



**Missoula Urban Transportation District  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
January 26, 2023**

**APPROVED**

**Members Present**

Jesse Dodson, Chair  
Andrea Davis, Treasurer  
Amy Cilimburg  
Sebastian Strauss

**Members Absent**

Don MacArthur  
Doug Odegaard

**Staff**

Corey Aldridge, General Manager  
Mary Hanson, Director of Finance  
Jennifer Sweten, Director of Ops.  
Colin Woodrow, Project Manager  
Dan Stone, Transit Planner  
Heather Halter, HR Manager  
Michele Erickson, Recorder

**Guests**

Kevin Davis  
Jason Wiener

**Call to Order and Roll Call**

Dodson called the meeting to order at 12:05 PM. Roll call was taken.

**Changes or Additions to the Agenda**

Action Item 5.3 was moved ahead of 5.2. Action Item 5.4 Election of Board Officers & Committees for 2023 will be postponed until the Board's next meeting on February 23, 2023.

Vince Caristo, Projects Procurement Specialist, arrived at 12:08 PM.

**Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda**

Kevin Davis is a member of the Grant Creek Neighborhood Council. Davis, K. is interested in the expansion of services with the possibility of a park-n-ride lot. Davis would like to host a few Board members at the Reserve Street Working Group on March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Dodson noted that the Planning Committee would be an appropriate time to discuss the next steps.

**Discussion Items**

**General Manager's Report (12:12 PM)**

Hanson reported that the furniture arrived, and the cubicles were assembled. Heidi and Jasmine each set up in their respective locations. Hanson returned to the office, and the year-end calendar work began. Jasmine continues to add employees and keep all employees and vendor requests paid timely. She is working on quarterly payroll reporting and W-2 and 1099 reporting documents. Heidi prepared the December financials and the MDT and UPWP (Unified Planning Work Program). Heidi also is doing quarterly reporting and fielding additional questions from the NTD Reporting. She has also prepared the asset chapter of the triennial report. Hanson has

spent time preparing for the triennial audit. The first round of information requests is due January 31st. Monday and Tuesday of this week, Region 8 Office is having a review to prepare us for this virtual audit to occur the first week of May.

Sweten confirmed three new hires in training & recruitment and currently 62 Operators. The next class will be in February. The budget is also being updated to 70 Operators due to the increased demand for Paratransit services. There were three working holidays this month, and all were worked with volunteer labor. Training will continue for veteran operators on Saturdays. The training covered in the first session was Safety and Security. The following month will be Customer Service, and the last 4 hours will be focused on ADA and Specialized transit. Sweten hosted Summit Independent Living as part of our expanded training program to learn what our paratransit riders expect from our drivers. Sweten will continue working with Jake in his new role as Maintenance Manager. Replacement parts availability is getting better. All chargers are back up, and two buses had battery replacements. Sweten concluded by informing the board that she will get the information on the battery operating hours for the buses.

Woodrow explained that the RAISE Brooks Street BRT TOD Planning Consultant team has been selected, and the Paper Grant Agreement has arrived. The next steps are selecting a contractor to begin this project along with MRA and the City. Other Community Planning Work is Code Reform, Midtown Master Plan, Higgins Street Corridor, Front and Main Conversion, and Downtown Master Plan Implementation Team. UDASH has updated a new route for the Purple Line, and we continue to work in coordination with them as the Subrecipient Management for the Triennial. Furniture Procurement installation and delivery have been substantially successful. The final round of installation will be forthcoming in February. The Bus Wash, Phase A heating installation is complete and on time. The Bus Wash Phase B includes the deconstruction of the current waste oil burner, existing wash, and installation of the new system, including plumbing and electrical, in Mid-March, and the completion of the project in late April. The new heating system will be natural gas. Woodrow explained that as far as Electrification Infrastructure, the Wabtec Reels, sequential charging with ABB, and equipment installation from FY21 Low No has been delayed, with installation targeting early April. Woodrow explained the need to purchase additional charging infrastructure this summer using FY21 Low No funds. Bus Stop Master Plan consisted of Phase 1 and Phase 2 procurements. The Phase 1 Amenity Installs will be handled internally. Other discrete projects such as Fairgrounds, Large Shelters at the University, Sha'Ron, and the Veterans Administration are in various stages but should be completed in this same timeline. For the new facility, an RFQ, request for a quote for a design team was pulled, and work to continue Amendment 4 and a forthcoming Amendment 5 (February) § Timeline; NOFO release imminent, Projected Application Deadline § Participation and Cost Effective § Projecting RFQ for late Summer-early Fall, Progress § Determination of Parcel Boundaries with 406 Engineering based on an updated conceptual design. § NEPA CATEX submission § Negotiations forthcoming. The On-Demand Transit Study would make use of the \$60,000 of Planning funds from MDT. It would review programs operated in communities/districts of similar size and characteristics, the feasibility of meeting the goals of increasing geographic coverage, expansion of overall system service hours, increasing ridership and customer satisfaction, and increased productivity (cost per trip). The focus areas of interest will continue to be Target Range, South Hills, Miller Creek & Linda Vista, Sxwtpqyen Area, and Grant Creek. The Operational Plan seeks to recommend geographic areas, hours of operations, pickup/drop-off locations, vehicle types, trip booking, and individual eligibility requirements. The Financial Plan is to create a 3-year budget with considerations of personnel, fuel, software and tech, vehicles, and maintenance. The Performance Measures will include tracking ridership, the percentage of the district using the service, reduced paratransit attributable to the service, and reduced SOV trips. The RFP is set to be released by the end of January, brought to the board in March, with the final report in October, and then close out the project in December.

Halter addressed the correct number of employees as 105, with 15 in Maintenance, 63 Operators, 24 employees in Administration, and three in Paratransit. Three new hires in training will be taking their driving test on February 2<sup>nd</sup>. There are also a few employees in Maintenance who will be able to take their driving test at that time. The next hiring class will be on February 13<sup>th</sup>. There were nine candidates for the class, five of whom will be starting in that class. Halter will be working with Windfall to change recruitment targeting to security and pay. We are currently hiring a Communications Specialist, Maintenance Technician, and Bus Operators. She is also preparing for the Union negotiations.

Aldridge introduced Jason Wiener, who was attending the Board Meeting as a resident of Missoula, but who will be joining the board in a few days. Wiener represented Ward 1 on the City Council from 2008-2016 and focused on transportation policy as Chair of The Public Works Committee during that time. He also served on the NPO Board for five of those years.

Aldridge spoke about the Midtown Master Plan and the inception of the RAISE Grant. Aldridge met with the City and people from the Fairgrounds about what they are now calling 'Fun Junction.' The Fairgrounds is hosting a meeting on January 26<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm for whoever would like to give their input about the Brooks St./Russell St. intersection. Aldridge also met with the FTA's regional administrator, and the NOFO (Notice of Funding Opportunity) will be released. The notices about the funding apportionment for the current federal fiscal year. After that is released, the funding will be available. It will be based on the 2010 Census. The FTA has released the new Census. Montana currently had three urban systems, but they added Bozeman and Helena to the small urban systems.

## **Action Items**

### **Minutes of December 15, 2022 (12:40 pm)**

Strauss made a motion to approve the minutes of December 15, 2022, seconded by Cilimburg. The motion carried unanimously.

### **Petition for Removal from the MUTD for Linda Vista's 12<sup>th</sup> Supplement (12:43 PM)**

MUTD received a petition to be removed from the District. In 2019, the Board initiated a planning process to evaluate how petitions for removal should be evaluated based on the services MUTD provides and applicable law. This process culminated in a 2019 update to the Strategic Plan to broadly define the transportation services that directly benefit all property owners and constituents within its district boundaries. Some of the services include:

- Planning services performed for the entire district aim to develop new transit services that support community goals, growth, and development.
- Education and outreach on transportation options that helps to manage growing transportation demands in the community.
- Reductions in traffic congestion due to fixed route ridership, and associated increases in quality of life and the environment, benefit everyone.
- Eligible persons within 3/4 of a mile of a fixed route receive origin-to-destination paratransit or senior van service.
- Park-and-ride opportunities allow people who don't live within walking distance of a fixed route to access the system.

A property that is removed from the District would continue to benefit from these services, but it would not contribute its fair share of the costs of these services, which would be unfair to the remaining residents of the District. Missoula Urban Transportation Districts Staff has determined

that the petitioners receive and benefit from some or all the direct transportation services described in the amended Strategic Plan, and therefore the Board should deny the petition.

Financial Impact: Removal from the District would result in a decrease in local funding.

Davis, K. asked for clarification on why Mountain Line would not just begin servicing the Linda Vista area which seeks to remove itself from the District.

Dodson explains there have been a total of three petitions for removal from the District in the last 50 years. Two of them are very recent (both since 2019) and come from the same area in Miller Creek. Before that, the only petition Mountain Line received was from 1987, and that situation in the Rattlesnake was the genesis of the law allowing petitions for removal. Dodson gives a brief history of where the law originated. In 1987, the Upper Rattlesnake neighborhood known as the Klapwik Addition was not receiving services, and at the request of Mountain Line's general manager at the time, the residents petitioned into the District to receive fixed route transit services. (Mountain Line's services at the time were more limited and were essentially limited to fixed route service.) However, the services Mountain Line provided to the Klapwik Addition did not generate sufficient ridership and after about a year they were discontinued. The Klapwik Addition residents then wanted to petition out of the District, however, there was no law at the time to allow them to do so. At the time there was a perceived unfairness to the situation, in the sense that these residents in an established neighborhood were asked to petition into the District to receive a specific fixed route service, but then the fixed route service was promptly discontinued, so the law was changed to allow the neighborhood to petition back out of the district.

Dodson explained that the situation with the Linda Vista area is much different. First, there is a legal waiver of the right to petition for removal from the District. The developer petitioned into the district as a legal requirement of the City in connection with subdivision approval. The residents of Linda Vista purchased homes within the development, and they became subject to all the conditions of their subdivision approval, including this waiver. Further, Mountain Line's services have expanded substantially since 1987. The Linda Vista area does benefit substantially from the services Mountain Line provides, as described above, even though they do not yet have fixed route services. Furthermore, Dodson explains the ability of Mountain Line to plan for the future is directly affected by the taxing district. There is a direct connection between Mountain Line's planning services and its District boundary. Mountain Line cannot plan for growth if every new neighborhood can simply petition out of the district. To illustrate this example, Dodson referred to the Klapwik Addition. Today, that neighborhood is within Mountain Line's paratransit service area and there is no question that they receive direct transit services. However, they are no longer in the District so they receive those services for free. Dodson expressed that the ultimate result of the Klapwik Addition's removal from the District was actually unfair, contrary to the perceptions in 1987, and Mountain Line must avoid the situation occurring again as it plans for the future.

Kevin Davis provided public comment that he believes we need to update our strategic plan to bring more services to every area of Missoula. Kevin Davis left the meeting at 1:00 PM.

Dodson made a motion to deny the petition to remove Linda Vista's 12<sup>th</sup> Supplement from Missoula Urban Transportation District for the reasons described above. Davis seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Hanson reported revenues greater than budgeted at 8.7%, and total expenses were under budget by 15%. Most under-budget expenses are due to timing availability for work to be done. Compensation was 10% less than the budget, even with the three working holidays. Maintenance was 20% less than budget, and General is 38% less than budgeted. Hanson also reviewed the plan to continue with the goal of putting another \$500,000 in fleet replacement reserves and facility. Currently, there is \$9 million in the cash account, which will cover the cost of operating expenses. The current operating expenses estimate, including compensation, benefits, et., is \$850,00-\$900,00. The furniture invoices are still coming in from the remodel and will be paid. Property taxes in November were much higher, and December was half as much as last year's. Hanson estimates Mountain Line should receive \$10 million to \$10.5 million in property taxes, slightly more than budget. Hanson requested half of the funds from the Operating Assistance Grant. Total operating expenses were \$4 million, maintenance was \$829,000, and GNA was \$830,000. Maintenance has two large projects coming in, and there may be more staff to account for in GNA. Hanson also said that the fuel was over budget and custodial expenses were over budget.

Dodson made a motion to approve the December 2022 financial statements, seconded by Cilimburg. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **Amended Federal Grant Policy and Procedures (1:11 pm)**

Hanson explained that the policy was last updated in August 2019. The policy has been reviewed, and updated procedures were included. The Federal Grant Policy and Procedure update is a part of the Triennial Audit. The procedure starts from the beginning when a grant is awarded, the steps to process it and complete it, to closing out the grant. Hanson summarized that the few changes were minimal. Discussion between Strauss and Hanson about the most significant part of the change was the part about public notice. Hanson is waiting to hear back from MPO about whether Mountain Line will be required to provide public notice on projects and planning.

Strauss made a motion to accept the amended Federal Grant Policy and Procedures. Seconded by Dodson. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **Adoption of Check Signers for MUTD (1:14 pm)**

Hanson made a recommendation to postpone the adoption of new check signers since there were not four board members attending the meeting in-person to take on the responsibility.

Dodson made a motion to postpone the adoption of four valid signers for warrants issued by Missoula Urban Transportation District until the next Board meeting on February 23rd. Cilimburg seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **Construction Contract for Bus Stop Improvement Project Phase I Rebid (1:16 pm)**

Caristo reviewed the bid for this Phase I project to complete all the concrete work on both routes 1 & 2. Bids for this project were due at MUTD's offices on January 18 at 2 pm. Two (2) bids were received, and all bids were reviewed and considered complete and responsive. This included the acknowledgment of addendums, required signatures, bid forms, and an acceptable bid bond. Based on the unit prices and total bid price, Knife River is the apparent lowest responsive bidder, with a total bid of \$393,228.10. Knife River was found to be active with no exclusion records in the SAM.gov System for Award Management. Knife River's bid is considered fair and reasonable based on the competition in this bid and information on recent pricing for similar projects. This

purchase is in the FY23 budget, but the combined price with Ph II (bid concurrently), \$571,561, exceeds what was budgeted by \$63,112.10. The purchase is planned to utilize a combination of 5339 funds with a 20% local match.

Strauss made a motion to authorize the General Manager to execute a contract with Knife River Corporation, LLC in the amount of \$393,228.10, plus a 3% contingency. Dodson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**Construction Contract for Bus Stop Improvement Project Phase II (1:24 pm)**

Caristo explains that Phase 11 of the Bus Stop Improvement is focused on the new signage along all bus routes. Bids for this project were due at MUTD's offices on January 18 at 12 pm. Two (2) bids were received, and all bids were reviewed and considered complete and responsive at that time. This included the acknowledgment of three (3) addendums, required signatures, bid forms, and an acceptable bid bond. Based on the unit prices and total bid price, Poteet Construction is the apparent lowest responsive bidder with a total bid of \$178,333.00. Poteet Construction was found to be active with no exclusion records in the SAM.gov System for Award Management. Based on the competition in this bid, and information on recent pricing for similar projects, Poteet's bid is considered fair and reasonable.

Dodson made a motion to authorize the General Manager to execute a contract with Poteet Construction, LLC in the amount of \$178,333, plus a 3% contingency. Cilimburg seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 1:29 PM.  
Submitted by Michele Erickson