

Faribault-Martin County Joint Transit Board – Executive Committee  
FM Transit Facility  
1023 North Dewey Street Fairmont, MN 56031  
February 7, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 a.m. by Board Chair Bill Groskreutz. 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. Monahan asked to discuss an Out of State Travel Request, Interview protocol for possible hiring of a Safety Manager, and Token Sales at the Courthouse in Blue Earth. Motion made by Commissioner Young, seconded by Commissioner Bless to approve the agenda as amended. Motion passed unanimously.

Monahan produced an Unpaid Bills report totaling \$38,198.46 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. Discussion ensued regarding a few of the bills including the Replacement of the Interior Lights for the Transit Facility garage area. Monahan noted that project went well so he arranged to add two replacement and one additional exterior fixture for the parking apron out front. The additional fixture will light an area where employees park and is dark in the morning and evening when they leave during the fall and winter months. He also noted the bill for the registration fee for Transportation Day at the Capitol in March which Monahan will be attending and meeting with State Legislators. There was discussion about some of the other bills and their details.

Motion made by Commissioner Belgard, seconded by Commissioner Bless 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.

Monahan produced a Bank Statement for the Transit Board. It showed that as of January 31, 2024 the Transit Board had \$381,659.85 for a bank balance. Monahan noted on January 11<sup>th</sup> a payment of \$222,168 was received which was the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter State Share for the 2024 Operations Contract. This will be the last large funding amount until April so the balance in the bank will have to last until then. Monahan feels confident based on the Cashflow analysis that has been completed the amount will be sufficient. The rest of the activity was business as usual.

Discussion turned to Old Business and an update on the 2022-2023 Financial Audit. Monahan reported that further discussion with the Office of State Auditor had led to the combined year audit being allowed and being completed in 2024 however they do want some unaudited Financial Statements uploaded to their website by Monahan in the meantime. He is working with OSA staff to get them the information they are requiring. All questions the OSA has will be answered with the completion of the audit within the year. Monahan is also working on the re-solicitation for financial audit services. First for the dual-year audit and then for option years for FY 2024 and FY 2025 so this will have arrangements for quite a few years into the future.

Discussion turned to an update on the 2024 Vehicle Purchase Application. Monahan reported that for 2024 the Transit Board was eligible to apply to replace one (1) vehicle at an estimated cost of \$232,000 per bus. Recently MnDOT sent out the award notification which showed that the Transit Board's application was accepted. Monahan noted that there were some systems that were eligible and applied for vehicles in 2024 that were not able to be replaced at this time so he feels fortunate to maintain this vehicle replacement pace. There was discussion about the vehicles along with brief discussion about the Electric Vehicle project which is still ongoing.

Discussion turned to the 2024 Technology Grant Application update. Monahan noted that he and the Operations Manager had been working with MnDOT and a consultant that they had funded to complete a very detailed application process for replacing the inefficient and expensive routing software. Part of the application process included research to ensure that there are other products available that might suit our needs along with ensuring that the project is not underfunded. The Transit Board was awarded a grant for \$143,000 to complete the initial purchase of replacement routing software. This grant will also cover the first year of maintenance cost along with costs associated with the transition. This grant will require a 10 percent local match. After the first year the annual maintenance will be built into the annual Operations budget. This is currently done with our existing software at an amount higher than the products that are anticipated to be available.

Discussion turned to New Business and Personnel Actions. Monahan reported that Dispatcher David Scheppmann had successfully completed his probation. Also that non-CDL Transit Driver Maleea Bryan had successfully completed her probation and will remain a non-CDL Transit Driver which does not allow for an increase in pay. Non-CDL Transit Drivers have the same wage as probationary drivers. Monahan asked for approval of these two actions.

Motion made by Commissioner Belgard, seconded by Commissioner Young to approve the two Personnel Actions as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion turned to the ridership report. Monahan showed the chart with January 2024 amount so there is not trendline available for the year yet. However comparing to previous years January showed strong improvement. Faribault County also had their second highest monthly total for ridership ever in January. Drivers are motivated to keep positive and try and have another increase over last year's numbers for February. Monahan also presented the results of a survey of area rural transit systems comparing their 2019 ridership to their 2023 ridership to show the amount and pace of recovery. Prairie Lakes is still down about 23 percent from 2019 which is about middle range from the systems surveyed. Some systems are still down 30 percent from 2019 and others are only down about 7 or 8 percent. So improvement all around the state but nobody is exceeding the 2019 amounts yet. There was discussion about the ridership data.

Discussion turned to an Out of State travel request. Monahan had recently been encouraged by a number of other system directors along with some MnDOT staff to attend the Community Transit Association of America (CTAA) National Conference and Expo. This year's conference is in June and will be held in West Palm Beach, Florida. There was discussion about what CTAA is and what occurs at their conferences. Monahan noted aside from the networking that he looked up the workshops presented at the 2023 conference to see if any were relevant to either

him to help with education or growth or to the Transit System to help with the improvement of the organization. He found nearly two dozen sessions that were relevant. There was more discussion the content of the workshops, the cost and if this was budgeted for in the annual operations.

Motion made by Commissioner Bleess, seconded by Commissioner Young, to recommend to the Full Transit Board that they approve the Out of State travel request for Monahan to attend the 2024 CTAA Conference and Expo in West Palm Beach Florida. Motion passed unanimously.


Discussion turned to sale of token packs in Blue Earth at the Faribault County Courthouse. Monahan noted he was not aware that the current staff did not have any experience with token sales and if the Courthouse was not desired to be a sale point it could be phased out. Commissioner Groskreutz has confidence the new Courthouse staff to handle the task. Token sales in Blue Earth will continue.


Discussion turned to the possible hiring of a Safety Manager. Now that the Transit Driver staffing level is becoming adequate the Safety Manager will not be needed to drive a route all day every day. They will be able to do the work needed for their job. Monahan noted they have not hired someone in a management position since 2016 and when that was done he had two commissioners with him and scoring the interviews along with him. He asked if that was still desired. After discussion it was decided to continue that practice and to work to arrange one Martin County and one Faribault County Executive Committee member to sit in on interviews for the Safety Manager when they occur.

The next Executive Committee meeting was changed to Thursday March 8<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 a.m. at the Transit Facility in Fairmont. The next Full Board meeting will be held on Tuesday February 27<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. at the Transit Facility in Fairmont.

With no further business to wit, a motion was made by Commissioner Belgard, seconded by Commissioner Young to adjourn and the Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:35 a.m.

JOINT TRANSIT BOARD  
FARIBAULMARTIN COUNTIES

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
William Groskreutz Jr., Joint Transit Board Chair

ATTEST:   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Greg Young, Board Secretary