

Faribault-Martin County Joint Transit Board
Faribault County Human Services Center Conference Room
412 North Nicollet Street
Blue Earth, MN 56013
Wednesday December 20, 2023 10:30 a.m.

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m. by Board Chair Elliot Belgard.

Joint Transit Board members present were: Faribault County Commissioners Groskreutz, Roper, Anderson, Lovell, and Young and Martin County Commissioners Belgard, Flohrs, Bleess, Smith, and Koons. 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 Groskreutz, seconded by Commissioner Koons to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion was made by Commissioner Koons, seconded by Commissioner Bleess to approve the meeting minutes for the October 31, 2023 Full Board meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion was made by Commissioner Groskreutz, seconded by Commissioner Bleess to approve the meeting minutes for the November 9, 2023 Executive Committee meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion was made by Commissioner Flohrs, seconded by Commissioner Bleess to approve the meeting minutes for the December 8, 2023 Full Board meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

There was no Old Business to discuss.

Discussion turned to New Business and the 2024 Wage Adjustments for Full Time Staff. Monahan noted that according to performance reviews all Full Time staff will be eligible to receive a Step increase for 2024. The Cost of Living Adjustment which is the average of Faribault County and Martin County has been confirmed to be 3 percent. Therefore it is proposed to have the Operations Manager be at Grade 10 Step 6 with an hourly wage of \$27.80 per hour and the Transit Director is at Grade 17 Step 6 with a salaried wage of \$47.33 per hour.

Motion was made by Commissioner Koons, seconded by Commissioner Bleess to approve the Full Time Staff wage increase for 2024 as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion turned to the Benefits Administration Agreement with Martin County. Monahan explained that with the Transit Board purchasing benefits for their Full Time staff through Martin County's benefits programs Martin County staff are involved in completing steps necessary to administer the Transit Board's benefits. They also provide valuable advice for staff throughout the year as needed. A yearly fee was established after the forming of the Joint Powers Board and hiring of a Full Time staff but it was a flat rate per employee. This new agreement is determined as a percentage of the benefit premium amounts which will then be able

to flex with inflation and staffing level changes in the future. The Martin County Board of Commissioners passed this agreement in November and the Executive Committee reviewed the agreement at their December meeting and passed a motion recommending the Full Board approve the agreement for the Transit Board. There was discussion regarding the agreement and the cost per employee for benefits administration.

Motion made by Commissioner Koons, seconded by Commissioner Bless to approve the Martin County Benefits Administration Agreement as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion turned to the Employee Earned Safe and Sick Time policy. Monahan presented a policy reviewed by Martin County HR Staff after the draft policy that was approved by the Executive Committee at their December meeting contingent on review by Martin County HR Staff. The policy explains how the Transit Board will implement its ESST policy for Part Time staff, which will now be able to have paid leave for the first time. It also explained how the Full Time staff's existing PTO and Sick Bank policy will cover the ESST requirements. There was discussion regarding the policy including its impact on the budget and the reasoning behind some of the details.

Motion made by Commissioner Koons, seconded by Commissioner Young to approve the Employee Safe and Sick Time Policy as presented to be implemented January 1, 2024. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion turned to the Ridership Report. Ridership for October and November had been very strong for the system. Faribault County continues to show record breaking ridership. Martin County routes and the system as a whole continue to show steady increase over previous year amounts each month. Monahan noted in staff meetings he had shared historical ridership numbers and shared that while there was a decline from 2019 to the bottom out of 2021 the last two years have shown steady increases with 2023 projected to have a total of 45,000 rides. This is still a drop from pre-pandemic numbers but Monahan said it is still very optimistic to have recovered this much this quickly compared to some other systems.

Discussion turned to the Financial Reports. Monahan produced the Bill Payment Report since the Full Board meeting on October 31, 2023.

Second he presented a Year to Date expenditure report for the 2023 Operations Contract. This showed each line item and the pace of expenditures compared to the annual budget. Almost all line items are still under budget with a couple exceptions due to unexpected expenses in office equipment and software cost increases. Also revenue generation is right on track to meet the annual goal for 2023.

Discussion turned to Special Business of electing the Transit Board Officers for 2024. Commissioner Belgard opened up the floor for nominations for the position of Board Chair.

Motion made by Commissioner Young, seconded by Commissioner Smith to nominate Faribault County Commissioner Bill Groskreutz as Board Chair. Commissioner Belgard asked three times if there were any other nominations. There were none. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Koons, seconded by Commissioner Groskreutz to nominate Martin County Commissioner Jaime Bleess as Board Vice-Chair. Commissioner Belgard asked three times if there were any other nominations. There were none. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Smith, seconded by Commissioner Anderson to nominate Faribault County Commissioner Greg Young as Board Secretary. Commissioner Belgard asked three times if there were any other nominations. There were none. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Koons, seconded by Commissioner Anderson to nominate Martin County Commissioner Elliot Belgard as Board Treasurer. Commissioner Belgard asked three times if there were any other nominations. There were none. Motion passed unanimously.

The newly elected Board Officer's terms will begin on January 1, 2024.

The next Executive Committee meeting will be held on January 5th. The next Full Board meeting will be held on February 27th in Fairmont at the Transit Facility.

With no further business to wit, the Board Chair adjourned the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

JOINT TRANSIT BOARD
FARIBAULMARTIN COUNTIES



Elliot Belgard, Joint Transit Board Chair

ATTEST: 

Jamie Bleess, Board Secretary