

Faribault-Martin County Joint Transit Board – Executive Committee
Martin County Courthouse
201 Lake Avenue Fairmont, MN 56031
April 10, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m. by Board Chairman Bill Groskreutz. This meeting was held with teleconference attendance capabilities under Minnesota Statute 13D.021 which allows for teleconference meeting while in a state of emergency during a health pandemic.

Joint Transit Board members present in person were: Faribault County Commissioner and Board Chair Bill Groskreutz and Faribault County Commissioner Greg Young. Participating Board Members via telephone were Martin County Commissioners Tom Mahoney and Elliot Belgard. Also present in person was Jeremy Monahan, Faribault – Martin County Transit. Also present via telephone was Melinda Estey, MnDOT Office of Transit and Active Transportation.

Motion made by Commissioner Belgard, seconded by Commissioner Mahoney to approve the agenda. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Monahan produced an Unpaid Bills report totaling \$19,908.56 plus a bill for \$196.08 that was not included on the report. As usual a number of the regular and recurring bills have not yet arrived. There was brief discussion on a few of the bills. Monahan also noted that it should be expected that the Transit Board will start having to pay their portion of Unemployment Insurance for past workers that have moved on to other jobs and have been laid off due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Motion made by Commissioner Young, seconded by Commissioner Belgard to approve payment of the Unpaid Bills as presented, and to approve giving the Transit Director authority to continue to pay other regular and recurring bills at the discretion of the Transit Director upon receipt. Motion passed unanimously.

Monahan produced Bank Statements for the Transit Board. It showed that as of March 31, 2020 the Transit Board had \$310,722.94 for a bank balance. Monahan noted the deposit on March 23rd of \$165,782 which were loaned funds from each county that will be used to pay for the two new vehicles in the coming days. Monahan also noted that MnDOT has noted they are planning to distribute the Quarter 2 payment as usual by the end of April. However moving forward recent federal legislation labeled the CARES Act provides a generous amount of federal funding for public transit due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The legislation and its impacts are still being analyzed by MnDOT and Monahan is working with Estey with any questions.

Discussion regarding an update on the Office Building Construction RFP and Fuel Procurement RFQ ensued. Monahan explained that both projects were put on pause by him at the onset of the pandemic due to concerns of getting enough responses. MnDOT advised that both projects should move ahead as all the businesses that are going to be potential respondents are essential and still working. Monahan said he plans to get both project's solicitations out the week of April 13th and that the results of the proposals and quotes can be discussed at the May Executive Committee meeting. There was no action needed for this as it was information only.

Discussion regarding vehicle purchases ensued. Monahan reported that the effort to purchase a used bus from a 5310 provider in Minneapolis was not successful in early March due to the offer not being high enough for the seller. Monahan noted that with more money available to be offered, drawn from the reserve account along with the insurance settlement funds, the 5310 provider might be enticed to sell. Discussion regarding dollar amounts and value of a used bus versus a typical local share for a new bus took place. Commissioner Young suggested Monahan approach them for a counter-offer before giving a higher offer.

Motion made by Commissioner Belgard, seconded by Commissioner Mahoney to authorized Monahan to continue negotiation for the used bus with a maximum offer of \$9,000 allowed. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Discussion regarding wage adjustments ensued. Monahan stated that the revised job descriptions for both the Transit Director and Operations Manager position along with their grading based on Martin County's grade and pay scale have not yet been completed. Martin County Human Resources have been very busy due to the pandemic and issues that have come up. Monahan did review a few points regarding the Martin County grade and pay scale only being used as a guide and that the Transit Board is not locking into this scale even if a new wage is chosen from it. Monahan also noted that any budget concerns about being able to handle an increased wage for either position should be appeased by the lower costs of corrective maintenance that have been discovered along with other means of budget conservation. Commissioner Groskreutz noted that more discussion without the completed job descriptions would not be needed at this time and that the topic can be revisited upon completion of those documents.

Discussion turned to new business and the Food Delivery Effort. Monahan said that work has begun with local food shelves to coordinate delivery of their goods. The effort has had a slow start but it is hoped that more will come on board soon. Commissioner Groskreutz noted that some food shelves have concerns over privacy issues when considering using the public transit system for delivery. Hopefully that can be worked out. Monahan also reported that with the help of SHIP for Faribault and Martin County efforts for assisting with Meals on Wheels delivery are ramping up quickly in both Fairmont and Blue Earth.

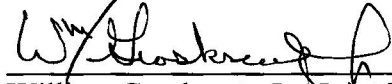
Discussion regarding the service hours and other activity ensued. Monahan noted that service hours have been reduced in response to the pandemic. It has been a balancing act of employees voluntarily staying at home and their route being suspended along with making sure that the remaining riders are still served combined with the expanding food delivery effort. Hours and ridership is being tracked and reported to Estey and MnDOT weekly. Ridership has been down 70 percent from expected ridership amounts for two straight weeks so the "bottom" might have been reached for now. Food delivery can count as passengers but MnDOT is working to ensure that is how these efforts are to be tracked. It is new territory for every level of the system. Monahan finished by stating that with the CARES Act funding Paid Administrative Leave could be an option offered to staff if the demand drops too much and there is a need to reduce staff levels. This cost, along with any other operation cost during the pandemic, would be reimbursed at 100 percent federal share less any revenue made by the system.

Discussion regarding the system ridership report ensued. Monahan presented the regular charts which showed that March 2020 was the lowest ridership for the system since the merger in 2016. He noted that tracking trends of ridership will not really be relevant until things return to normal but the rides will still be tracked and charted. Monahan pointed out again like the week before that while there has been a significant and expected decrease in ridership the transit system is still providing a good number of rides to the communities it serves. It will be a significant loss in the long run in terms of ridership projections but remaining available for the public is still essential. Estey echoed these sentiments explaining that public transit is the only way for a number of people to get to any essential need that they have and that is why the effort is still ongoing despite the pandemic.

The next Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for Friday May 8th at 8:00 a.m. at the Martin County Courthouse in Fairmont with the potential for teleconference attendance. The next Full Transit Board will be handled by the Executive Committee members. The meeting date is scheduled for Tuesday April 28th following Human Services Board meeting. Monahan will coordinate with Human Services staff to hold the meetings consecutively.

With no further business to wit, a motion was made by Commissioner Belgard, seconded by Commissioner Young to adjourn. With a unanimous roll call vote the Board Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:10 a.m.

JOINT TRANSIT BOARD
FARIBAULMARTIN COUNTIES



William Groskreutz Jr., Joint Transit Board Chair

ATTEST:



Greg Young, Board Secretary