

Faribault-Martin County Joint Transit Board – Executive Committee
FM Transit Facility
1023 North Dewey Street Fairmont, MN 56031
January 6, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m. by Board Chair Elliot Belgard. Joint Transit Board Executive Committee members present in person were: Faribault County Commissioners Young and Groskreutz. Attending remotely was Martin County Commissioner Belgard. Missing was Martin County Commissioner Bleess who had Commissioner Koons attend in his place. Also present in person was Jeremy Monahan, Faribault – Martin County Transit Director.

Board Chair asked for any changes to the agenda. There was a letter received by Commissioner Groskreutz from Commissioner Roper regarding a staffing matter that Monahan wished to add to New Business. Motion made by Commissioner Groskreutz, seconded by Commissioner Koons to approve the amended agenda. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Monahan produced an Unpaid Bills report totaling \$31,357.18 and noted that there will still be a number of regular and recurring bills arriving in the coming days and weeks that will be due before the next Executive Committee meeting. There was brief discussion regarding a few of the bills. Commissioner Belgard asked about the placement of the new Transit Facility security cameras which were installed in December. There was also discussion regarding the increased cost of benefits for 2023 for full-time staff. Monahan also noted that fuel usage was down considerably in December due to the amount of days with service disruptions due to weather and holidays.

Motion made by Commissioner Groskreutz, seconded by Commissioner Young 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 by roll call vote.

Monahan produced a Bank Statement for the Transit Board. It showed that as of December 30, 2022 the Transit Board had \$388,587.65 for a bank balance. Monahan noted there were no large or extraordinary deposits or payments in December.

Monahan also presented a report showing each line item's budget and yearly expense through November. Most line items were well under budget however a few, in particular Office Supplies and Fuel, were over the budgeted amounts. Overall 80 percent of the annual budget had been spent through November. Monahan projected about 90 percent of the budget will be spent for the contract. Through November revenues totaling 8 percent of the expenditures had been recovered. It was noted that in last month's Full Board meeting that if the local share is increased to 15 percent the current gap would be about 7 percent that would be need to be made up for local share recovery.

Discussion turned Old Business and an update on the CY 2021 audit. Monahan noted the audit is nearing completion with just a few outstanding items and tasks needed. He was informed

from the auditors that any findings would be sent in the coming days and that the exit interview would be scheduled shortly afterwards. He also noted that the Office of State Auditor informed him that they will not be able to do the annual system audit for 2022 and for the next few years at least due to their staffing issues. Monahan expressed frustration with this as the audit process was becoming streamlined with the OSA team becoming familiar with the Transit Board operations. He said we will need to find a new accounting firm to complete the audit for 2022. Commissioner Groskreutz noted that firms capable and willing to complete these types of audits are becoming hard to find so it would be wise to start searching soon. He also wanted to make sure we checked with OSA if they have the final review authority of the audit still and to ensure we understand the timeline to complete the audit. Monahan said he will ask OSA staff these questions as the 2021 audit is being completed.

Discussion turned to the possibility of purchasing some equipment for the Transit Facility to move snow in instances when the snow removal company that has been hired might be delayed getting to the garage. The instance spurring this was a number of drifts in front of the garage doors one morning. The buses would have struggled to get out of the garage had the snow removal company not returned to remove the drifts. Monahan was just looking for a Plan B with the snow that was not a shovel. There was discussion and concern about how much a snow blower might be used, who would operate it, and other concerns and ideas. There was no action taken at this time, rather it was decided to continue to rely on the snow removal company for now.

Discussion turned to New Business and the ridership report. Monahan reported that the December numbers were steady and that the yearly totals had been calculated. It showed that system-wide there was an 8.2 percent increase over 2021 ridership amounts. This was the first system-wide increase since 2017 so it was exciting. Also, each county had an increase over 2021 with Martin County increasing 6.3 percent and Faribault County increasing 12.7 percent. Monahan also noted that it is no longer practical to compare system numbers to 2019 or pre-pandemic amounts. Almost all transit systems are lower than pre-pandemic and industry standard is to move forward with the new normal and build off that.

Discussion turned to a staffing issue regarding simple maintenance tasks, in particular in Blue Earth. After discussion Monahan requested that he be allowed to assign two to four drivers to do simple maintenance tasks on top of their driving duties. As an incentive for doing these extra tasks, when they are doing them the drivers will be allowed to be paid the Shift Differential wage of an additional \$0.50 per hour.

A motion was made by Commissioner Young, seconded by Commissioner Groskreutz to recommend to the Full Board that Monahan be allowed to implement the Shift Differential pay for simple maintenance task work for 2 – 4 transit drivers. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

The next Executive Committee is scheduled for Friday February 10th at 8:00 am. The next Full Transit Board meeting is planned for February 22nd in Blue Earth starting at 8:00 am before the Human Services Full Board meeting. For 2023 it is desired to return to piggybacking with Human Services for Full Board meetings.

With no further business to wit, a motion was made by Commissioner Young and seconded by Commissioner Groskreutz to adjourn and the Board Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:10 a.m.

JOINT TRANSIT BOARD
FARIBAULMARTIN COUNTIES



Elliot Belgard, Joint Transit Board Chair

ATTEST: 

Jamie Bleess, Board Secretary