

Faribault-Martin County Joint Transit Board – Executive Committee
Faribault County Courthouse
415 North Main Street Blue Earth, MN 56013
August 12, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 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. There were none.

Monahan produced an Unpaid Bills report totaling \$53,238.71 and noted there will still be a number of regular and recurring bills arriving in the coming weeks that will be due before the next Executive Committee meeting. The amount was larger than usual this month due to the annual fees from RouteMatch software accounting for over \$25,000 of the total. This is the dispatching and scheduling software used by the transit system. Monahan noted that the recent Technology Grant awarded to the Transit Board will be able to cover these costs next year and the goal of the grant is to find a software that is not so cost prohibitive on an annual basis. There was discussion regarding the details of a few of the other 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 July 31, 2024 the Transit Board had \$480,720.06 for a bank balance. He noted there was a deposit of \$222,168 on July 29th from the State of Minnesota which was the 2024 Quarter 3 State share of the Operations Contract. He also noted that a Request for Funds for the Quarter 2 Federal Share reimbursement was submitted for over \$121,000 and is being processed and should be deposited in August. Monahan noted that due to the recent large deposit amounts and the pacing of the imminent bus deliveries he does not plan to request County assistance for vehicle payments at this time. The rest of the activity for the month was business as usual.

Discussion turned to Old Business and an update on a potential Transit Facility in Blue Earth. Monahan noted that he had been working with a MnDOT funded consultant on different options for a potential Transit Facility located in Blue Earth for vehicle storage, office space, and possible meeting space. While a new facility is being explored as one option, the reuse of an existing building is also being investigated. Commissioners Groskreutz and Young had toured the facility with Monahan and the consultants and staff from MnDOT recently to see if it might be able to meet the needs of the Transit Board. Also discussed were possible renovation costs that would be required to get the facility to meet any accessibility standards and to meet the needs that were desired for a Transit Board facility for the foreseeable future. Monahan reported that the consultant reported there would be some costs required to get the building to meet public accessible standards. There would also be other costs associated with general renovation needs

for the dated interior. However all of these costs would be able to be included in a Facility Grant project that the Transit Board could apply for with MnDOT. Also included in the grant could be an acquisition cost. It should be noted however that being able to get the grant approved and then a contract executed could be months if not a couple years from now. The current owner likely would not be able to wait that long to transfer the property. So if the Transit Board were to utilize the building, a possible plan would be for Faribault County to purchase the building and then have the Transit Board lease the building from them until the Facility Project is executed when acquisition from the County and renovations could be completed. There were discussions and Commissioners Belgard and Bleess would tour the facility after the meeting. The Executive Committee consensus was to continue working with the consultants and to approach the Full Board for approval of a project application at the August meeting.

Discussions turned to the staffing make up for the Transit Board. Monahan said that while the Board had discussed and approved including up to four Full Time Transit Drivers in the 2025 Operations Budget, Monahan was hoping to implement the staffing changes sooner than January. Due to the pattern of availability for part time staff Monahan thought that Full Time staff, and their availability for work, would help with a number of scheduling issues. Monahan noted that the cost increase would only potentially be the added cost of the health insurance premiums which would not likely need to be paid by the Transit Board until November based on hypothetical September hirings. MnDOT said it would be okay to add the Full Time staff as long as the Operations Budget could sustain it or local funds were used. There was discussion regarding the logistics of Full Time Transit Drivers for the system.

A motion was made by Commissioner Young, seconded by Commissioner Bleess to recommend to the Full Board that Full Time Transit Drivers be implemented now rather than at the beginning of the 2025 Operations Budget. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion turned to an update on the Replacement Vehicles. Monahan produced two emails from the two vehicle vendors he has been working with for the 2021 orders. Both emails noted that vehicle delivery is imminent with United Bus Sales stating that their single bus that was ordered is finalizing the inspection process. North Central Bus Sales has six vehicles that were purchased in 2021 and currently has two that are going through the final inspection process. Once those inspections are completed, the vendors will schedule the delivery of those three vehicles to Fairmont. The other four from North Central will be completed in the coming weeks according to the sales rep.

Discussion turned to New Business and Monahan presenting a Draft Revised Personnel Policy Manual. Monahan said he was working with another MnDOT funded consultant to review the Personnel Policy from 2016 and make appropriate revisions. This effort was also meant to have highlights for what was more pertinent to Part-Time staff during their orientations. The Executive Committee discussed the draft briefly. Monahan said he was hoping to bring the Final Draft to the Full Board for adoption either in August or October.

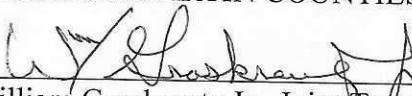
Discussion turned to Personnel Actions. Monahan wished to hire a Probationary Transit Dispatcher named Angela Rowan. Motion made by Commissioner Belgard, seconded by Commissioner Bleess to accept the presented Personnel Action. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion turned to the ridership report. Monahan presented the charts and noted that July saw a nice recovery from June and nice increase over the 2023 ridership amounts. Monahan noted that staffing had been difficult in July and despite that there was still a strong ridership amount and increase over 2023 when staffing was also an issue.

The next Executive Committee is scheduled for September 6th back in Fairmont at the Transit Facility. The next Full Board meeting will be held on Tuesday August 27th at 9:00 a.m. in Blue Earth.

With no further business to wit the Chair adjourned the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

JOINT TRANSIT BOARD
FARIBAULMARTIN COUNTIES



William Groskreutz Jr., Joint Transit Board Chair

ATTEST: 

Greg Young, Board Secretary