

Faribault-Martin County Joint Transit Board – Executive Committee
Prairieland Facility
801 E 5th Street N Truman, MN 56088
Friday, December 12, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Board Chair Billeye Rabbe. Joint Transit Board Executive Committee members present in person were: Faribault County Commissioners Groskreutz and Young and Martin County Commissioners Loughmiller and Rabbe. Also present was Jeremy Monahan, Transit Director of Faribault – Martin County Transit Board.

Board Chair asked if there were any additions to the agenda. There were none. Motion made by Commissioner Loughmiller, seconded by Commissioner Groskreutz to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Monahan produced an Unpaid Bills report totaling \$28,853.24 and noted that a few bills have not yet arrived in the mail. There was brief discussion about some of bills as they were all business as usual. Monahan noted there will likely be more unique bills in from December as some end of year projects are being completed.

Motion made by Commissioner Loughmiller, seconded by Commissioner Groskreutz 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 November 28, 2025 the Transit Board had \$505,158.18 for a bank balance. He stated some noteworthy transactions including the 3rd Quarter Federal Operations Share payment of \$62,481.83 received on the 19th. He explained that a payment of \$57,653 was to MnDOT for their share of the insurance settlement of the total loss for Bus 20 in June. The remainder of the settlement will be saved for a portion of the local share of the replacement vehicle. There was some discussion some of the other transactions.

Discussion turned to Old Business and a discussion on the 2026 Replacement Vehicle Awards. Monahan noted that for 2026 there were three vehicles eligible to be applied for replacement and of those two met the qualifications in a statewide ranking and were awarded. The third eligible vehicle was just outside of the ranking to be within the funding capacity for 2026 vehicles. The two vehicles that met the limit were requested to be replaced with Class 400 cutaway buses. The one that didn't make the list was the one requesting a Transit Van replacement downsizing so that will not be happening in the 2026 round of replacement purchases. Monahan noted that the replacement for Bus 20 that was totaled will be in a separate contract than the standard replacement vehicles. There was also brief discussion about the long-awaited electric buses that have not yet been ordered. Monahan explained that one vendor is still getting their vehicle through the testing phase to finalize getting on the State contract and then there will be two options to compare from when making the purchase. He hopes the ordering will be completed this winter yet.

Discussion turned to the Appeals Committee for the active rider suspension issue. There was brief discussion about the current state and clarification of the roles and responsibilities.

Discussion turned to the Blue Earth Transit Facility and its progress towards the 2026 Facility grant. Monahan updated that he had been discussing with Faribault County staff about the status of the grant. There is not an exact date known for the execution of the contract but he expects it to be done in the first quarter of 2026 and then the acquisition portion of the building can be completed. The discussion of which portions of the campus to purchase continued with whether or not to pursue the detached garage structure which was originally planned. However, the County is currently making good use of the structure so it may not be needed for purchase. If so then the purchase price would be adjusted accordingly. Lastly the agreed upon rental price is still ongoing and County staff are preparing invoicing for the rent for 2025 to ensure it is on the 2025 Operations contract. There was then ongoing discussion about the entire project.

Discussion turned to New Business and a discussion on a request to travel out of state. Monahan noted that there is an opportunity to travel to Washington DC in March 2026 for the Community Transit Association of America's (CTAA) Legislative Fly-In which is a national level of the Minnesota Public Transit Association (MPTA) Fly-in done each September. Being the MPTA Vice-President starting in 2026 Monahan encouraged to attend these as often as practical to take advantage of the networking with other rural transit leaders around the country and with the elected officials and their staff that are not just from Minnesota but that make all the transportation decisions federally. There was discussion about cost and coverage of work. It was noted by the group that this looked like a good opportunity.

Motion made by Commissioner Loughmiller, seconded by Commissioner Young to approve the out of state travel request for Monahan to attend the CTAA Fly-In in March 2026 in Washington DC. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion turned to a discussion on Holiday Pay. Monahan noted that for Christmas Day and New Year's Day the transit system will be closed. Also, that per policy any employee working on Christmas Eve, which is one of the six noted federal holidays the system is operating, hourly staff will be paid 1 ½ times regular wages. This year is somewhat unique with Christmas Day and New Year's Day both on a Thursday making the 26th and the 2nd a Friday and a date that many staff would wish to have off of work. Monahan proposed as a reward for working on this day, this year, that hourly staff working be paid the Working Holiday Pay rate of 1 ½ times regular wages. There was discussion about setting precedent of expectations and Monahan said he could explain how this is unique because of the Friday week set-up and to not expect this in the future. There was also concern about the fact that this benefit is not provided for other agencies in the area, it is a unique one for Prairie Lakes Transit and now an expansion of it could look problematic. There was also discussion about how this is a way to show the staff appreciation in a small manner without affecting the budget in a large way.

After discussion of the pros and cons a motion was made by Commissioner Young, seconded by Commissioner Loughmiller to approve paying hourly staff working on December 26th and January 2nd the Working Holiday Pay rate of 1 ½ times hourly wage. Motion passed with three votes for and one vote against.

Discussion turned to a Personnel Policy issue regarding self-defense items on the bus. Monahan noted that there was recently staff concern about what the policy regarding their ability to carry self-defense tools such as mace on the bus with them while they work. Monahan presented the only written policy regarding “weapons” for the entire transit system which is within the Riders Guide that says “No weapons of any kind.....are allowed on the bus.” This did not clarify or differentiate between staff or riders. After lengthy discussion including laws regarding conceal and carry permits it was decided the next step would be to consult with MnDOT on the question to get their advice.

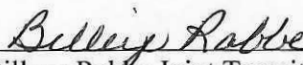
Discussion turned to Personnel Actions. Monahan started with the End of Probation and Internal Promotion to the open Full-Time Driver position in Blue Earth for Transit Driver Jason Spencer. Second, Monahan noted that Transit Driver James Opheim had to be Terminated from employment for cause. After discussion regarding circumstances of both actions a motion was made by Commissioner Groskreutz, seconded by Commissioner Loughmiller to approve the Personnel Actions as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

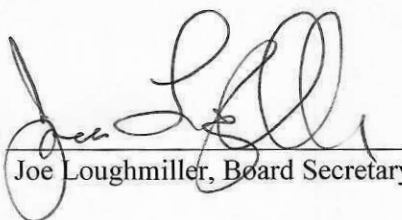
Discussion moved to the Ridership Report for November. Monahan recognized the dramatic drop in ridership from October along with comparisons to November 2024 and other recent years. The most logical explanation seemed to be the number of operations days being reduced to an abnormal 19 weekdays rather than the typical 21 or 22 days. In October 2025 there were an abnormal 23 weekdays which made the decrease look that much more substantial. He also noted severe weather shortened some services and with the Thanksgiving holiday pre-school and other regular services have extended holiday breaks.

There was brief discussion about staff meetings with training being held throughout December that the Executive Committee would be welcome to attend. The next Executive Committee meeting would be planned for Friday January 9th at 9:00 a.m. at the Fairmont Transit Facility. The next Full Board meeting will be held on Tuesday December 23rd at 9:00 am at the Fairmont Transit Facility where 2026 Transit Board Officers will be elected.

With no further business to wit the Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:55 a.m.

JOINT TRANSIT BOARD
FARIBAULMARTIN COUNTIES


Billee Rabbe Joint Transit Board Chair

ATTEST: 
Joe Loughmiller, Board Secretary