

Faribault-Martin County Joint Transit Board – Executive Committee
Martin County Courthouse
201 Lake Avenue Fairmont, MN 56031
May 9, 2018

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

Joint Transit Board Executive Committee members present were: Faribault County Commissioner Loveall and Martin County Commissioners Belgard and Mahoney. Missing was Faribault County Commissioner Groskreutz. Also present was Jeremy Monahan, Faribault – Martin County Transit Director.

Board Chair started the meeting by asking for any additions to the agenda. Monahan said he had added Ridership Statistics to New Business to the agenda.

Motion made by Commissioner Mahoney, seconded by Commissioner Belgard to approve the amended agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

Monahan produced an Unpaid Bills report totaling \$38,696.91 and explained a number of the regular and recurring bills have not yet arrived and would need to be authorized for payment to avoid late fees. A bill of note that was discussed was the Office of State Auditor work completed in 2018 to finish the 2016 audit. It was higher than expected and some of the work that was underestimated was discussed. It was noted that the OSA staff predict that the next audit will be less costly and also that another Transit Board system that was audited had a similar cost to complete their audit.

Motion made by Commissioner Belgard, seconded by Commissioner Mahoney 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 Bank Statements for the Transit Board. It showed that as of April 30, 2018 the Transit Board had \$49,131.93 for a bank balance. Monahan noted that the expected 2nd Quarter funding for Operations from the State did not arrive in April. Contact was made with MnDOT and the processing of the payment was fast-tracked. Monahan reported that a notice of imminent deposit was received the morning of the Executive Committee meeting which would add over \$157,000 to the bank balance. Also not shown on the statement was the loan deposits from each County for the vehicle purchase as the deposits and payment were made in May. They will both appear in May's statement. Lastly Monahan pointed out that on April 12th a deposit was made where the coinage for the deposit was believed to be undercounted by almost \$120 and that money was added to the deposit. Upon further investigation Monahan worked with CCF Bank staff to double check the discrepancy and it was learned that the original deposit amount was in fact correct. To correct the bank balance, the bank recorded a "withdrawal" on April 13th and the combination of the incorrect deposit amount and withdrawal amount equals

the actual deposit made. Monahan wanted to point this out because “withdrawals” are not made with this account and it was done only to account for the error.

Discussion turned to the Proposed System Modifications Status. Monahan reported that he is still working to produce the correct documentation requested by MnDOT to approve the modification requests. Summaries of public input gatherings are being produced, a Transit Advisory Meeting was held, and another Public Input meeting in Faribault County will be held in May. Monahan said stating qualitatively why these modifications are needed is easy to completed but are not adequate reasoning on its own for MnDOT. It has been difficult to quantify some of the reasons the modifications are needed but he is working on data, denial records, and other sources to find quantifiable reasons for the changes and projected differences to operations following the modifications implementations. It was noted that one of the reasons it would be nice to get the modifications approval would be that the new Rider’s Guides and other literature for the Transit System, which is all completed in Draft form awaiting the approval, could finally start being produced. The initial supply of guides has been exhausted and many places, especially libraries and doctor’s offices, have mentioned to staff and commissioners a desire for more guides. Old versions will not be reprinted at this point if they will be outdated shortly after production so approval of the modifications is the last hurdle to clear before production and a mass distribution effort can begin. Monahan will still continue to work with Meyer to ensure the proper procedure is followed to make the modifications to the system.

Discussion turned the staffing levels issues of the Transit Board in particular another office staff member needing to be hired for dispatching and, after discussion from the April Full Board meeting, a potential staff to split time with marketing and sales efforts. Work is being done on potential scheduling scenarios and other staff availability issues. Monahan is working on rewriting a job description to include the extra tasks and desired time availabilities. No action was required this was just information for the Executive Committee.

Discussion turned to New Business. Monahan discussed that the Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting was held as scheduled on April 26th. Four members of the TAC were able to attend with three members unfortunately having last minute cancellations, one spot is unfilled, and one member did not RSVP to the invitation. It was noted that the discussion regarding the proposed system modifications that were presented to MnDOT were discussed thoroughly. The TAC stated that all proposed modifications had merit and should at least be tried to see how they work provided their effectiveness is measured again in about a year or so. These thoughts will be reported to Jean Meyer with the resubmittal of the modification request along with the other input she requested and documentation that is being worked on. It was noted that City of Kiester Mayor Doug Trytten, who is a new appointee, was able to attend. Having his thoughts, in particular an opinion from that geographical area of the system (Eastern Faribault County) was very much appreciated, especially with discussions regarding service to Albert Lea for Faribault County residents. Another portion of the TAC meeting was spent with another new TAC member Tom Hawkins, who is a City of Fairmont Councilmember and local business owner, explaining his efforts at marketing his company and even the City of Fairmont via Facebook. Tom had a lot of good points on how effective Facebook can be at relatively low costs compared to other advertising mediums.

Discussion turned to the planning of the 2019 Operations and Capital applications that are due to MnDOT at the end of July. The only Full Board meeting before the deadline is in June, so a Draft Budget for the application will have to be completed by then for consideration of approval. Monahan said he plans to have a draft for the Executive Committee to discuss at their early June meeting so they can make their recommendations to the Full Board. Monahan discussed how the budgets have not been used completely due to overestimates on a few line items such as fuel costs and staff wage increases. He said MnDOT will likely closely scrutinize the application to ensure that the proposed budget is not larger than necessary based on previous year's expenditures.

Also discussed was the fact that in 2019 the Transit Board will likely be able to submit two applications for vehicle purchases. This is due in part because no vehicles will be purchased in 2018 due to a missed deadline. Discussion ensued regarding the pros of procuring two vehicles at once including fleet age and maintenance costs of newer vehicles along with less frequent use or disposal of older vehicles that are getting costly to maintain and keep in good running order. Cons discussed would be that the Transit Board would likely need to borrow money from the counties again to pay for the vehicles upon delivery. This time the amount borrowed could be close to twice as much as the \$77,000 plus that was just borrowed, while waiting for the 80 percent reimbursement. Monahan noted that this would likely not happen until vehicle delivery which will likely be early 2020 with the vehicles being ordered in the spring of 2019. There is a possibility that the financial situation of the Transit System could be better in terms of cash flow, but planning for the loan would be prudent. He also noted that one of the two vehicles purchased could be smaller and somewhat less expensive because it would be serving and stored in Faribault County as they would be due for a new vehicle again. The commissioners discussed more pros and cons, asked Monahan to produce a table displaying stats of some of the costs of newer and older buses and their maintenance costs along with the costs that have been incurred through the lifetime of some of the older buses to better illustrate for the Board the expenses involved. No formal recommendation was made at this meeting but the topic will be discussed along with the operations budget at the June Executive Committee meeting.

Discussion turned to the system ridership report. Monahan had recently received April 2018 ridership numbers and reported that while there was a drop in ridership from previous years, April 2018 had a number of snow events that significantly affected the service and ridership numbers. He noted that MRCI had a number of days that were closed or started late, which would reduce the rides their facility needs, and that could have increase the monthly ridership by almost 200 – 300 rides, which would have been an increase over previous years. It was noted that the trend of overall ridership from March to April showing a sharp decline continued as it had the previous two years.

The next Full Transit Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday June 20, 2018 at 10:00 a.m. in the Faribault County Human Service Conference Room following the Human Services Board meeting. The next Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday June 6th at 9:00 a.m. in Fairmont at the Martin County Courthouse.

With no further business to wit, the Board Chair adjourned the meeting at 10:30 a.m.

JOINT TRANSIT BOARD
FARIBAULT-MARTIN COUNTIES



Tom Loveall, Joint Transit Board Chair

ATTEST:



William Groskreutz Jr., Board Secretary