



**Missoula Urban Transportation District
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
November 16, 2023**

APPROVED

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

MEMBERS ABSENT

Andrea Davis

STAFF PRESENT

Corey Aldridge
Jen Sweten
Colin Woodrow
Allison Segal
Heather Halter
Olga Kreimer
Darlene Craven
Dan Stone

Call to Order and Roll Call

12:03 p.m. – MacArthur called the meeting to order and asked for a roll call.

Changes or Additions to the Agenda

None

Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda

None.

4.1 General Manager's Report

Projects/Planning/Procurement

Woodrow stated that contracting for the approved chargers is in its final stages. Because the FY22 grant for the ten buses has a shortfall of about \$900,000, the remaining balance will be funded by CMAQ and 5339 grants. The bus project has a two-year timeline. Woodrow explained that while many cost centers in the grants haven't been identified, the chargers needed now will take a big chunk. A work scope change will determine how they can be pulled from the grant. A five percent workforce development set aside is also required. A 340-degree training simulator will be purchased to satisfy that requirement. Strauss asked whether the simulator could be shared with other organizations to offset costs. Woodrow replied that it could be programmed to accommodate training for emergency services. It will be well over a year before anything else needs to be purchased.

12:08 – Dodson joined the meeting.

Woodrow stated that work on charge management continues, and the trolley procurement timeline has been increased due to delays with the Freightliner chassis. Negotiations for the MOAB property continue, and a counter-counteroffer has been sent. MUTD met with the city public works department and DJ&A regarding the water/sewer on the property.

12:12 – Wiener joined the meeting.

A three-day meeting with Wendel will be scheduled to get to a 30% design by the end of March or early April. The RFP for a general manager/general contractor (GMGC) will go out in December with a goal of contracting in March 2024. The landowners still need to sign the development agreement for the Grant Creek realignment, but the goal is to contract the work for May 2024 and start moving dirt in the fall.

The Bus Stop Improvement Project is nearing completion. The remaining installations will be done by MUTD staff. The RFP for the ERP vendor is going out in December. The RAISE Brooks project is holding a public meeting on November 16, 2023. The consultant, HDR, will attend the December planning committee meeting. The strategic planning contract with Nelson Nygaard will be brought to the December board meeting with an anticipated 12-month timeline. Cilimburg remarked that it was good to work with local companies. Strauss asked if MUTD was the prime contractor and whether extra administrative work was required. Woodrow responded that though MUTD holds the contract, MPO is paying the larger portion.

Marketing/Communication

Kreimer reminded the board about the upcoming RAISE Brooks public open house and the Holidays on Higgins promotion on December 2. Kreimer reminded everyone to subscribe to the newsletter and that the new campaign and tagline are rolling out. Kreimer is distributing a list of values survey and will bring a revised mission/vision/values statement for approval to the December board meeting. The advertisement removals are going smoothly, and a new campaign will appear on the buses in December. A photoshoot is scheduled for the first week of December. Window clings with a QR code containing information about the RAISE Brooks project will also be hung in the buses.

Administrative Services

Halter is working on a collective bargaining agreement with the maintenance department that will renew in July 2024. The human resources (HR) department is focusing on revamping recruitment and onboarding processes, including actively recruiting from other places. A recruiting open house will be scheduled in early 2024. Many reports are due this time of year, including transportation improvement program amendments that have been submitted. The finance department is drafting a budget calendar and schedule and standard operating procedures to foster reporting efficiency.

Operations

Sweten announced that the bus lift had been installed and is working, so there are two functional lifts, as the oldest lift did not pass a certification inspection. Parts availability continues to be a problem, and price gouging is rampant. Body shop repairs are scheduled six months out due to labor shortages. Amenity installations to be performed by the shop employees are delayed due to staffing shortages. Cilimburg asked how many maintenance employees there are. Sweten answered that optimum staffing is seven technicians and six service people, but there are only six technicians now. Strauss asked if the FTA could intervene in the price gouging. Sweten responded that the third-party suppliers control the market because they have the parts. MUTD participated in a city snow removal planning meeting and will exchange plowing services with the Parks and Recreation Department.

Summer construction detours are now completed, and supervisor training is resuming. Paratransit made 6,487 rides in October. Sweten has been named to APTA's battery electric bus safety task force. The Proterra transit section was sold to the Phoenix Motor Company. MacArthur asked if

the supply issues were connected to the Proterra bankruptcy and sale. Sweten said there are issues regarding replacing proprietary Proterra parts.

Aldridge mentioned that Davis, who was recently elected mayor of Missoula, will attend the December board meeting. A member of the housing community in Missoula would be desirable to fill the vacant board seat.

The Perry amendment that potentially threatened federal transit funding was rejected. If there is a government shutdown, the FTA offices will remain open.

Action Items

5.1 Minutes of October 26, 2023, Board Meeting – Strauss moved to approve the October board meeting minutes, Dodson seconded, and the motion to approve passed.

5.2 September 2023 Financial Statements – Strauss said that expenses are generally below budget and expected revenue is above budget based on tax receipts. Reserves are funded at or above the minimum required level. The draft budget calendar presented in the finance committee meeting will be revised to show the initial budget draft at the May 2024 board meeting, with the final approval scheduled for the June board meeting. Wiener asked for a board member to volunteer on the finance committee, and Dodson responded that he would do it.

MacArthur asked if long-term budget planning had been scheduled, and Aldridge said that it was in development and would be shown to the board when finalized. Strauss emphasized the need for ongoing discussion regarding how the proforma is assumed and developed. MacArthur suggested that the planning and finance committees should meet.

Strauss motioned to approve the September financials, Dodson seconded it, and it was approved unanimously.

5.3 – Bus Engine Replacement – Sweten reported that the three diesel buses from 2014 keep breaking down and have been used to their fullest extent. One bus requires an overhaul of the engine. The normal expected maintenance for those buses is included in the FY24 budget. The requested engine is a known brand that comes with a warranty. Strauss asked how many years the bus could be used with the new engine. Sweten replied that the bus could be driven to 2028, when the electric buses will replace it. Dodson moved to approve, Cilimburg seconded, and the motion passed.

Dodson agreed to serve on the board for four more years. Aldridge thanked the board for a great working relationship.

12:57 p.m. – The meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by Darlene Craven