

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

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 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 Bleess. Also present was Jeremy Monahan, Faribault – Martin County Transit Director.

Board Chair asked for any changes to the agenda. Monahan asked to discuss a possible date change for the July Executive Committee meeting. Motion made by Commissioner Belgard, seconded by Commissioner Young to approve the agenda as amended. Motion passed unanimously.

Monahan produced an Unpaid Bills report totaling \$33,272.28 and noted there will still be a large number of regular and recurring bills arriving in the coming weeks that will be due before the next Executive Committee meeting. There was discussion regarding a few of the bills including a few of the mechanical repair bills.

Motion made by Commissioner Belgard, seconded by Commissioner Bleess 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 May 31, 2024 the Transit Board had \$326,706.70 for a bank balance. There were no significant funding deposits made in May but Monahan noted that there was solid regular deposits from farebox collections throughout the month. There was also discussion regarding the increase in Interest Dividend now with the Transit Board carrying a higher balance than it did in January and February. The rest of the activity for the month was business as usual.

Discussion turned to Old Business and an update on Transit Advisory Committee recruitment efforts. Monahan explained that he and Commissioner Groskreutz are involved in an area group call Stronger Together with a subcommittee called Access to Health Care which meets quarterly. This group consists of people from Human Services, which organizes the group, healthcare, schools, county commissioners, public transit, elderly care, and some others. Monahan and Groskreutz both had wondered if having the Access to Health Care group serve as the Transit Advisory Committee would be allowed from MnDOT's point of view. Monahan looked into it and it would be and he noted that at the MnDOT Spring Workshop there was a panel discussion on TACs and how to manage them and one transit system manager stated that his TAC was actually imbedded in another group and the TACs business was typically just an agenda item or two for each meeting. Monahan explained that a change to the Transit Board By-Laws which explicitly states TAC committee member appointments would be needed. Monahan presented

language that moved the organization responsibility to the Transit Director and removed the term lengths and location directives. This way more flexibility is available to utilize the Access to Health group or another group in the future.

Motion made by Commissioner Belgard, seconded by Commissioner Young to recommend the Full Board adopt the proposed language changes to the By-Laws regarding Transit Advisory Committee appointments. Discussion included requests to bring to the Full Board a current list of the Access to Health Care members so they can see the represented groups and to ensure the voting protocols for By-Law changes are understood before the meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion turned to Fuel Procurement in Faribault County. Monahan stated that he had recently reached out to the new County Engineer and was planning to meet with her after the Independence Day holiday. He was planning to propose to once again start purchasing fuel from Faribault County to avoid having to procure it on the open market and to try and save some money. Hoping that prior bookkeeping concerns had been resolved and that careful training of transit drivers would avoid any problems. After discussions it was noted that while a Fuel Procurement may be beneficial it is still prudent to at least see if purchasing fuel from the County is an option.

Discussion turned to an update on the Electric Bus and Bus Charging Station project. Monahan reported the project is moving along much slower than desired, however recently the architect hired by MnDOT to evaluate the Fairmont building to determine a good location for the charging station proposed a location that was agreeable. During that meeting discussions regarding the funding for the project came up and Monahan learned that there is upwards of \$180,000 for Transit Facility Construction to get the building acceptable for storing and charging an Electric Bus. It was noted this is a generous amount of money and that Monahan will work with MnDOT to determine what needs for the building can be justified and funded.

Discussion turned to a 2021 Replacement Vehicle delivery update. Monahan noted that while there have been discussions regarding the six buses from North Central recently, there was a 7th bus purchased in 2021 from United Bus Sales. This bus was funded 100 percent with State and Federal funds and has been delayed like all other vehicles. The sales rep from United recently reached out to Monahan and said that the bus is almost complete and about to be delivered to their shop for completion and inspections. Once that is complete, we can take delivery. Like North Central's vehicles it is anticipated to be this summer. There was discussion about paying for this bus and waiting for reimbursement along with the North Central buses and the potential to request cashflow assistance from the Counties.

Discussion turned to New Business and Monahan presenting two different options for 2025 Service Design. One had no changes to the yearly hour plan, the other had reductions from various routes that did not reduce coverage overall during the week other than the number of vehicles on the road at the beginning and end of the day. The major reductions are on Saturday which have been becoming harder to staff so each route is designed to be covered by one staff member a day. Monahan proposed other staffing design changes including adding Full Time Transit Drivers to the roster in 2025 which would then include needing to budget for Health

Benefits. So the savings from service hour reductions was used up by the increase in cost by adding Full Time Driver benefits. There was discussion about the impact of service hour changes and having full time staff. There was discussion about the difficulty in recruiting part time staff and ability to staff specific days of the week and times of the day. Monahan noted that with the proposed plan to add Full Time drivers the budget could be exceeded by over \$110,000 but it would depend on the ability to hire Full Time drivers and their selection of Health insurance plan. Regardless of any expenditure, the Transit Board will only be awarded \$1,607,800 for 2025 and anything over that is 100 percent local share. This type scenario has been the case for the past few years and each year the proposed budget has exceeded the known awarded amount. However the Transit Board has yet to use their entire awarded budget and been in a situation where expenses were 100 percent covered by local funds for Operations.

Motion was made by Commissioner Belgard, seconded by Commissioner Young to recommend the Full Board approve the proposed plan of a reduction of service hours and addition of Full Time Drivers for 2025. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion turned to the 2025 Replacement Vehicle application. Monahan reported that for 2025 the Transit Board would be eligible to replace up to three (3) vehicles. That did not mean that we would be awarded three only that three of our current vehicles are eligible to be replaced now. Monahan also noted that both accessible Minivans and Transit Vans are now going to be available on the state contract. These vehicles will have cost savings over the standard cutaway buses that have been purchased in the past which now are estimated to cost up to \$234,000 for 2025 but Transit Vans might be half that cost. Monahan proposed that he apply for all three to be replaced but that one of them be replaced with a van and that instead of an minivan which we already have, we procure a Transit Van and see how that works in the system.

Motion made by Commissioner Bleess, seconded by Commissioner Young to recommend the Full Board approve the proposed plan to apply for three replacement vehicles for 2025 and that one of the vehicles be a Transit Van instead of the standard cutaway bus. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion turned to Personnel Actions. Monahan stated that Commissioners Belgard, Groskreutz, and himself interviewed candidates for Safety Manager and recommend Peter Milne for the position, he wished to hire Probationary Transit Driver Anthony Potter, and he wished to complete the probationary period with Olivia Williams with an employment separation.

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

Discussion turned to the ridership report. Monahan presented the charts and was very pleased with the May totals pointing out that the amounts chart is in the same area as some “pre-pandemic” numbers. Faribault County has had a steady amount all year but is likely to take a dip due to school being out for the summer. Martin County has gained a lot of riders from STEP and is expected to have a strong summer due to that continued relationship.

Discussion turned changing the date of the July 5th Executive Committee meeting. Monahan suggested moving it one week to July 12th but that date conflicts with the Prairieland Board meeting. However, meeting after that board meeting has worked recently and was proposed again.

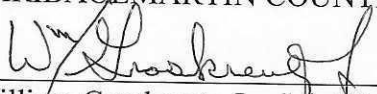
Motion made by Commissioner Belgard, seconded by Commissioner Young to move the July 5th Executive Committee meeting date to July 12th in Truman following Prairieland at 10:00 am. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion turned to the recent Personnel Security matters. Monahan updated the Executive Committee that on May 10th a guilty plea of Disorderly Conduct was entered in Faribault County court by an individual due to an incident in February on a Prairie Lakes Transit bus. The individual was sentenced to probation and fined and a stayed jail term. This individual is not allowed on Prairie Lakes Transit buses indefinitely.

The next Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for Friday July 12th at 10:00 a.m. at Prairieland in Truman. The next Full Board meeting will be held on Tuesday June 25th at 9:00 a.m. in Fairmont at the Transit Facility.

With no further business to wit, a motion was made by Commissioner Belgard, seconded by Commissioner Bless, and the Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:30 a.m.

JOINT TRANSIT BOARD
FARIBAULMARTIN COUNTIES



William Groskreutz Jr., Joint Transit Board Chair

ATTEST: 

Greg Young, Board Secretary