Mountain Line

Missoula Urban Transportation District
Planning Committee Meeting Minutes
November 8, 2023

APPROVED

MEMBERS PRESENT	**MEMBERS ABSENT**	**STAFF**
Sebastian Strauss	Don MacArthur	Corey Aldridge, Gen. Mgr.
Amy Cilimburg		Colin Woodrow, Dir. P3
Jason Wiener		Jen Sweten, Dir. Operations
Jesse Dodson		Olga Kreimer, Comms. Specialist
		Darlene Craven, Exec. Asst.
		Spencer Starke, Assoc. Planner

Guests
David Perlmutter
Rich Goluskin

Call to Order and Roll Call
Cilimburg called the meeting to order at 11:04 a.m. and roll call was taken.

Changes or Additions to the Agenda
None

Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda
None

Action Items

4.1 Minutes of October 4, 2023 – Strauss requested that the minutes be corrected to reflect that he wanted to know how many people were served by fixed route service not in the district, and how many people in the district are not served. He moved to approve the minutes with the corrected language, Dodson seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion Items
5.1 On-Demand Transit Study Review – Woodrow advised that Perlmutter would be reviewing a synthesized report that included the committee's feedback with new graphics to address questions about what needs to be covered in the upcoming strategic planning and whether MUTD needs additional information from Via.

Perlmutter said the report focuses on an implementation plan and the steps it will take to get the program going, including funding, launch planning, accessibility/equity, operators, vehicles,

marketing, compliance, and post-launch adjustments. Potential funding sources include FTA formula funding grants, federal competitive grants, and local funding such as ballot measures and partnerships with local stakeholders.

Strauss asked if the report covered specific amounts that the funding sources would cover. Perlmutter responded that the report contains more detail as to allocation.

Procurement to launch could take anywhere between six and twelve months. The proposed schedule is launch; pre-planning; preparation; post-launch; implementation; driver recruitment and training; accessibility/equity; community engagement; stakeholder engagement and marketing. The first three months would focus on marketing to promote the service with continuous community outreach, followed by monitoring and calibration for collecting service KPIs.

Woodrow stated that on-demand will be an expensive cost center. Aldridge added the funding would have to come from the existing operating budget requiring something else to be cut. Woodrow said the low-no grants will be used for the existing electric vehicle efforts. An eighteen to twenty-four-month launch time is probable and because of the limited space, contracting the service out would be required. Sweten asked what the economy of scale was for that third-party contracting. Perlmutter replied that the turnkey model runs in the $60 to $70 hourly range. Sweten said an economy of scale would occur as zone numbers increased. Commingling between fixed route, paratransit and on demand would be the most advantageous way to operate.

Cilimburg stated that the board would need to discuss the matter further. Woodrow agreed that alignment between the board and staff is important and that this was a preliminary study to bring forth prior to strategic planning.

11:57 p.m. – Perlmutter left the meeting.

11:59 p.m. – Goluskin joined the meeting. Woodrow described the consultants' role and explained that the fact-finding process had been productive in determining weaknesses with MUTD's current systems.

Goluskin stated that the findings and recommendations focused on finance, human resources, maintenance, procurement and project and grant management. There are technical shortfalls, disparate systems without integration, information gaps, compromised data and inefficient manual processes. The desired characteristics for a streamlined system would include dynamic reporting for real-time decision making, minimal redundancy and best practices for federal reporting compliance.

Payroll is inefficient, redundant and time-consuming. Scheduling operators across three spreadsheets is cumbersome and human resources functions are not automated.

Based on the findings, adopting automation with an integrated system that incorporates formalized grant management functions, standard business functions and special purpose systems is recommended.

Pricing includes software as a subscription that includes hosting, support and maintenance as follows:

Year 1 - $400,000-$600,000

Year 2 - $100,000-$150,000
Year 3 - $100,000-$150,000
Years 4 & 5 - $100,000-$150,000

Additional first-year costs for data conversion and project oversight are $100,000 to $150,000. The five-year total range would be between $800,000 and $1.2 million. Aldridge asked how the ongoing fee is priced. Goluskin said it depends on the vendor and is based on whether a user number or transaction model is chosen. Implementation costs can run around $200,000 to $300,000 depending on customization needs.

Goluskin suggested several ERP firms that served the public sector including BS&A and Edmunds GovTech. Next steps are validating and confirming requirements, issuing an RFP, selecting three finalists to present, selecting and negotiating contracts, and implementation planning. If an RFP is issued by the end of December, responses would be due in late January 2024, live demonstrations would occur in February 2024, a vendor announced in March 2024, and a contract submitted to the board for approval in April 2024.

Cilimburg asked when it would be brought to the board. Aldridge replied to it would be implemented in FY2025. Dodson asked if reserve funds would be used to pay for the system. Aldridge replied there is enough in the budget without pulling from reserve funds. Strauss asked if there is enough funding in the current budget to support getting through the next steps. Woodrow replied that those steps are part of the current scope. Strauss commented that the potential efficiencies should manifest as return on investment (ROI). He expressed concern about integrating legacy information for continuity while managing the transition to avoid dual processes. Goluskin responded that going from old platforms and processes to new ones can be painful. Woodrow added that there isn't a great baseline for tracking process time so figuring ROI would be difficult. Aldridge pointed out that the live demonstrations should clarify the conversion process.

Cilimburg stated that MacArthur needed to have this information before a decision was made and Aldridge responded the matter would be brought to the board after the proposals had been submitted.

12:59 p.m. – Cilimburg left the meeting.

Strauss stressed the need for clarifying a baseline on task analysis to quantify time for inefficient processes and rank them for establishing priorities.

Adjournment
1:02 p.m. – Aldridge adjourned the meeting.

Submitted by Darlene Craven