



**Missoula Urban Transportation District  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
April 25, 2024**

**APPROVED**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Don MacArthur  
Jason Wiener  
Sebastian Strauss  
Amy Cilimburg  
Jesse Dodson  
Sam Oliver

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Dr. Josephine Hazelton-Boyle

**STAFF PRESENT**

Jen Sweten  
Colin Woodrow  
Allison Segal  
Heather Halter  
Olga Kreimer  
Darlene Craven  
Spencer Starke  
Dan Stone

**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 BBER Rider Survey Final Report was struck from the agenda and will be pushed to a later date. Wiener asked to add a discussion item to discuss the CEO/GM status.

**Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda**

None.

**General Manager's Report** – Sweten said the bus stop amenities are continuing and spring cleaning at bus stops continues. Supply chain issues are diminishing but parts often take one to two months to obtain. The maintenance department is fully staffed and the four 10-hour shifts trial was successful so that schedule will continue. Chris House will move from the operator pool to dispatch supervisor in preparation for replacing the training supervisor position. Interviews for that position will start in May with the candidates presenting a training session as their interview.

Construction season has started requiring proactive detour messaging. Jacob Ashbrook, chief safety officer, completed his TSI safety certification and he is the third person in the state to complete that program. The trolley will start running during the Saturday farmer's markets.

**Projects/Planning/Procurement/IT** – Woodrow said the new trolley is waiting on a new chassis and should be delivered at the end of August. The landowners now want to sell the full site (fifty acres) for \$10 million instead of the original 18.75 acres. The subcommittee reviewed the options – two parcels purchased separately. The first parcel is the original Tract 1 approved by the FTA and the second parcel would be the balance broken into three tracts. MUTD staff is working with the engineers, DJ&A, on cost modeling for selling those parcels. Wiener asked if that amount

included Tract 1 improvements. Woodrow responded the infrastructure cost is \$4 million, lowering the per square foot price for the larger property. It depends on how the board handles selling off the larger parcels. The subcommittee is working on a letter of intent, contingent on board and FTA approval. The goal would be to sell off the remaining acreage. The landowners are entertaining other offers. Oliver asked if there was a clear delineation in zoning or is it all inclusive. Woodrow said the code is form-based, so the property is zoned for mixed use. Cilimburg observed that MUTD is not a real estate developer.

A&E – Wendel has provided two conceptual designs, both of which required substantial reconfiguring to fit as many vehicles as possible while making the administrative and maintenance spaces as functional as possible. The Wendell team will be in Missoula on May 7 for the visioning workshop and the construction manager at risk (CMAR) RFP has been posted. A pre-bid meeting is scheduled for May 7 as well. The RFP will be open about six weeks and so far, four construction companies have expressed interest. The goal is to finalize the CMAR contract by May 7 to facilitate a smooth onboarding process for the chosen team. A committee needs to be assembled for the selection process which will start in June.

Electrification – The FY25 Low-No Grant application will be submitted today. The Center for Transportation and the Environment (CTE) has been a supportive and helpful partner. Woodrow also acknowledged the MUTD staff who had contributed to the effort as well.

IT – The accounting software upgrade went well and an internal standard operating procedure website will launch this summer. The ERP will be presented in the FY25 budget with a goal to launch in FY26. The delay was due to staffing capacity as it is a substantial time and resources commitment. The planning committee is targeting a large public engagement in the fall. A variety of potential initiatives will be discussed at the June planning committee meeting (on-demand transit, the BRT project and strategic planning). The BRT team is working on stops modeling to establish two potential southern terminals with a transfer center in the midtown area. The June and July planning meetings will establish direction for presenting to the board.

**Communications** – Kreimer said strategic planning with coordination between the various groups continues. She is working with an agency to conduct a marketing audit to establish parameters for what MUTD needs for effective marketing communications across all platforms. MUTD participated in Earth Month activities in April and a Wall Street Journal article about different transportation systems and how they leverage electrification highlighted battery electric bus operation in cold weather. In conjunction with the Roxy Theatre, MUTD sponsored a screening of the movie, Speed, that was a big success in terms of reminding people that MUTD is part of a hip and cool community. MUTD is sponsoring Missoula Pride and the annual Roots Fest later in the summer. Partnering with groups that don't always participate in the Pride parade is a primary focus. The paratransit materials are being updated and the mobile application training class has morphed into one-on-one training. The idea is to ensure accessibility. The printed maps are being distributed throughout Missoula.

**Administrative Services** – The next training class is scheduled for June 10. The operator staff numbers somewhere in the low fifties so the training class schedule was accelerated to get more drivers on the road for the summer. Since summer can be a busy, stressful time, Halter stressed the importance of utilizing the employee assistance program to alleviate mental health issues. Open enrollment is starting in May. Missoula County Benefits staff said MUTD could expect a five percent increase for benefits. File audits are almost finished and the next negotiation meeting for the maintenance contract is set for May. Chris House was selected as the new dispatch supervisor.

**Finance** – Allison Segal has been training Jasmine Blumenbach on awards. The TransADE audit was completed and Segal is working on the FY25 budget draft. She is drafting federal operating assistance and CMAQ funds requests totaling three million dollars. Teddy Mierze completed his third payroll and he and Blumenbach filed the 941 and unemployment quarterly returns. Migrating the 401A and 457 retirement benefit plans to Mutual of America continues though it became necessary for MUTD’s attorney, Susan Aaberg, to write to the current retirement fund firm to request the funds. Cilimburg asked if more people were interested in working at MUTD than previously. Halter replied that while there are more applicants, the quality of the applicants continues to be challenging due to driving records, drugs and health issues causing failed physicals. Spring and summer usually bring more qualified applicants.

MacArthur asked if the delayed ERP implementation was due to insufficient staffing. Woodrow said the finance team is still learning job duties and functions, and future scheduled deliverables and audits will make it difficult to learn a new platform. MacArthur expressed concern about the next steps with the vendor MUTD has been working with to choose an ERP system. Woodrow responded that the contract is mostly complete. MacArthur recommended working with the vendor over the next year to evaluate any changes with the ERP software.

**General Manager/Chief Executive Officer Search** – Wiener said a search firm was hired for a seventy to ninety-day timeframe to assist with the search for a general manager/chief executive officer (GM/CEO). The schedule is as follows: stakeholder interviews followed by an advertising period, the candidate compilation, selection interviews and final selection. The selection committee consists of Wiener, MacArthur, Cilimburg, Jason Struppler (union staff) and Woodrow (non-union staff). Halter will continue to liaise with the search firm. The intake meeting is scheduled for April 26 where the draft job description will be discussed. Since Sweten is applying for the position, she will not be involved with the hiring process. The position will be advertised in about three weeks and a robust candidate pool is expected.

**5.1 March 28, 2024, Board of Directors Meeting Minutes** – Wiener motioned to approve the minutes, Cilimburg seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

**5.2 February 2024 Financials** – Strauss said the financial situation is good and operating expenses are ten percent below budget. Maintenance expenses are fourteen percent lower and administrative expenses are seven percent less than budgeted. Revenue is ten percent over budget. The finance committee reviewed an initial budget draft that will be refined and updated once the benefits premium costs are finalized. The finance committee also reviewed a proforma draft. Strauss moved to approve the financial statement as presented. Oliver seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

**5.3 Shadow Asphalt Repaving/Sealing/Restriping Project** – Kuhl said the asphalt behind the bay where the buses are shuffled was dangerous and getting worse. The proposal is to repave that area, and reseal and restripe the whole lot. The area where the buses leave the bus wash is also beginning to show wear. The scope of work calls for a four-inch asphalt replacement layer. MUTD staff will consult with an engineering firm to confirm the scope specifications and proper thickness to ensure the asphalt will survive the next four to five years of use. Oliver suggested that the asphalt should be tested after it’s installed. MacArthur said the board would authorize the expenditure and advised adding a \$15,000 contingency for testing and increasing the asphalt thickness based on consulting an engineer. Oliver motioned to approve the original \$43,888 estimate with an additional \$15,000 contingency for potential upgrades and engineering. Cilimburg seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**5.4 Remix Transit Mapping Software Project** – Kuhl said the current transit mapping software contract is expiring on July 31, at the end of the last option, totaling five years. The new contract calls for a three-year contract with two 1-year renewal options for a total of five years. Stone explained that the software is used for service planning and operator scheduling and feeds into the Clever Devices dispatching software and the real-time passenger information system. The initial term total is \$86,000, with the options costing \$30,600 and \$31,500 respectively. This is a sole source contract based on the software provider's unique transit niche. Wiener motioned for approval of the contract, Oliver seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

**5.5 MOAB LEED Certification Contract Option** – Woodrow said the option, adding an additional \$205,000 to the design, is for achieving a LEED gold certification. Wendel is excited about MUTD's interest in sustainability and has started preliminary work on the specifications. Cilimburg noted that adding the certification provided for better contract terms. Woodrow said that lower testing requirements on the back end could be a cost savings for certification. The cost is for Wendel's time in modeling the building to meet the standards, but earning a certification is a separate process. Cilimburg said it is difficult for a transit building to be completely net zero. MacArthur said the certification embodies MUTD's commitment to sustainable living and leads to better performing systems. The construction team will have to provide the necessary reporting during construction. Cilimburg motioned to approve the LEED certification design option, Wiener seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

**5.6 MOAB Microgrid Concept and Design** – Woodrow said project explores alternative energy systems working with Cushing Terrell and the Missoula Electric Cooperative (MEC) to develop an energy model for the new facility potentially incorporating different options such as solar photovoltaics (PV), battery, and backup generators. The modeling will be done in three phases with the first phase costing \$87,750. The staff is seeking approval to spend \$20,000 for evaluating the role of solar panels in powering the new facility. It will also explore using a geothermal system and resiliency of battery electric storage systems. Wendel's contract only includes the building itself and fleet management is secondary. This modeling will help to right size the facility to meet fleet needs. Cilimburg added that many large organizations that use a large load of electricity in a defined area are exploring using microgrids. The changing environment dictates planning for an unknown future that likely will happen by the time ground is broken. The study will show the points where a battery storage agreement with MEC would be viable. The idea is to determine possibilities and how to get the relevant components into the facility. It represents a necessary second step because MUTD needs a larger electrical grid or a microgrid of its own. The microgrid would be just for the facility and the fleet only. MacArthur observed that the grid will only generate enough power needed to operate the buses. Cilimburg confirmed that to be energy and economically resilient without relying on MEC's electricity, MUTD should control its own power generation. MacArthur noted that the \$20,000 was for discussing the possibilities of a microgrid, not designing the microgrid. Woodrow said the matter could be further discussed at the planning committee meeting and then presented at the next board meeting. Sweten asked if the study was necessary for Bonneville to upgrade the lines. Woodrow said it's not time sensitive. MacArthur stated that the matter will be tabled.

Wiener asked if it was possible for the board to have a Mountain Line email account. Sweten said if the cost is not prohibitive to provide the board with domain emails, it will be done.

1:27 – The meeting was adjourned.