

Faribault-Martin County Joint Transit Board – Executive Committee
Martin County Courthouse
201 Lake Avenue Fairmont, MN 56031
March 5, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m. by Board Chairman Elliot Belgard. 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 Commissioners Young and Groskreutz and Martin County Commissioners Belgard and Forshee. Nobody joined via teleconference. Also present in person was Jeremy Monahan, Faribault – Martin County Transit Director.

Martin County Commissioner Forshee was tasked by the Martin County Board to replace Commissioner Richard Koons as Transit Board Secretary after his swearing in on March 2, 2021. A formal confirmation will be considered by the Full Transit Board in April on this change to Board Officers.

Board Chair asked for any changes to the agenda. Monahan asked to add discussion regarding potential hiring authorization. Motion made by Commissioner Young, seconded by Commissioner Groskreutz to approve the amended agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

Monahan produced an Unpaid Bills report totaling \$22,777.30 and noted that more regular and recurring bills are expected to arrive in the coming weeks. There was a brief discussion on a few of the bill but there was nothing out of the ordinary.

Motion made by Commissioner Groskreutz, seconded by Commissioner Forshee 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 a Bank Statement for the Transit Board. It showed that as of February 26, 2021 the Transit Board had \$688,232.06 for a bank balance. Monahan noted that balance grew again after receiving the reimbursement payment for Quarter 4 of 2020 from the Federal share of the CARES contract. Monahan noted he has worked with CCF Bank to increase the pledged collateral to have bonds of \$600,000 and then the \$250,000 FDIC backing. There was brief discussion a few of the other deposits. There was no action required this was for information purposes only.

Discussion turned to Old Business and the Facility Construction Project. Monahan had a number of Facility construction or other facility related topics to address with the Executive Committee. First Monahan reported on the summary of the two change orders on the construction project. One was for modification to an interior wall to accommodate an opening between two offices. The other was to add a new circuit breaker box that was mistakenly believed to have adequate

spare spaces for the new construction but was found to not have those spaces. The costs for the two change orders totaled \$3,218.13 which added to the original contract with APX for a new cost of \$237,716.13 in total. There was discussion about both change orders and their necessity and who might have been financially responsible for these issues besides the Transit Board.

This led to discussion of both the budget deficit for the project and an inquiry with MnDOT regarding a possible budget amendment to add funds. The contract with MnDOT was for \$270,000 total with 20 percent local share. The grand total of Architecture contract and Construction Contract was now at \$280,516.13 or just over \$10,500 over budget. Monahan reported he had inquired with MnDOT about a potential amendment but has not received any response yet. Discussions resulted in a wait and see approach knowing that the current overage is not exorbitant and the budget amendment would just be helpful at this point.

Next Monahan reported that he and his staff have been inquiring about what it would take to get cable internet service to the building due to poor and inconsistent service through a DSL phone line. Currently the closest cable box is about 2 blocks away so Midcontinent Communications (Midco) quoted a \$7,500 cost for extending cable to the building. However Monahan believes, and is awaiting clarification from Midco, that the cost can be reduced depending on the data plan that is signed up for and could be reduced to \$3,400 for local cost. Monahan will wait for confirmation of the cost for extending the cable and work towards completing this task. It was noted that faster internet is definitely needed at the facility, especially with additional staff moving in.

Finally on the facility Monahan reported that he had budgeted in the 2020-2021 operations budget to purchase equipment for lawn mowing and snow blowing. There was discussion about the type of machines being considered and who might operate them. Monahan said the point of purchasing the equipment is to not be completely reliant on Martin County Sentence to Service staff for these tasks as they are not always available. Monahan was advised to explore having contractors doing better snow removal and possibly lawn care or looking into smaller machines.

Discussion turned to the CARES Act budget status. Monahan explained to the Executive Committee the nature of how all \$1,250,500 in CARES Act funds have now been dispersed even though that amount was not all spent by the Transit Board by the end of December. There was discussion about the methods of dispersing funds and also how the future funding will be different with MnDOT planning to amend the 2020-2021 operations contracts again to allow for them to cover 100 percent of operations and not have a local share until at least 2022. More info and updates on this topic will be available in coming months.

Discussion turned to New Business and Monahan noted that he would like to be able to explore the potential to utilize Martin County Information Systems Department at the Transit Facility once the construction is complete. Other sites have this remote access such as VSO, 4H, Highway, etc. and with the amount of files stored currently on Martin County's network it would be extremely convenient to be able to continue the access from the Transit Facility. After discussion it was decided Monahan should approach Martin County MIS Director about the proposed project.

Discussion turned to posting Transit Board meeting minutes on the Prairie Lakes Transit website. Currently there are minutes dating back to 2015 on the website and the webmaster inquired if we would like to maintain keeping that many minutes posted or if we would like to remove some. Monahan confirmed with the webmaster that storage space is not an issue. He also conferred with the Office of State Auditor about any regulations regarding posting meeting minutes on the website. OSA said there is no requirement but if we have at least a few years going back it makes auditing easier for them. After discussion it was decided to keep 5 years back plus the current year on the website and remove anything older. Then a statement will be placed on the website that notes that older minutes dating to 2015 are available upon request at the Office of the Transit Director.

Discussion turned to the potential to hire a dispatcher. Monahan noted that he had not been able to complete the interviewing and hiring process before this Executive Committee meeting to get approval to hire any candidates. Due to this delay Monahan was hoping to have permission to hire a person as he see fit and allow them to start work before the next Executive Committee meeting in April.

Motion was made by Commissioner Young, seconded by Commissioner Groskreutz, to allow Monahan to proceed hiring for the dispatcher position as he sees fit. Motion passed unanimously.


Discussion regarding the system ridership report ensued. Monahan noted that there was a significant drop from January to February. In analyzing the differences in the month aside from extreme cold potentially reducing ridership there was one less Saturday in February than January. With fare collection beginning February 1st it appears some ridership patterns, in particular in Faribault County, did change which reduced ridership. There was discussion about potential changes to service hour planning and ensuring that the Transit Advisory Committee be utilized as best as possible in helping with that planning.

The next Executive Committee is scheduled for Friday April 9th at 8:00 am. The next Full Board meeting will be held on Wednesday April 21st at 10:30 am following the Human Services Board meeting. Also a motion was made by Commissioner Groskreutz, seconded by Commissioner Young to schedule the May Executive Committee meeting for Friday May 7th at 8:00 am in Fairmont.

With no further business to wit, the Board Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:35 a.m.

JOINT TRANSIT BOARD
FARIBAULMARTIN COUNTIES


Elliot Belgard, Joint Transit Board Chair

ATTEST: 
James Forshee, Board Secretary

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