



**Missoula Urban Transportation District
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
August 24, 2023**

FINAL

MEMBERS PRESENT

Don MacArthur
Jesse Dodson
Jason Wiener
Amy Cilimburg
Sebastian Strauss
Dr. Josephine Hazelton-Boyle

MEMBERS ABSENT

Andrea Davis

MEMBERS PRESENT

Colin Woodrow, P & P Dir.
Jen Sweten, Operations Dir.
Heather Halter, Admin. Svcs. Dir.
Olga Kreimer, Comms Spec.
Spencer Starke, Assoc. Planner
Jasmine Blumenbach, Accountant
Darlene Craven, Exec. Asst.

Guests

Brad Vies, Missoula Resident
Quin Maus, Missoula Resident

Call to Order and Roll Call

12:02 p.m. – MacArthur called the meeting to order and asked for a roll call.

Changes or Additions to the Agenda

Item 4.2 Ridership report will be moved to the September meeting as Stone was not available to present.

Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda

Brad Vies, a Linda Vista resident, introduced himself, remarking that he wanted to discover what occurred at board meetings. Vies was concerned about the process for the petition to remove Supplement 12 from the District. Vies signed the removal petition but didn't understand why the board denied the petition.

MacArthur stated that a property within the urban growth boundary won't be removed voluntarily from the District. Dodson concurred with MacArthur and added that it's difficult to provide expanded service when property owners ask to be removed from the District. Dodson further explained that the board didn't act on the petition filed several years ago that resulted in the 2018 Long Range Strategic Plan being updated because there was no final policy regarding petitions.

4.1 General Manager's Report

Operations

Sweten related that an independent engineering firm will inspect the bus lift to test the concrete. The bus stop amenities installation project is ongoing. Interviews for the Maintenance Manager

and a Service Technician are underway. Full bus service resumed on August 21. Sweten met with the director of Partnership Health to discuss shortcomings and how to be better partners.

Sweten and Aldridge attended the Community Transportation Association of America's Small Urban Network conference in Gulfport, Mississippi, which focused on operator retention and providing operators with more benefits and mental health support. Sweten also presented at a Washington State Transit Association conference session in Vancouver, Washington, on electrification and the importance of transition planning.

Finance

Halter summarized the Finance team updates in the General Manager's report and introduced Allison Segal, the new Finance Manager. Halter added that the Finance team will be working on gathering materials requested by JCCS for the upcoming financial audit. The Finance team is also working on the deficiencies found in the triennial audit.

12:17 – Hazelton-Boyle arrived. Cilimburg joined the meeting and introduced herself.

Projects/Planning/Procurement

Woodrow stated that the concrete portion of the bus stop master plan is 65% complete. Phase Two of the signage project is 85% complete, with striping to be completed within the first three weeks of September. Woodrow said the planned bus stop near the Veteran Affairs (VA) building is stalled.

Woodrow related that MUTD is ready to move ahead on the land acquisition for the MOAB. A right-of-way specialist has been retained. Three strong applications were received for the architects and engineers procurement. Interviews will be scheduled in early September, and the selected firm will be approved at the September board meeting.

Other projects include the electric trolley purchase and adding two additional bus chargers to the back shed. Additionally, Woodrow mentioned that Starke will handle the mandatory automatic passenger counter verification required by FTA. The joint strategic planning request for proposals (RFP) will go out on August 24. Mountain Line will hold the contract and split the selections 50/50 with MPO. Woodrow stated that interviews will be held the third week of October, and the selected firm will be approved at the November board meeting.

Woodrow stated that the on-demand transit study will wrap up by the end of September after Via has conducted interviews with local agencies that use public transportation services. David Perlmutter, Via project manager, will review the study results at the September planning committee meeting. MacArthur asked if Partnership Health was one of the agencies Via would interview, and Woodrow confirmed.

Woodrow said the RAISE TOD Brooks Street project is moving forward with a cooperative memorandum. Other projects include the Midtown Master Plan and Parks Open Space and Trails study. Woodrow told the board that the IT department has been setting up new equipment for staff while overseeing the data migration. The ERP project is moving forward and anticipates reporting to the board by the end of the year.

Strauss asked if the bus stop project contract provided a discount for delays. Woodrow responded that the contract provides for liquidated damages. The project is still ahead of schedule and should be done in October.

Communications

Kreimer advised the board of the upcoming events where Mountain Line would have a presence. Kreimer is working with Windfall on upcoming campaigns, taglines, and the mission/vision/values; all the surveys have been completed.

Kreimer said the mission/vision/values update would be presented toward the end of the year. The Montana Shooting Sports Association is threatening a lawsuit to force Mountain Line to allow open carry of firearms on buses. Kreimer attended the Southwest Transit Association conference and learned about public engagement tactics used by other agencies.

Human Resources

Halter said the employee count is 105, and the next new hire class is scheduled for early October. Posted jobs are for an accountant, a maintenance technician, and operators. The new handbooks for represented and non-represented employees will be finalized and handed out in September. The annual safety banquet is scheduled for September 9, 2023.

4.3 Mission/Vision/Values (MVV) – Kreimer is working with Windfall to develop a synthesized product based on a myriad of surveys and last year’s board workshop SWOT analysis. Windfall has not delivered on that scope. Kreimer asked for input regarding the following: to continue developing the MVV statement with Windfall, hold another board workshop, or develop the statement in-house.

MacArthur responded that Windfall should be compelled to provide a usable product. MacArthur also observed that having an outside entity produce a draft might be valuable but that the MVV was not an emergency.

Hazelton-Boyle endorsed the value of an outside perspective and suggested that the staff could put something together for Windfall to review.

Cilimburg said she is not excited about bringing in yet another party. Strauss said Windfall should be held accountable for the quality of the work produced and suggested that Aldridge could reach out to his counterpart at Windfall to make it clear the product didn’t live up to expectations. MacArthur said to bring a product from Windfall to the September board meeting, and if Windfall fails, it could be produced internally.

Hazelton-Boyle asked if Kreimer had informed Windfall about this dissatisfaction. Strauss suggested copying the agency owner on an email back to Windfall regarding our dissatisfaction, so the message is not surprising when Aldridge calls.

1:00 p.m. – The guests left.

Action Items

5.1 Minutes of June 22, 2023, Board Meeting – Dodson moved to approve the June board meeting minutes, Hazelton-Boyle seconded, and the motion was approved.

5.2 Minutes of July 27, 2023, Board Meeting – Cilimburg moved to approve the July board meeting minutes, Strauss seconded, and the motion was approved.

5.3 June 2023 Financial Statements – Strauss said the unaudited statements showed that the reserve goal had been surpassed, but operations reserves are low relative to showing the matching funds. Operating expenses are eight percent less than budget, and the District ended

the year in a good position. Property tax assessments could yield an eight percent increase, but it was too soon to get solid property tax revenue numbers.

Strauss moved to approve the June financial statements, Dodson seconded, and the motion was approved.

5.4 Purchase of One 28-ft Battery Electric Transit Vehicle Trolley – Woodrow advised that there is an opportunity to replace the current diesel-powered trolley with a battery electric model using CMAQ funds. The trolley features updated technology while keeping the feel and character of a trolley. Even though there is a 10-month delivery timeline, the funding would fall within the federal fiscal year.

The trolley will need to pass FTA's Altoona testing before delivery. MacArthur asked what would happen if it doesn't pass and Woodrow responded that all payments would be refunded.

Dodson moved to approve the recommendation to purchase the electric trolley, Strauss seconded. Wiener requested that the minutes reflect a stipulation for paying the deposit on the trolley only if it passes the mandatory testing. Woodrow vouched for the trolley company's reputation and its understanding of the federal funding process. The motion was approved.

1:22 p.m. – The board went into a closed session.

2:00 p.m. – The regular meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by Darlene Craven