

Faribault-Martin County Joint Transit Board
Faribault County Human Services Center Conference Room
412 North Nicollet Street
Blue Earth, MN 56013
Wednesday October 16, 2024 10:30 a.m.

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m. by Board Chair Bill Groskreutz.

Joint Transit Board members present were: Faribault County Commissioners Groskreutz, Roper, Anderson, Loveall, and Young and Martin County Commissioners Flohrs, Smith, Belgard, and Koons. Missing was Martin County Commissioner Bleess. Also present was Jeremy Monahan, Faribault – Martin County Transit Director.

The Board Chair asked if there were any other additions to the agenda. There was none.

Motion made by Commissioner Flohrs, seconded by Commissioner Anderson to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion was made by Commissioner Belgard, seconded by Commissioner Young to approve the meeting minutes for the August 27, 2024 Full Board meeting, and the September 6 and October 4, 2024 Executive Committee meetings. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion turned to Old Business and an update on the Blue Earth Transit Facility application. Monahan updated the board that the Transit Board's Facility Application was submitted to MnDOT at the end of September on time and with all the required materials. The determined costs associated with the project, which included all acquisition, demolitions, renovations, and reconstructions that are needed came just under \$375,000 with the local share for the project being 20 percent. The current plan calls for Faribault County exploring the feasibility of purchasing the entire building and then leasing the garage space to the Transit Board until this project would be approved and executed. If the County does purchase the building the Transit Board would be able to relocate as soon as the current occupants leave. A lease agreement would need to be created between the Transit Board and the County. Commissioner Smith asked about the acquisition cost the Transit Board would have from the County and it was noted in the application the estimated amount at \$165,000 at this time. There was further discussion regarding the details of the acquisition process. There was also discussion regarding the parking situation including the potential uses for the detached garage building that was also planned to be purchased by the Transit Board. Monahan noted that the application will be reviewed early next year and then the Board will be notified but with the amount requested plus the fact this is a renovation and not a new construction he was hopeful this project will receive funding.

Discussion turned to an update on the 2021 Replacement Vehicle Deliveries. Monahan reported that all seven vehicles have now been delivered. Post delivery work continues with graphics and other equipment being installed. Some buses have some issues that are being addressed with the vendors. The short term loans secured with each County for \$100,000 are being used to help with payments on the vehicles in full and requests for funds from the State that are also being

filed. Monahan noted that with the financial situation of the Transit Board the short term loans will almost certainly be paid back by the end of the year as promised absent any issues from the State in their process. There was discussion regarding a few of the issues with the vehicles that are being resolved on a case by case basis.

Discussion turned to New Business and consideration of an Americans with Disabilities Act Policy Plan to adopt for the Transit Board. Monahan reported that MnDOT had provided a template policy document meant to satisfy a number of compliance issues that many transit systems, including the Transit Board, were having upon closer review. Having this plan in place removes the compliance concerns and has policy language to follow for situations, some of which are obscure, that arise in regards to the ADA. The policy includes issues with Reasonable Modifications, discipline of riders for No-Shows, and the appeals process a rider could use should their riding privilege be suspended. Monahan noted that the Executive Committee reviewed this policy in detail at their October meeting and passed a motion recommending the Full Board adopt the plan as proposed. There was brief discussion regarding a few of the details of the policy.

A motion was made by Commissioner Koons, seconded by Commissioner Belgard to approve the adoption of the Americans with Disability Act Policy Plan as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion turned to Monahan describing for the Board the impact on the Transit Reserve fund that a return to a 15 percent local share for Operations costs would have. Monahan noted that after the 2025 contract when a 5 percent local share that is legislatively mandated expires the Transit Reserve Fund could be completely depleted after using it to cover capital purchases and operations shortfall. Currently there are efforts to encourage consideration of either an extension or permanent change in the local share obligation via a legislative change. If that should fail the other options to reduce the depletion of the reserve fund are, a change in the fares for passengers to increase some revenue, a reduction in service to reduce some expenditures, an annual financial commitment from member counties for operations, or a combination of all of these solutions. The Executive Committee discussed this matter at its September meeting with a matrix showing the impact of a 15 percent local obligation and keeping with the current rate of annual expenditure increases with only capturing about 8 percent through farebox revenue. The Reserve Fund is depleted in two years. Monahan presented a spreadsheet illustrating the finances and the impact member contributions would have to maintaining a reasonable Reserve Fund for capital purchases. There was discussion regarding the effort to continue trying to convince MnDOT of the legislature to change the stance of 15 percent being needed and there was also discussion regarding means of increasing revenue by doing incremental fare increases to reduce the financial impact on the riders. There was no action needed at this time.

Discussion turned to the Ridership Report. Monahan noted how the system continues to perform at a 10 percent increase over 2023 amounts which is the overall month to month goal. Faribault County routes have seen their expected increase in September from the return of preschool transportation. Monahan noted that having Martin County routes keep consistent numbers throughout the year is an ideal situation and it has been happening with the variations likely being attributed to the number of days of operation that month.

Discussion turned an update from Monahan noting that at the 2024 Minnesota Public Transit Association Annual Conference Commissioner Elliot Belgard was awarded the Friend of Transit Award for his year of leadership in the transit industry. Commissioner Belgard noted he appreciated the award.

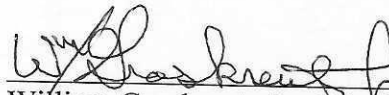
The December Full Board meeting regular date would normally fall on December 24th and Monahan requested that for December the date be changed to coincide with Human Services Full Board meeting on December 18th.

A motion was made by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Young to change the date of the December Full Board meeting to December 18th at 10:30 am following the Human Services Full Board meeting.

The next Executive Committee meetings will be held on Friday November 8th in Fairmont. The next Full Board meeting will be held on Wednesday December 18th in Blue Earth.

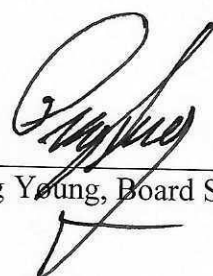
With no further business to wit, a motion was made by Commissioner Belgard, seconded by Commissioner Koons to adjourn and the Board Chair adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m.

JOINT TRANSIT BOARD
FARIBAULMARTIN COUNTIES



William Groskreutz Jr., Joint Transit Board Chair

ATTEST:



Greg Young, Board Secretary