

Faribault-Martin County Joint Transit Board – Executive Committee
FM Transit Facility
1023 North Dewey Street Fairmont, MN 56031
December 8, 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 and Martin County Commissioners Belgard and Bless. Also present was Jeremy Monahan, Faribault – Martin County Transit Director.

Board Chair asked for any changes to the agenda. There were two additions from the tentative agenda sent out including a discussion on discussing the proposed Full Time staff 2024 Cost of Living Adjustment percentage to be presented to the Full Board later in the month and to discuss confirming some meeting dates in 2024 for the Executive Committee. Motion made by Commissioner Groskreutz, seconded by Commissioner Young to approve the agenda as amended. Motion passed unanimously.

Monahan produced an Unpaid Bills report totaling \$123,896.26 and noted there will still be regular and recurring bills arriving in the coming weeks that will be due before the next Executive Committee meeting. A large portion of the bills was an invoice from MnDOT requesting repayment for the overpayment of the 2022 Operations Contract funding. Monahan had reported that this was coming and it came out to \$85,746.26 in total, and arrived about a year earlier than planned for cashflow purposes. However with current bank balances and projected spending and funding Monahan reported that cashflow should be sufficient to get through to late spring when cashflow tends to stop being a concern. Monahan also noted that with this repayment the Transit Board no longer has any overpayments looming, they are all paid back. The remaining bills were pretty standard business as usual. There was discussion about some of the various bill details.

Motion made by Commissioner Groskreutz, seconded by Commissioner Young to approve payment of the Unpaid Bills as presented including the upcoming exhaust system repair bill not 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 November 30, 2023 the Transit Board had \$470,392.06 for a bank balance. Monahan noted that the 3rd Quarter Federal share of the 2023 Operations contract totaling just over \$164,000 was deposited in November contributing to the large increase in balance from the previous month. Monahan also noted that \$1,850 of the Washington DC Fly-In expenses were reimbursed by the Minnesota Public Transit Association essentially covering the airfare and hotel costs. In addition MCIT paid their Annual Dividend of \$3,252 to the Transit Board which will be counted towards system revenues. There was brief discussion about a few other transactions on the Bank Statement.

Discussion turned to Old Business and an update Draft Employee Safe and Sick Time Policy. Monahan reviewed the policy with the Executive Committee which enacting the required paid

leave time for all employees beginning January 1, 2024 along with the methods in which the Transit Board will be implementing them. There was discussion about the policy including a desire to have Monahan have Martin County HR staff do a quick review of the Draft policy with him for any advice before presenting it to the Full Board.

Motion made by Commissioner Bless, seconded by Commissioner Young to recommend the Draft Employee Safe and Sick Time Policy addendum to the Transit Board's Personnel Policy is approved by the Full Board contingent on successful review of Martin County HR staff. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion turned to the Garage Light Replacement Project. Monahan reported that he had revived the project that was paused last spring due to vendors not being available as easily for an indoor project during the summer. He had obtained 3 updated quotes to replace all 28 lights on the Transit Facility ceiling with LED bulbs. Kahler Electric from Fairmont was the low bid and selected and Monahan is moving forward with the project hoping to be completed by year's end.

Discussion turned to the Martin County Benefits Administration Agreement. The Transit Board purchases benefits for their Full Time staff through Martin County's benefits programs. With that Martin County staff are involved in completing steps necessary to administer the Transit Board's benefits along with providing 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 Transit Full Board will need to consider doing the same in December.

Motion made by Commissioner Groskreutz, seconded by Commissioner Young to recommend to the Full Board they approve the proposed Benefits Administration Agreement with Martin County. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion turned to New Business. Monahan reported on the recently completed Compliance Review. He noted that the Final Draft of the report has not yet been received. In it there will be timeline guidelines for completion of action items along with advisory language for policy modifications. There was discussion about the review, saying how much of it was policy language focused, and of the policies the Riders Guidelines and ensuring ADA compliance was a focus. There was also discussion regarding accounting procedures, vehicle maintenance, procurement, staffing, and Civil Rights. It was noted by the consultant team completing the review and MnDOT that the Transit Board is doing very well.

Discussion turned to CCF Bank fraud protection tools that are available. Monahan reported that he had recently met with CCF staff both local and corporate level and they described a number of tools that are available to us as a customer that can help reduce the risk of fraudulent activity. Many of the tools are free and could be helpful. There was a tool that had a monthly fee of \$85 that would prevent anyone from modifying a check before trying to cash it or try and complete an ACH transaction that was not authorized. Monahan said he had been most worried about ACH theft but had not had any experiences with it for the Board. He also noted that CCF Bank

could have the ability to help with payroll processing that would realize savings over our current software that would offset the cost of the fraud protection that has a fee. Monahan needed to get more details about how a transition to do that would work. The Executive Committee asked Monahan to get more information from CCF Bank and perhaps have their staff come and present to the Board to show the benefits of these tools and programs.

Discussion turned to the Credit Card Rewards. The Transit Board VISA card has a rewards points program that has been building up for years. Monahan was asked a couple months ago what the points could be used for and if there was any restriction on using the points. He researched and could not find any restrictions on the use. He also learned that the points can be redeemed to get gift cards or products. After discussion it was determined that the rewards would not be used for rewards for individual employees. It was also determined that the rewards would be used for products and services that would need to be funded by the Non-Transit Related Revenue Fund.

Discussion turned to the Blue Earth Transit Facility. Monahan reported that he had looked into what might be possible for building a Transit Facility in Blue Earth. He noted that having a new building there, with space for 5 buses, heat, and an office and meeting space would be very nice for operations. He showed how MnDOT has consultants available to help with a number of different types of projects similar to the recent Labor Market Analysis. Another type is Facility Planning which can help with site selection and conceptual design. Essentially everything needed to apply for a Facility Capital Grant with MnDOT. After discussion, and with no reason to have the project be completely stopped right now in a planning and concept phase, Monahan was directed to enlist the consultants funded by MnDOT to assist with Facility Planning in Blue Earth.

Discussion turned to Blue Earth Fueling. The Blue Earth fueling situation with Shell is working well but will need to be put out for bid again. However if the Faribault County Highway Department Fuel where the buses are parked becomes available again, there would not be a need to put a bid out again. Commissioners Groskreutz and Young were going to inquire with a few people to see what might be possible.

Discussion turned to Personnel Actions. Monahan noted that Transit Driver Cindy Milne had successfully completed her 6-month probation and he wished to take her off probation and give her the wage increase associated with that action. Motion made by Commissioner Bless, seconded by Commissioner Young to approve the Personnel Action as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion turned to Full Time staff wage adjustment. Monahan noted that with the New Year the Full Time staff would be due for consideration of a wage adjustment. According to performance reviews all Full Time staff are eligible for a Step increase for 2024. However the Cost of Living Adjustment which is the average of Faribault County and Martin County needs to be confirmed before presenting to the Full Board. After discussion it was determined that both Martin County and Faribault County have 3 percent COLA for the 2024 increase. Therefore that will be the proposed COLA increase along with one step for the Transit Board Full Time staff.

Discussion turned to the ridership report. Monahan reported that November had a decline from October but that was expected with one less operating day and the day after Thanksgiving always being a slow day for transit. The increase over previous years is still exciting to see, especially the consistency in Martin County. Faribault County sets a record high for the month for the 6th time this year and shows promising future.

Discussion turned to the scheduling of the Executive Committee meetings. For 2024 Monahan said he had penciled in the first Friday after the first Tuesday throughout the year and it worked fine almost every month. It was noted the January will be held on Friday the 5th and February will be held on the Wednesday the 7th due to conflicts. For Full Board meetings, again Monahan noted that he penciled in for 2024 the fourth Tuesday of even months and the only month that was problematic was December when it fell on Christmas Eve. So an adjustment might be needed then. The Transit Board will be meeting following the Human Services Board meeting on December 20th. The start time will be set for 10:30 a.m. or begin at the conclusion of Human Services.

With no further business to wit, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 10:10 a.m.

JOINT TRANSIT BOARD
FARIBAULMARTIN COUNTIES



Elliot Belgard, Joint Transit Board Chair

ATTEST:



Jaime Bless, Board Secretary