocation of utility lines along Fourth Street, outlining the processes and schedules for completion and giving an overview of comments received during the FEIS public review period.

6. 2010 Emission Technology

Jan Homan, Director of Bus Maintenance for Metro Transit, gave a presentation on the handling of emissions on Metro Transit buses. He explained terminology and illustrated past, present and future technology of the systems used and their relative effectiveness.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Scherer, seconded by Hilker to adjourn the Transportation Committee meeting at 6:03 p.m. August 10, 2009. Motion passed

Respectfully submitted,
Liz Maday, Recording Secretary