



**Missoula Urban Transportation District
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
July 27, 2023**

DRAFT

MEMBERS PRESENT

Don MacArthur
Jesse Dodson
Jason Wiener
Amy Cilimburg
Andrea Davis
Sebastian Strauss

MEMBERS ABSENT

Dr. Josephine Hazelton-Boyle

MEMBERS PRESENT

Corey Aldridge, Gen. Mgr.
Mary Hanson, Fin. Dir.
Jen Sweten, Dir. Operations
Heather Halter, HR Mgr.
Colin Woodrow, P & P Mgr.
Spencer Starke, Assoc. Planner
Jasmine Blumenbach, Acct.
Dan Stone, Planner

Guests

Aaron Wilson, Missoula Metropolitan Planning Organization

Call to Order and Roll Call

MacArthur called the meeting to order at 12:04 p.m. Roll call was taken.

Changes or Additions to the Agenda

Aldridge requested that the June meeting minutes be pulled for this month to make corrections. Item 5.5 – Resolution should show as 23.06 in the staff report. Hanson also requested that the June financial statement be pulled as well.

Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda

None

Action Items

General Manager's Report (12:07 PM)

Human Resources – Halter reported that there were currently 104 employees, and a new hire class is starting on August 7, with a subsequent class to start on October 2. The new finance director, Allison Segal, will start full-time on August 21, and the new customer service representative will start on August 7. The collective bargaining agreement has been completed, and the represented handbook will be updated before the August 7 training class. The diversity and inclusion program is almost complete.

Operations – Sweten advised that the recently poured concrete for the new bus lift is curing, and the charging reels are in and working well. In addition, the new paratransit vehicles are now in revenue service, and full bus service will resume on August 20. Sweten also added that the Trackit software works well and tracks a lot of data. Jacob Ashbrook will be the new safety officer, and

the maintenance manager position is posted. Sweten also told the board about her trip with Woodrow to Gillig headquarters in California to complete pre-production on the four new electric buses. In response to Strauss' question about the anticipated arrival of the buses, Sweten responded that they were scheduled to be delivered in spring 2024. Wiener asked about the cost and whether they were paid for with federal grants. Hanson responded that eighty-five percent was paid through grant money. Sweten added that each bus costs about \$1.2 million.

Finance – Hanson advised that the MDT vehicle quarterly reports had been completed, and the UPWP report was in process. All the contract change payouts are complete, and the federal quarterly reports have been filed.

Projects & Planning – Woodrow told the board that phase 2 of the bus stop master plan is nearing completion but has been delayed due to the contractors working on other jobs. Woodrow reported that he had attended the ribbon cutting at the Sha-Ron access. He noted that the reported high usage is a testament to multiple agencies coming together for a common goal.

The MOAB architect and engineer (A&E) selection subcommittee will review RFP submittals and interview candidates. Woodrow also reported that the landowners are interested in working with MUTD and sharing costs for the development. The focus is on Tract 1, the best site geographically (based on the NEPA approval), and is available now. Cilimburg asked what the timing was for finalizing the purchase. Woodrow responded that it depends on whether MUTD can negotiate for purchasing the property as is or pay for improvements on a fully subdivided lot. Woodrow thanked the board members on the A&E selection subcommittee and mentioned meeting invites for candidate interviews would be sent out.

There will be some follow-up with the University of Montana resulting from the UDash onsite review. UDash has adopted reasonable safeguards with respect to the drug and alcohol policy for the bus.

An \$18,000 invoice from ABB and WABTEC for commissioning the charging reels was negotiated to zero. The air conditioner at the Golden York in the transfer center has not been operational, resulting in shutting down the restaurant during the hottest days. A swamp cooler has been installed, and the required air conditioner parts will be delivered soon. ERP has been pushed back due to the finance director position in transition and will be addressed again in October. A request for approval of the electronic trolley will be presented to the board at the September meeting and charging infrastructure before the buses arrive next spring.

The RAISE project is also moving forward. A completed on-demand transit study evaluation should be completed in September and presented to the board in October. In addition, the study will be the subject of the November planning committee meeting.

Woodrow then addressed the strategic plan update based on the board's input at the June board meeting. He stressed meeting the needs and requirements of Mountain Line and its services in the community. By coordinating with the MPO, costs could be shared, but there is flexibility to work independently. It boils down to what vendor can deliver for both the MPO and Mountain Line with the ability to off-ramp if needed. Woodrow reviewed an overview of tasks that depicted separate and joint items. Of note, both teams would end up with their own plan, resulting in two separate deliverables. The anticipated timeline is: RFP in mid-August; proposals in mid/late September; and presentation for approval at the October board meeting.

MacArthur asked whether the joint effort would become the standard or is it a one-time approach. Woodrow emphasized that MUTD isn't married to this model if it doesn't work. He isn't convinced

that MUTD wouldn't lose something by embarking on a public process that isn't completely focused on transit. He advocated for the value of some public outreach focusing solely on transit instead of the LRTP. MacArthur pointed out that the strategic plan isn't an action item. Aldridge confirmed that the presentation was meant to bring the board up to speed and answer any questions regarding the strategic plan. He stated that this joint process is unique and would provide more effective and better planning than other MPO/transits can follow.

The board members ultimately agreed that the combined approach was a good idea, provided that MUTD meets its needs and goals. MacArthur added that MUTD should proceed cautiously and expressed his trust in the staff to make it work. Wilson emphasized that this was a unique opportunity to portray transportation in Missoula as working toward the same goals to the public. Woodrow said he had high hopes for the deliverables, and if it didn't work, MUTD could take a more traditional approach.

Communications – Kreimer reported on all the events in August – Downtown Tonight table, Western Montana Fair featuring “Bike & Bus to the Fair”; and Sunday Streets, with River City Roots Fest coming in September. Kreimer will be reviewing the marketing plan with Windfall in the next couple of weeks and exploring a collaboration with Big Dipper Ice Cream. The BBER survey draft is expected soon. Kreimer will report on the mission/vision/values research at the August board meeting, and survey analyses are targeted for October completion.

Wiener asked what the public opinion surveys were. Kreimer responded that the MPO survey targeted everyone, including non-riders. She added that the goal is to get responses about why people don't like the bus to understand misconceptions, perceptions, and prejudice. Wiener asked if there were questions about private, rideshare, and electric vehicles, and Kreimer responded in the affirmative. Wiener asked about self-driving vehicles. Wilson said the autonomous vehicle craze has tempered a bit now. Kreimer said that the survey was mostly very bus specific.

Davis pointed out that the Sha-Ron partnership is a big deal because it helps transit stay relevant, and she thanked the staff for its efforts.

Action Items

Item 5.1 – Minutes of June 22, 2023, board meeting – Minor corrections are needed and will be submitted for approval at the August meeting.

Item 5.2 – June 2023 Financial Statements – Hanson confirmed that the financials would not be submitted to the board for approval at the July meeting as they require amending. Hanson reported that operating revenue came in 13% higher than what was budgeted, and expenses were down 10% from the budgeted amount. Facility reserves are \$10.4 million, fleet replacement is \$5.4 million, and operations are \$2 million. Hanson noted that these are all unaudited amounts. The checking account has almost \$11 million, so the operating reserves would be replenished to maintain a \$5 million level and return another \$2 million for anticipated costs. Hanson advised that there will be expenses between now and November. Property taxes are \$10.4 million. MUTD received its federal operating assistance, CMAQ, and the funds allocated for the bus wash. Total revenue is \$15.1 million, and total operating expenses are \$12.2 million. \$500,000 was earmarked for fleet and facility replacement reserves. The year-end was under budget for the buses and repairs for the paratransit fleet. Hanson will ask the auditors to push the audit to October based on receiving benefits figures from Missoula County. The audit is due in November for everything to be filed with the federal clearinghouse by the end of December.

MacArthur asked when the new property tax assessment figures would be added to Mountain Line's income. Hanson pointed out that the initial notices don't necessarily reflect the actual

amounts that will be taxed. MUTD can ask the state on August 15 for the correct property values in the transit district that will dictate what MUTD can expect. MacArthur noted that MUTD could see a 15% increase that could be used to serve the constituents better. Strauss added that surplus should be used to fix things along the way. Strauss also stated that a new proforma that prioritizes projects, planning, and timing would be developed once the new finance director is in place.

Item 5.3 – Bylaws Update – Aldridge told the board that the bylaws approved in 2020 were never signed. The bylaws have been updated to reflect the current board chair. Strauss moved to approve, Cilimburg seconded, and the motion carried.

Item 5.4 – Records Request Policy – Kreimer reported that there was a draft incorporating the existing policy to establish procedures for requesting documents. Wiener asked how often this happens. Aldridge responded that it was happening more frequently, and two former employees who had requested documents were the impetus for getting this policy in place. Kreimer added that a handful of people had requested records regarding bus stop placements. Stone noted that RFP vendors who were not chosen could also request documentation. Strauss asked how payment for the documents would be managed. Aldridge responded that the request would be paid for upfront. Strauss also asked if there was a way to verify a requestor's identity. Aldridge observed that the language was sufficiently vague. Wiener motioned to approve the records request policy with minor edits as discussed, Davis, seconded, and the motion carried.

Item 5.5 – Pontiac Subdivision Inclusion Request – Stone explained that this request to be included in the transportation district was submitted in compliance with a county requirement. Cilimburg motioned to adopt the resolution, Strauss seconded it, and the motion carried.

MacArthur recognized Hanson for her diligent, solid, and terrific service, describing her as a steadying force to MUTD. Cilimburg gave Hanson a gift and wished her the best in her retirement.

1:39 p.m. – MacArthur adjourned the meeting.

Submitted by Darlene Craven