



**Missoula Urban Transportation District
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
February 22, 2024**

APPROVED

MEMBERS PRESENT

Don MacArthur
Jason Wiener
Sebastian Strauss
Amy Cilimburg
Jesse Dodson

MEMBERS ABSENT

Dr. Josephine Hazelton-Boyle

STAFF PRESENT

Corey Aldridge
Colin Woodrow
Allison Segal
Heather Halter
Olga Kreimer
Darlene Craven
Teddy Mierze
Dan Stone
Vince Caristo
Frank Kuhl

Guest

Sam Oliver

Call to Order and Roll Call

12:06 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

Marketing & Communications – Kreimer announced that MUTD is participating in the St. Patrick's Day parade and the annual Roll and Read event in April. March is Transit Employee Appreciation Month, and she is working with Mayor Davis's office to issue an Operator Appreciation Day proclamation on March 18, 2024. A public education/training event teaching paratransit users how to use the mobile application for booking trips has been scheduled

Takeaways from the APTA Marketing Communications and Customer Experience Conference included: choice ridership to draw in the non-commuting crowd and getting community buy in for BRT initiatives. Work with Windfall continues on the website and outreach materials audit. Kreimer is working with the new contracts specialist to develop the RFP for an advertising agency when the Windfall contract expires in June.

Wiener asked if there were new stories about the weapons policy. Kreimer responded that the PBS Impact story incorporated the recent issue with the weapons policy into a larger story about state laws versus local ones.

Administrative Services – Halter stated that two positions – transit analyst and road supervisor – are currently posted. Dan Stone, the current transit analyst, is leaving in May. An offer to a dispatch supervisor has been made as well. Drug and alcohol reporting continues, as do maintenance contract negotiations. A labor committee meeting with both bargaining units has been scheduled monthly for now but should move to quarterly later in the year. Company-wide training on the Americans with Disabilities Act, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) requirements and harassment will be scheduled.

Halter will work with the accounting department to formalize an EEO complaint form for posting on the website. The 1099s and W2s have been processed and sent out. The finance staff participated in an FTA triennial audit training. The fiscal year-to-date budget has been completed, as well as the UPWP report and the TransADE grant documentation. Teddy Mierze, the new staff accountant, has started and will be learning all finance processes, including payroll and accounts payable. The finance staff also participated in an FTA federal funds review meeting.

Mierze introduced himself.

Operations – Aldridge covered the operations section of the general manager's report because Sweten was at a conference. The new maintenance trainees are continuing their training and working on obtaining commercial driver's licenses. MUTD is working with Phoenix Motors, the company that purchased Proterra in 2023, to repair one of the Proterra chargers. The four buses on order from Gillig will deliver in August 2024, a third delay caused by the battery supplier's material shortages.

Projects/Planning/Procurement/Technology – Woodrow said the Grant Creek realignment for the MOAB land purchase negotiation was close to being finalized. The land value continues to be the issue though the recent appraisal commissioned by the landowners was not a full appraisal so comparing it to the MUTD appraisal won't provide a realistic value. Conceptual agreement sharing improvement costs has been reached. MUTD will make an offer based on the appraisal commissioned in 2023. The Wendel Consulting three-day immersion meeting will take place at the end of February.

MUTD is applying for another grant from the Low or No Emission Vehicle Program (LoNo Program) in conjunction with the Center for Transportation and the Environment (CTE) to supplement the fleet with six new electric buses, eight electric paratransit vehicles and the required charging infrastructure that can be moved to the new MOAB. The due date is April 25, and it is likely MUTD will enter into partnerships for obtaining the vehicles. Cilimburg asked when the grant will be awarded. Aldridge explained approval takes ninety days. Strauss asked if the vehicles would come before the MOAB was built. Woodrow responded that was unlikely.

Though resolution on the automatic passenger count was reached, breach of contract with Clever Devices could be an issue. The Naloxone machines will be installed in April and United Way will be managing that program.

The phone system has been migrated to Teams and the new Xerox copiers are up and running.

Wiener asked if the number generated by the recent landowners' appraisal was presented in bad faith. Dodson responded that what the landowner sent over was not an appraisal but a very high-

level, speculative valuation assuming that all subdivision improvements have been completed, and while it does not meet MUTD's or the FTA's appraisal requirements, it is not necessarily in bad faith. Dodson explained that it is possibly a negotiating tactic to get a higher price for the land. Cilimburg noted that the FTA dictates the process. Dodson noted that the landowner doesn't have to abide by FTA requirements when coming to their own subjective conclusions about the value of their land. But MUTD's constraints with the FTA process conflict with the landowners' expectations. Because Wendel will be delivering thirty percent design, the early work product can transfer to a new location, if necessary. Wiener asked when the thirty-percent design would be complete. Woodrow responded sometime between July and September 2024. Dodson added status with the landowner should be clarified during that time. The Grant Creek redesign will take the property off the floodplain. This is important because MUTD cannot build on a floodplain. MacArthur said because the design vision isn't yet site-dependent it is important to keep the process going.

MUTD is scoping for digital signage and land mobile radios in FY2025. Three finalists for the ERP software will present demonstrations during the week of March 11. When the board is asked to authorize the ERP purchase, Strauss asked to see the projected incremental costs and annual costs in addition to the initial five-year startup costs.

Strategic planning is in the early stages of data collection and developing public participation. It will be discussed at the April planning committee meeting. Public engagement on the Transform Brooks RAISE Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project has been encouraging and the next step is to create design concepts and stops modeling for determining routes and the south terminus. During the first week of March, Woodrow and Aldridge are taking a field trip to meet other agencies in the West that have implemented BRT.

Woodrow introduced Frank Kuhl, the new contracts specialist.

MacArthur mentioned the Montana Department of Transportation is launching a program to measure greenhouse gas emissions on the highways and cautioned that measuring these emissions could be tied to funding and penalties. Figuring out how to count emissions correctly is a crucial element to reducing those emissions. He congratulated Aldridge on his nine-year anniversary with MUTD. Woodrow stated that the March planning committee meeting would be cancelled.

Action Items

5.1 Minutes of January 25, 2024, Board Meeting – Wiener confirmed that the changes he requested to include the slate of officers had been included and motioned for approval. Strauss seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

5.2 December 2023, Financial Statement – Strauss stated that MUTD is in good financial shape overall. Expenses are below budget and the forecast indicated closing the fiscal year on budget. The first half of the tax revenues are approximately ten percent higher than budgeted. The first proforma is being prepared on realistic assumptions. He commended Segal for being proactive in auditing departmental spend mid-year to control expenses.

MacArthur asked when the budget would be presented. Strauss replied that a draft budget would be presented at the March board meeting and approved at the May board meeting. Aldridge mentioned that planning the capital improvement list is underway and will be presented at the April board meeting. MacArthur asked if MUTD can deliver more service given the resources. Aldridge responded that the reserves were allocated for the MOAB and cost of living increases.

Strauss said the proforma indicated a need to square up the property tax increases. He motioned to approve the December financial statement as presented, Dodson seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

5.3 – FFY2025 Community Coordination Plan & Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) Grant Application – MacArthur opened the public hearing at 1:15 p.m. and Aldridge explained that the Specialized Transportation Advisory Committee (STAC) drafts a coordination plan and grant application for submitting to MDT annually. MUTD requested funds to purchase two electric paratransit vehicles (replacement and fleet expansion) and The Arc of Western Montana requested two accessible minivans. The staff requested the board’s approval to send the funds application to MDT. Strauss pointed out corrections that needed to be made to the plan and asked for data on how performance measures mentioned in the coordination plan are tabulated as he would like to see that data.

1:17 p.m. – Hearing no public comment on the coordination plan, MacArthur closed the public hearing. Strauss motioned to approve the coordination plan and Dodson seconded it. Wiener asked if the motion included approval of the grant application. Strauss restated the motion to include approving the FFY2025 Community Coordination Plan and the MDT grant application. Dodson seconded it and the motion passed unanimously.

MacArthur thanks Oliver for attending the meeting.

1:19 p.m. – The meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by Darlene Craven