

Faribault-Martin County Joint Transit Board  
Fairmont Transit Facility  
1023 North Dewey Street  
Fairmont, MN 56031  
Tuesday April 27, 2023 9:00 a.m.

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Board Chair Elliot Belgard.

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

The Board Chair asked if there were any other additions to the agenda. There were none.

Motion made by Commissioner Koons, seconded by Commissioner Flohrs to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Commissioner Flohrs, seconded by Commissioner Anderson to approve the meeting minutes for the February 22, 2023 Full Board meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Groskreutz, seconded by Commissioner Young to approve both the March 10, 2023 and April 7, 2023 Executive Committee meetings. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion turned to Old Business and a discussion regarding the 2021 Vehicle purchases. Monahan noted that he was able to get the cost of both style of vehicles, Martin County rear lifts and Faribault County front lifts, reduced by eliminating some options from the purchases. Work was done with the North Central rep to reduce the cost of the Martin County style bus to \$116,995 and the Faribault County style bus to \$118,358. The contract maximum is \$114,000 so anything over that will be 100 percent the responsibility of the Transit Board along with the contracted 10 percent local share. The quantities of each style bus was also changed to have four (4) Martin County style buses purchased and two (2) Faribault County style buses purchased. The 10 percent local share will be \$68,400, the overrun on the 4 Martin County buses totals \$23,960 and the overrun on the 2 Faribault County buses totals \$8,717 for a grand total local share for the six vehicles of \$101,076 which is an increase from the original \$57,000 approximate local share. However it is a significant reduction from the \$183,000 local share presented once the new vehicle prices were given to the board in February. There was brief discussion regarding the reworked options and configurations.

Discussion turned to the Low / No Grant Opportunity. Monahan reported that after voting in February to proceed with participating in another grant application for an electric bus, MnDOT contacted him and stated that we were one of only two systems which replied with interest at this time. Also our system was the only system replying with interest in an electric bus, the other system had interest in propane powered buses. MnDOT asked if we would “stand down” for this grant so that they could focus on writing a solid grant proposal for propane buses, just like they

did for writing the grant for electric buses the prior year when we were awarded an electric bus and infrastructure support. The Transit Director took the “team player approach” and told them we would stand down for this grant knowing that there will be a grant opportunity every year for quite a few years to come. The Executive Committee discussed this and by consensus agreed with the decision. There was brief discussion about this action including discussion about support for potential propane powered buses for the fleet in the future as there is still some concern about the viability of electric vehicles being used.

Discussion turned to the 2024 Operations Contract Local Share. Monahan reported that at a March 24<sup>th</sup> meeting with MnDOT, they reported that for 2024 they will be able to hold the Local Share to 8 percent, which was a great relief. The trade-off for being able to keep the Local Share at a lower amount was MnDOT stated they will only be able to increase 2024 Operations contracts by 2 to 4 percent over the 2023 contracts. Monahan reminded the board that the 2023 contract, due to the rapid increase in costs and wages needed for staff recruitment, were allowed to be increased by 10 percent over the 2022 contracts. The other trade-off was that the 10 percent Local Share for vehicles will need to return to a 20 percent Local Share. Monahan said this was not unexpected as the 10 percent Local Share was only meant to be a stop gap to allow systems to catch up on aging fleets when it was implemented. Since it was implemented unfortunately the vehicle costs have increased significantly but having an additional 10 percent increase locally for vehicles is much less of a financial burden than having to endure a 15 percent operations local share. Monahan noted this means that at least for 2024 there will not be a need to plan for County Levy funds to be budgeted for Operations. Brief discussion ensued including ideas for increasing revenue. Monahan was asked to analyze impacts of rate increases on revenue along with exploring other means of revenue generation such as deliveries or exterior ad rate adjustments. Commissioner Koons noted that if a rate increase is needed it might be best to do a small amount at a time rather than waiting and then doing a larger amount. Monahan noted he will look into these ideas and options.

There was no New Business to present to the Board.

Discussion turned to the Ridership Report. Ridership for the system in 2023 is off to a really nice start. Faribault County Routes are breaking all-time records month after month. Monahan said this is being done despite being short staffed and even with a number of weather cancellations in February. The Martin County based routes are showing steady progress in increasing ridership. The routes outperform last year’s ridership each month this year.

The system overall is having nice progress over last year. March was the highest ridership in a month while collecting fares since the beginning of the pandemic. Monahan noted this is a very encouraging sign but that April and the summer historically shows a decline in ridership. Token pack sales are in high demand, especially at the beginning of each month. The system is starting to regain strength and just needs the proper staffing levels to address all the needs that are demanded.

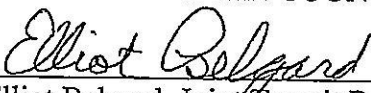
Discussion turned to the Financial Reports. Monahan produced the Bill Payment Report since the Full Board meeting on February 22, 2023.

Second he presented a report showing 2022 Operation's contract line item budget and yearly expenses through December. Most line items were well under budget however a few, in particular Office Supplies and Fuel, were over the budgeted amounts. Overall 90 percent of the budget was spent for the contract but there is one expense still outstanding and being worked on with MnDOT to see if it can be included in the 2022 Operations. Through December revenues totaling 7.9 percent of the expenditures had been recovered. For 2023 the local share is 5 percent which seems to be attainable and the Transit Reserve Fund is large enough to cover any shortfall which is not expected. There was brief discussion regarding some of the line item expenses.


The next Executive Committee meetings will be held on May 5<sup>th</sup>. The next Full Board meeting will be held on June 26<sup>th</sup> in Blue Earth at the Human Services conference room.

With no further business to wit, a motion was made to adjourn and the Board Chair adjourned the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

JOINT TRANSIT BOARD  
FARIBAULMARTIN COUNTIES

  
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Elliot Belgard, Joint Transit Board Chair

ATTEST:

  
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Jamie Bleess, Board Secretary