

Faribault-Martin County Joint Transit Board
Faribault County Human Services Center Conference Room
412 North Nicollet Street
Blue Earth, MN 56013
Wednesday October 20, 2021 10:00 a.m.

The meeting was called to order at 11:11 a.m. by Board Chairman Elliot Belgard.

Joint Transit Board members present in person were: Faribault County Commissioners Groskreutz, Roper, Anderson, Loveall, and Young and Martin County Commissioners Belgard, Smith, Flohrs, and Koons. Missing was Martin County Commissioner Forshee. Also present in person was Jeremy Monahan, Faribault – Martin County Transit Director.

Commissioner Belgard asked if there were any additions to the agenda. There were none. Motion made by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Young to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Commissioner Young, seconded by Commissioner Groskreutz to approve the meeting minutes for the August 18, 2021 Full Board meeting, September 10 and October 12, 2021 Executive Committee meetings. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion turned to an update on the Facility Construction project. Monahan reported there were delays in resolving some of the final punch-list items but the construction is nearing completion and the contracts are anticipated to be closed in the coming weeks. The phone and internet installation was completed on September 21st and is going well. Plans for the Transit Director to relocate to the Transit Building are being made. However there are a couple of audits that need to be completed before the move is feasible.

There was discussion regarding the budget and how much of it had been spent, how much of the MnDOT funds had been received, and how much the counties would need to contribute upon the completion of the project.

Discussion turned to an update on the vehicle purchases for 2021. Monahan reported authorization to proceed to purchase has been received for all seven (7) of the 2021 vehicles. Six of these vehicles are a 90 percent State and Federal Share and 10 percent local share. Each vehicle contract is for \$95,000 total. One of the vehicles is 100 percent funded by State and Federal funds and does not require any local share. The budget for that vehicle is \$100,000 due to some extra safety features that are required as part of the grant the State received to help purchase these vehicles.

Monahan explained that typically when vehicles are purchased the Full Board has to approve a resolution noting the price, model, and vendor of each vehicle being purchased. Due to the timing of the proceed to purchase authorization arriving, the 60-day deadline to complete the purchases, and the scheduled Full Board meetings the Full Board will not be able to be pass the resolution in time. It was suggested that the Full Board give the authority to pass the purchase authorization resolution to the Executive Committee which could be done at their November

meeting. At the December Full Board meeting a report on all purchases will be made. Similar authority has been granted to the Executive Committee regarding bill payments and decision making for the facility construction project. Lastly at their October meeting the Executive Committee passed a motion recommending the Full Board approve the authorization to pass the resolution is given to the Executive Committee.

Motion made by Commissioner Koons, seconded by Commissioner Flohrs, to approve giving the Executive Committee the authority to pass the vehicle purchase resolution at their November meeting to meet the end of November deadline. Motion passed unanimously.

Monahan was asked about the accessible mini-van project is still on-going. He reported that the Request For Proposals has been submitted to MnDOT for review and comment and recently returned. Plans are for solicitation to being in November with a vendor selection and vehicle ordering occurring in December.

Monahan was asked about the Financial Position statement for the Transit Board. He stated he had not updated or prepared the matrix usually used for this meeting but will do so for the next meeting and include more detail in terms of revenues coming in from sources including fares, state funds, and federal funds so the Board is able to have a better picture of the finances.

Discussion turned to the Paid Administration Leave (PAL) policy. Monahan reported that the PAL was put in place to protect staff wages during the pandemic due to their need to quarantine or for hour reductions due to service reductions. This was extended in June and is currently set to expire at the end of October when the Full Board could consider extending or ending the policy at their October meeting. Currently the PAL is rarely being used for quarantining and never for covering hour reductions made due to lack of work. The system is so short staffed that most workers are working as many hours as they are able to. Monahan noted it is also not clear yet if the funding starting in 2022 will allow a Paid Administrative Leave policy like the CARES Act allowed for with 2020 and 2021 funds. At their October meeting the Executive Committee passed a motion recommending that the Full Board allow the policy to expire at the end of October. It can be reinstated if the Full Board desires in the future if there is a need and it is allowed.

Motion made by Commissioner Loveall, seconded by Commissioner Koons to follow the Executive Committee recommendation and allow the PAL policy to expire at the end of October. There is the possibility of reinstating it in the future if there is a need and it is allowed upon approval by the Full Board. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion turned to New Business and consideration of increasing Part-time staff wages for November and December rather than waiting until January. Monahan explained how the 2020-2021 Operations Contract expenditures are coming in way lower than budgeted. This was expected as the service levels dropped quite a bit especially in mid-2020 which lowered costs. There are also the ever present concerns about staff morale. In an effort to both utilize more of the 2020-2021 funds and to hopefully increase staff morale it is proposed to increase the part-time staff wages for the pay period beginning October 24, 2021 instead of waiting until the typical first week of January. There would not be another adjustment in January. If the

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enhances wages proposed as part of the 2022 budget process were implemented at the end of October the approximate cost would be less than \$10,000 more in payroll than the current wages for the rest of this year.

There was discussion about the method for determining the wage increase, the precedent setting concern of doing a wage change mid-year, if full-time staff is affected, and clarification that there would not be another wage increase for part-time staff in January.

A motion was made by Commissioner Koons, seconded by Commissioner Roper, to approve the increased wage proposal effective October 24, 2021 payroll period. During discussion Commissioner Anderson noted that the percentage for certain positions was much less than other positions. It was noted that it could be more appropriate to change the wage adjustment to a 10 percent increase for all part-time staff. Commissioners Koons and Roper agreed to modify their motion. The motion passed by a vote of 8 yes and 1 no.

Discussion turned to the Ridership Report. Monahan noted that ridership for Faribault County increased in September primarily due to the start of the pre-school year. Prairie Lakes is providing transportation for some pre-school students in both United South Central District and Blue Earth Area District. Martin County routes have stayed flat statistically for about 6 months, and the system as a whole remains flat as well. There was some discussion about ridership amounts and other system's losses across the state.

Discussion turned to the Bill Payment List. Monahan presented a report showing all bills paid since the August 18, 2021 Full Transit Board meeting. There was brief discussion regarding some of the bills.


Discussion turned to Special Business. Per Minnesota Statue 13D.05 Sub, 3 this section of the meeting is closed to the public for the completion of the annual performance evaluation of the Transit Director. A motion was made by Commissioner Koons, seconded by Commissioner Anderson to move the meeting into closed session at 11:45 am. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

A motion was made by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Young to end the closed meeting at 12:18 pm. Motion passed.

With no further business to wit, the Board Chair adjourned the meeting at 12:19 p.m.

JOINT TRANSIT BOARD
FARIBAULMARTIN COUNTIES


Elliot Belgard, Joint Transit Board Chair

ATTEST: 
James Forshee, Board Secretary

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