



**Missoula Urban Transportation District
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
December 21, 2023**

APPROVED

MEMBERS PRESENT

Don MacArthur
Jesse Dodson
Dr. Josephine Hazelton-Boyle
Jason Wiener
Andrea Davis
Amy Cilimburg

MEMBERS ABSENT

Sebastian Strauss

STAFF PRESENT

Corey Aldridge
Jen Sweten
Colin Woodrow
Allison Segal
Heather Halter
Olga Kreimer
Darlene Craven
Spencer Starke

GUEST – Tiffany Semple, JCCS

Call to Order and Roll Call

12:05 p.m. – MacArthur called the meeting to order and asked for a roll call. He pointed out the revised agenda, correcting Item 5.7 – MUTD Strategic Plan and MPO Long Range Transportation Planning Contract to Item 5.8.

Changes or Additions to the Agenda

None.

Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda

None.

4.1 General Manager's Report

Operations

Sweten stated that the maintenance department is working on a rash of bus suspension failings. MUTD will be beta-testing the Remix software operations scheduling module. Sweten and Aldridge have had productive conversations with other small urban transportation systems and metropolitan planning organizations in the state. Ashbrook recently attended a safety training on battery electric bus safety and curbing operator assaults. Maintenance contract negotiations are ongoing. Wiener asked about points of contention, and Sweten replied that compensation was the main point but stated that an agreement would be reached.

Projects/Planning/Procurement

Woodrow said that contract negotiations with the architects and engineers' firm (Wendel) are progressing based on refocusing the scope to phase one only with a building that achieves LEED gold status. The contract will be brought to the board for approval at the January 2024 meeting. Wendel will be onsite for three days in January. MacArthur noted that the gold certification meeting

state standards embody the sustainability for which MUTD stands. Wendel is now focusing the estimate on Phase I only.

The landowners still need to sign the Grant Creek realignment agreement to move forward on the MOAB land acquisition, though the paperwork has been finalized. A meeting to discuss approaches for closing on the land and the necessary improvements has been set for early January. MacArthur asked if MUTD has a role in Missoula County's commitment to the Grand Creek floodplain work. Woodrow said nothing has changed for MUTD, though the landowners have a set timeline based on the matching funds to finalize that agreement. An RFP for the general contractor will go out in January or February 2024 with the goal of fifteen percent design within ninety days of Wendel's visit. There is strong regional interest in the project.

A report on the charge management's significant savings will be brought to the January 2024 board meeting. The remaining bus stop amenities need to be installed. Two new copiers need to be leased as Xerox no longer supports one of the existing machines. The RFP for an ERP vendor has been posted and a choice will be brought to the April 2024 board meeting.

Nelson\Nygaard has been chosen as the strategic planning consultant. Significant development on the Brooks RAISE project should occur from January to May 2024. The City of Missoula coders will attend the February planning committee to discuss growth and development in Missoula.

MUTD will not renew the sub-recipient agreement with the University of Montana (UM) beyond the currently required agreement for the UDASH buses awarded under the Low/No federal grant program. MacArthur asked if the Small Transit Intensive Cities (STIC) allocation is affected if no subrecipient exists. Aldridge stated that UDASH no longer voluntarily reports annual data to the National Transit Database, and MUTD is able to qualify for the same number of STIC categories even without UDASH reporting to NTD. MacArthur remarked that non-compliance makes establishing a mutually beneficial relationship with UM difficult. Aldridge added that it changes the conversation with UM about how it supports public transit. Cilimburg asked if the systems could be merged. Woodrow replied that UDASH cannot obtain more vehicles, and MUTD does not want the liability that comes with any kind of joint operation. UM has a new parking commission and transportation department that will address the university's transit needs.

Marketing/Communication

Kreimer advised the MUTD is supporting Missoula in Motion's Clear the Air Challenge. The new marketing campaign and tagline will be rolling out on the buses in January. A photoshoot featuring Mountain Line merchandise and reflecting diversity was done to update the current media library. BBER's final report with detailed summaries and analyses will be shared. Window clings with a QR code for raising awareness about the Brooks RAISE project will be installed in the buses for forty-five days.

Administrative Services

MUTD now has sixty-six operators driving buses, and the November class is now soloing. Five new hires will attend the January 2024 operator training class. MUTD will be over its operator goal if all five complete the training. In the future, hiring classes will be quarterly. The open positions are contracts specialist, accountant, and one more maintenance technician. The turnover rate for 2023 was twenty-eight percent, much lower than 2022's forty-two percent. Maintenance contract negotiations will resume in January 2024, as will the focus on updating the handbooks. Drug and alcohol end-of-year processing continues, and the Montana Transportation Department (MDT) report will also be submitted. The holiday supplemental payroll was distributed. The transition to the new retirement account firm, Mutual of America, is progressing, and the FY23 audit has been completed.

MacArthur recognized Davis for her twelve years of service as a member of the MUTD board of directors and looked forward to having a mayor who understands transit. Dodson thanked Davis for her mentorship. Davis remarked that this time was an opportunity to continue working together due to her interest in transit as part of the city's development. Davis noted that Missoula had gained a reputation nationwide due to its zero-emissions efforts and zero-fare.

Action Items

5.1 Minutes of November 16, 2023, Board Meeting – Wiener moved to approve the minutes, Hazelton-Boyle seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

5.2 FY2023 Financial Audit Report – Segal introduced Tiffany Semple from JCCS, MUTD's auditor, to review audit highlights. Semple said that overall, no issues or disagreements require a second opinion. Suggested adjustments include incorporating the property tax receivable amount into year-end reporting and refining monthly reconciliations. The depreciation schedule will be done quarterly, and pre-paid balances will be corrected at year-end. No issues were noted on the financial statements. Receivables are down but warrants payable are up. Operating expenses are higher due to labor costs, and non-operating revenues are down due to COVID-related relief funding ending. There are no significant deficiencies in internal controls, nor are there any federal compliance issues.

Wiener asked about the mechanics for evaluating compliance. Semple responded that grant reporting is compared to the financial statements to match elements and whether the expense makes sense for the relevant grant. MacArthur asked how MUTD can appropriately monitor the MOAB expenditures. Semple replied that it's important to track costs to make sure they are capitalized instead of expensed. Wiener asked Semple for input on the ERP vendor, and she responded that it was important to plan for now and in the future instead of applying minor fixes.

Wiener made a motion to approve the audit as presented, Cilimburg seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

5.3 October Financials – Aldridge requested that this item be moved to the January 2024 board meeting agenda as the finance committee meeting had been canceled due to a lack of a quorum.

5.4 Election of 2024 Board Officers & Committees – MacArthur stated he would be willing to serve another year as chair if the board approved. Cilimburg said consistency in the role was important. MacArthur asked Dodson if he was ready to serve as vice chair. Dodson agreed but stated that if someone else wants the role, they should have the opportunity. Aldridge suggested choosing the chair at this meeting and voting on the entire slate at the January 2024 board meeting. Hazelton-Boyle asked about efforts to fill the empty board seat. Aldridge said interviewing will start in January 2024. Davis motioned to elect MacArthur as chair and vote on the entire slate at the January 2024 board meeting. Cilimburg seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

The board will vote on the full slate at the January meeting, and MacArthur will discuss the vice chair role with Strauss.

1:22 p.m. – Davis left the meeting.

5.5 2024 Meeting Schedule – Aldridge reviewed the proposed meeting schedule, including November and December 2024 meeting changes. The January 2024 planning committee meeting will be canceled, and some of the other planning committee meetings will be moved to accommodate annual training and seminars. Dodson moved to approve the proposed schedule,

including the adjustments as presented, Cilimburg seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

5.6 Mission/Vision/Values – Kreimer stated that the minimal response to the staff survey yielded consistent themes. Wiener, Cilimburg, and Hazelton-Boyle suggested minor changes in the values list. MacArthur asked if the first sentence was also the tagline. Kreimer said it was not written that way. She emphasized that the mission/vision/values statement is meant to guide strategic planning.

1:43 p.m. – Hazelton-Boyle left the meeting.

5.7 Lease of 2 Xerox Copiers – Woodrow stated that MUTD currently leases two copiers through Mountain West. One unit will no longer be serviced, and the other needs to be updated. Mountain West's twenty-five-thousand-dollar proposal for one color copier and one basic black and white one on a five-year term was selected.

1:46 p.m. – Hazelton-Boyle returned.

Cilimburg moved to approve the copier lease, Wiener seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

MacArthur asked for a motion to approve the revised mission/vision/values statement with the suggested revisions. Cilimburg moved to accept the statement, Wiener seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

5.8 MUTD Strategic Plan & MPO Long Range Transportation Planning Contract – Woodrow explained the arrangement with Nelson\Nygaard, the strategic planning consultant MUTD, and the Missoula Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The city attorney reviewed the memorandum of agreement (MOA) between MUTD and MPO, allowing either party to sue the other if the deliverables or the arrangement become unacceptable. He stressed that MUTD had outgrown the 2018 strategic plan. Project kickoff is set for January 11, 2024, with anticipated completion in June 2025. MacArthur asked if the collaboration would be economically advantageous. Each pay application will require joint approval. MacArthur asked for clarification of the approval request. Woodrow explained that the city council needed to approve the MOA for the mayor's signature in January 2024. The MOA stipulates that either party can leave the agreement without cause if necessary. Wiener moved to approve the \$399,000 Nelson\Nygaard contract, Hazelton-Boyle seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The board then moved to a closed session.

2:31 p.m. – The meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by Darlene Craven