



**Missoula Urban Transportation District  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
February 27, 2025**

APPROVED

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Don MacArthur  
Eva Rocke  
Sam Oliver  
Jason Wiener  
Amy Cilimburg  
Lisa Sheppard  
Sebastian Strauss

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

**STAFF PRESENT**

Jordan Hess  
Colin Woodrow  
Allison Segal  
Heather Halter  
Jen Sweten  
Jasmine Blumenbach  
Spencer Starke  
Garin Wally  
Darlene Craven

**GUESTS**

Derek Hitt, Teamsters Local No. 2  
Flint Olsen, Quality Construction  
Eric Reiber, Quality Construction  
Ronald Reekes, Wendel Companies  
Jeana Stright, Wendel Companies  
Lindsay Brownschidle, Wendel Companies  
Christopher Osterhoudt, Wendel Companies

**1.0 Call to Order and Roll Call**

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

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

None.

**3.0 Approval of Minutes & Financial Statements**

**3.1 January 23, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes** – Cilimburg moved to approve the minutes, Sheppard seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

**3.2 January 8, 2025, Board of Directors Retreat Minutes** – Wiener moved to approve the minutes, Rocke seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

**3.3 December 2024 Financial Statements** – Strauss reported that expenses continue to post below budget and that trend is expected to continue. The finance team has requested federal reimbursement and investment revenue is posting at around 20-25% below budget. Strauss moved to recommend that the board approve the financial statements as presented, Wiener seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

**4.1 Agency Activity Report** – Strauss asked if the agency was going to receive automated passenger counter (APC) certification based on the NTD report. Hess responded that the agency requested a one-year extension on the APC) but the NTD rep(APC) but the NTD report was due on March 1. Strauss asked about the impact of not getting the one-year extension for submitting a correct APC report. Hess replied that the data would be flagged as questionable but there are no funding implications, other than internal performance-based funding.

**4.2 Legislative Update** – Hess advised that the two bills regarding changes to mill levies were up for a second reading after getting passed to the Senate floor. The lobbyist and other stakeholders are working to build a quorum of moderates on both side to vote against the bills.

Hess reported that another bill requiring the board of directors to be elected rather than appointed that contains a condition intended to prohibit using subdivision conditions to add land to urban transportation districts has also gained some traction. All five urban transportation districts have testified against it and are submitting a letter explaining a variety of reasons for not passing the bill. Another bill making it easier to expand transportation districts has also been proposed.

MacArthur asked how the elections would work. Hess replied numerous details would need to be clarified for the elections to be beneficial.

**5. 1 Election of the 2025 Board Officers and Committees** – MacArthur said the slate of officers and committees needed filling in and asked the newer board members where they would like to serve. The slate was finalized as follows:

Board Officers

Chair – Sebastian Strauss  
Vice-Chair – Jason Wiener  
Treasurer – Jason Wiener  
Secretary – Amy Cilimburg

Executive Committee

Chair – Sebastian Strauss  
Vice-Chair – Jason Wiener  
Past Chair – Don MacArthur

Planning Committee

Chair – Don MacArthur  
Sam Oliver  
Amy Cilimburg

Finance Committee

Chair – Jason Wiener  
Sebastian Strauss  
Lisa Sheppard

Transportation Policy Coordinating Committee Representative

Don MacArthur

Specialized Transportation Advisory Committee (STAC) Representative

Eva Rocke

Wiener asked Strauss about discussions outside board meetings and Strauss responded that he would abide by the letter of the law in upholding the public's right to participate in funding decisions and other pertinent matters. Hess and MacArthur agreed that framing board meeting preparation discussions for transparency while allowing for real-time responsiveness is optimal. Strauss moved to accept the slate as MacArthur presented, Oliver seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

MacArthur turned the meeting over to Strauss as the new board chair.

**5.2 Ratification of January Board Action Items** – Hess explained that though the January board meeting public notice had been posted timely, the agenda had not. Because it was brought to the staff's attention by an anonymous member of the public, ratifying the previously approved items at a properly noticed meeting was recommended out of an abundance of caution. Strauss then opened the meeting to public comment and listed the items for ratification as: December meeting

minutes; November financial statements; Grant Creek realignment cost share agreement, new facility offsite improvements; charger procurement; and a bus disposition. Hearing no public comment, Strauss moved to ratify the January board meeting action items to rectify the procedural error. MacArthur seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**5.3 FFY2026 Community Coordination Plan Public Hearing** – Sweten explained that the Community Coordination Plan funding request requires a public hearing at the most recent STAC meeting and this board meeting. Public comment was also invited through an advertisement in the Missoulian. Strauss opened the meeting to public comment. Hearing none, Strauss noted several discrepancies in the document that were not part of the agency's contribution should be identified as such so there was no confusion about providing incorrect information. Sweten said the agency receives a majority of its paratransit and shuttle van funding from the State of Montana through the 5310 grant with a 15% local match. The agency is requesting two electric paratransit vehicles and The Arc of Western Montana is requesting two accessible minivans and an accessible full-size van. The agency vans are ranked one and three in priority and The Arc van is ranked second. It is not known what vans will be awarded to which entity. Sweten asked the board to approve the coordination plan and the grant application.

Hitt asked why the previously requested vehicles were delayed. Sweten attributed the delay to pandemic-related supply chain issues causing a nationwide backlog. Strauss moved to approve the plan with the proviso that the incorrect years would be clearly delineated as provided by other contributing agencies. Cilimburg seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

**5.4 Teamsters Union Local No. 2 Maintenance Collective Bargaining Agreement** – Sweten said the agency reached an agreement that covers the maintenance technicians and service team with the Teamsters Local No. 2 on the three-year maintenance collective bargaining agreement after prolonged negotiations. Wage increases are as follows:

1 <sup>st</sup> year –	Technicians – 8.65%
	Service – 8.05%
2 <sup>nd</sup> year –	Technicians – 3.81%
	Service – 3.35%
3 <sup>rd</sup> year –	Technicians – 3.21%
	Service – 2.38%

In addition, the probationary period increased from ninety days to six calendar months and a shift differential payment for service people working until midnight clean vehicles was implemented. The agreement is retroactive to July 1, 2024. A wage negotiation will open on July 1, 2025, to negotiate wages for the last two years of the contract. Wiener moved to approve the collective bargaining agreement and asked if everyone in the bargaining unit was a union member. Sweten said the supreme court ruling dictated that employees are entitled to all benefits even if they do not pay dues. Sheppard seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

**5.5 FAAC MB-2000 Training Simulator** – Woodrow explained that the FY2022 Low-No grant required a five percent set aside for workforce development. The staff determined that accelerating training time using a real-time simulator would result in drivers getting out on the road faster.

Wiener moved to approve the purchase of the simulator conditional on the award obligation. Strauss asked about the expected utilization of the simulator. Sweten replied it would get a lot of use at the outset because operators used to driving diesel buses will need to adjust their driving

skills and habits to drive electric buses. Strauss asked if it could be rented to other agencies. Sweten said it could be turned into a fire truck simulator and the staff has discussed sharing the simulator with agencies on the west side of the state as Billings already has a simulator. The motion carried unanimously.

**5.6 Land Mobile Radio System Purchase** – Woodrow said the staff coordinated with the City and County of Missoula and Redtail Communications to identify the best solution for upgrading the land mobile radios. A state cooperative purchasing agreement with a local match will be used to purchase the equipment, install the radios, program the towers and provide a service and warranty contract. The installation should be completed in fall 2025. Strauss asked if the ten-year repair contract covered all care and maintenance. Woodrow said it was a standard 10-year limited warranty. Strauss asked if there would be additional costs. Woodrow said a memorandum of understanding with the city and county for space on the radio towers and a service plan will be put into place. Strauss said information about additional and ongoing costs outside the initial purchase should be provided whenever possible.

Strauss observed that the additional costs in five years could be as much as the initial purchase price. MacArthur asked about ongoing costs associated with the current system. Woodrow explained that the current system had technical and physical limitations. Strauss said he wanted to make sure the board understood that the radios represented an ongoing expense that will need to be budgeted. Cilimburg motioned to authorize the land use mobile radio purchase and Strauss added a stipulation that the purchase should be made only when the funding is obligated. The motion carried unanimously.

**5.7 Transfer Center Roof Raising Project** – Woodrow explained that the new buses are taller than originally designed and do not fit under the transfer center roof. Consequently, the roof will have to be raised. The design has been finalized, and the scope includes hoisting the trusses, welding, wiring, drainage and bird netting. Quality Construction will perform the work in April, requiring the transfer center to be closed for approximately two to three weeks. Sweten added that the staff is working on the logistics for rerouting the buses and communicating with the public regarding the construction. Strauss expressed his concern that the project had not been bid out, potentially not meeting the agency's federal procurement standards. MacArthur asked for confirmation regarding the estimate because it did not include a contingency amount. Reiber said he and the Quality team were confident that the project design was straightforward with only a few complexities that would not require a contingency. Woodrow noted that because local funding would be used to pay for the project, it would not be subject to a federal audit. More than half the operating fleet cannot use the transfer center safely and the transfer center needs to be operational before the ten new buses start to deliver in late March. Strauss moved to authorize the general manager to enter into the contract for raising the transfer center roof with Quality Construction. The motion carried unanimously.

**5.8 Automatic Passenger Counter Software Purchase** – Woodrow explained that the staff has not been able to finalize the required automatic passenger count and is seeking an extension for certifying the count. However, because the existing software is not working correctly despite daily contact with the vendor, the staff researched other vendors. Ultimately, the staff chose a software vendor with reasonable pricing and the capability to consolidate and finalize the certification process. The software will add onto the existing software that the current vendor will discount \$2,000 annually. The goal is to purchase the software before the next fiscal year to make the October 1 certification deadline. Strauss asked if the software could be used for a probationary period to test it and potentially take advantage of the pre-pay discount. Woodrow said the staff would be willing to negotiate those terms. Strauss moved to authorize the staff to negotiate and

sign a contract with the vendor by negotiating an initial one-year contract with a subsequent three-year discounted prepayment option. The motion carried unanimously.

**5.9 MOAB 30% Cost Estimation and Direction to Proceed to 60% Design** – Woodrow said the Wendel Companies design team had worked diligently to incorporate the board's suggestions into the 30% design. The point of today's discussion is to get authorization to proceed with a 60% design.

Stright reviewed the current design depicting two buildings in the first phase. Other cost saving revisions included reducing the parking lot size, the bus storage building size, the electrical duct bank and removing a voltage switch.

Osterhoudt reviewed alternatives for powering and heating the facility that compared geothermal systems, air source heat pumps, and natural gas boilers. MacArthur advocated for the air source heat pumps as a cost-effective solution. Stright pointed out the high upfront costs of installing dual systems complicates budget considerations. Strauss said board consensus is to avoid using fossil fuel power on the site.

Woodrow outlined current fleet needs with respect to the proposed charging infrastructure. Stright said the facility provides for a 10- to 15-year capacity before expansion would be required.

Strauss suggested delegating authority to decide on the facility power systems to the MOAB working group. Wiener said he needed more time to review the information and requested another week in which to review the materials sent just before the meeting. Cilimburg suggested holding a special board meeting to review the facility power and loan matters. Strauss proposed holding a separate meeting to decide on optimal power systems as well as budget and financing.

Wiener asked to see a funding graph depicting cash flow, incurred debt, and repayment structure and assumptions. MacArthur said he would like to explore the agency issuing its own bonds and how much work could be rolled into the loan and what those costs would be.

A special board meeting to discuss these matters will be scheduled for March 14 at 9:00 a.m. A packet will be sent for review on Wednesday, March 12.

**6.0 Adjournment** – MacArthur adjourned the meeting at 2:34 p.m.