MISSOULA URBAN TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

September 25, 2025

APPROVED

Members Present:	Don MacArthur, Eva Rocke, Sam Oliver, Jason Weiner, Amy Cilimburg, Lisa Sheppard, Sebastian Strauss
Members Absent:	
Staff Present:	Jordan Hess, Colin Woodrow, Allison Segal, Heather Halter, Stephane Gariepy
Guests:	Derek Hitt, Teamsters Local No. 2 Business Agent; Don Groves, Teamsters Local No. 2 Shop Steward; Jamie Sindelar, Mary Rector, Brian Mehus

1.0 Call to Order and Roll Call

12:00 p.m. Strauss called the meeting to order and asked for a roll call.

2.0 Public Comment

None.

3.0 Approval of Minutes & Financial Statements

3.1 September 4, 2025, Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Oliver moved to approve the minutes, Sheppard seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

4.0 Reports and Presentations

4.1 Agency Activity Report

Hess reported that the recreation shuttle pilot was launched successfully, and the ridership has been consistent over the four service weekends. He testified at the Legislative Transportation Interim Committee in Helena and explained that the interim transportation study is on track. Transit systems around the state are as diverse as Montana itself. They range from large systems like Mountain Line to volunteer drivers transporting people to medical appointments. The next transit system meeting will focus on engagement with all transit providers, not just the large established systems.

The staff continues to work on a personnel matter Hitt raised at a previous board meeting. Gariepy, who started as an operator, and most recently served as the interim operations directors, is retiring and Hess thanked him for his twelve years of service. Hess acknowledged Gariepys' stability and great operational knowledge. Interviews for the director of operations are starting. Hess is confident that Wehling is capable of handling the day-to-day operations during the short term. Halter added that the candidates come from around the country and represent a variety of experience levels and transit knowledge.

Halter clarified that the employees on workers' compensation were on duty, not off duty as the minutes stated.

Woodrow advised that the architect would finalize the transfer center renovation designs and the permits will be finalized on November 10. A request for proposals for the contractor will be posted in mid-October based on the architect's suggestion to retain a construction manager at risk, rather than using the low-bid method. The staff will retain a graphic designer for the bus stop improvement plan and will soon publish a request for proposals for a charge management vendor to ensure that power demand levels align with costs. Notification regarding the low-no grant application is required by September 27.

Wiener asked about the Uber study. Hess advised that the agency requested a quote from Uber regarding on-demand service and has consulted with other agencies using on-demand service.

5.0 Regular Business

5.1 HB 764 Update Policy/Adoption

Based on HB 764 that updates the current statute governing transportation districts, if the area has not received service for five years, and 51% of the qualified votes in the area sign a petition for removal, the area may be removed from the property tax rolls. However, the bill did not clearly define area and stipulates that individual properties can apply for removal. Hess recommended presenting a cohesive policy at a future meeting.

5.2 Petition to Remove the New Meadows and Golden West Subdivision from the Urban Transportation District

Hess said the recommendation is to approve the petitions based on the revised statute's October 1, 2025, effective date. Strauss observed that once the areas are removed, the agency has no control over when the properties are removed from the tax rolls. Wiener moved to approve the removal of the New Meadows and Golden West subdivisions from the urban transportation district and MacArthur seconded it. Sindelar said she had worked on language regarding the boundaries of areas petitioning out with the state senator who proposed the bill. The motion passed unanimously.

5.3 Security Camera Policy/Technology/Procedure Update

Hess explained that the previous policy adopted in 2024 defined videos as safety/security sensitive information not subject to public records requests. However, a recent court ruling countermanded that policy and established that videos are disclosable. The agency is now required to update its policy and make the videos available. To effect the court-ordered changes, the board must repeal the 2024 policy and revise the records retention policy as well. The agency will submit a draft policy for the court's approval at the October hearing as well as standard operating procedures for retaining pulling video. The collective bargaining agreement also dictates how the agency provides video recordings. Hess said there are questions about how to apply the ruling to the agency's other vehicles that will be addressed at the hearing. Wiener moved to adopt Resolution 25-06 that repeals Resolution 24-03 (establishing video policies and procedures) pending adoption of a new policy after the October 17 show cause hearing. Rocke seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

5.4 Records Requests Policy Revisions

Hess explained that the recent passing of HB 100 dictated that the records requests policy needed to be updated to comply. The changes focus on the time needed to comply with the request, the charge for that time, and the response window. Wiener recommended adding language regarding protected information that aligns with the statute. He moved to approve the revised policy with the suggested language change and MacArthur seconded it.

Strauss asked what provisions had been established for ensuring compliance regarding the response timeframe and receipt acknowledgement. Hess responded that the internal processes would be refined to ensure compliance with the provisions of the policy. The motion passed unanimously.

5.5 Land Mobile Use Radio

Woodrow stated that funding for the land mobile use radio system had been allocated, and the agency is now coordinating the power space with the city in providing equipment racks at its facility on Waterworks Hill or on Mount Sentinel. Strauss noted for the record that the agency is aware of the existing system's communications challenges and has been working to resolve the situation. Woodrow explained that the vendor, Red Tail Communications, expanded the scope and reduced the cost. The remaining question is whether the agency will have to build its own tower. The timeframe has been extended based on the city's schedule.

5.6 Debt Policy

Segal explained that the general purpose of the debt policy is to establish guidelines for debt issuance. The finance committee recommended a few minor edits. The new facility should outlive the debt and the debt will not affect ongoing operations. The finance committee voted to recommend that the board approve the policy with two minor modifications. Another benefit is that the debt policy will contribute to a potentially stronger bond rating. Wiener moved to approve the debt management policy with the two adjustments, MacArthur seconded the motion and passed unanimously.

5.7 Floating Mill Levy Resolution Update

Segal explained that recent legislation dictated that the mill levy is now configured as a dollar-based calculation for the tax year 2025. The staff recommends the first option that converts the mills to a dollar-based calculation. Cilimburg asked what the intent of the legislation was. Wiener answered that the legislature sought to lower property taxes. All the jurisdictions that have chosen the dollar-based mill levy have likely benefited from the conversion. Wiener moved to adopt the resolutions (tentatively numbered 25-08 and 25-09) that convert the 2013 and 2020 levies to dollar-based calculations. Sheppard seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

5.8 Supervisor Vehicle Purchase

Kuhl said one of the supervisor vehicles needed to be replaced and the lowest quote was $46,025 that will be funded with a federal grant and local match. Strauss asked whether the replacement vehicle had to match the original vehicle's specifications and if a hybrid vehicle was considered. Segal explained that the specific state funding stipulates certain specifications so finding the right fit was a challenge. Cilimburg motioned to approve the vehicle purchase for $46,025, MacArthur seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

5.9 New Facility Update

Woodrow thanked the board for their participation in the design workshop on September 24 and explained this segment would provide a timeframe for the project into 2026. The project financing would be split into two buckets – one for the facility and one for the shared infrastructure. The land purchase is going forward based on the county's approval of the corridor split. The FTA shared that despite budget modifications and federal funding reduction, the project funding remains viable. The challenge will be refining the design to align with debt management. A power purchase agreement is not feasible though. Once a ninety percent design is reached, the shared infrastructure portion can be put out to bid. Hess said there is not a way to make the project smaller without sacrificing some important aspects. MacArthur observed that the board would have to have a serious discussion about scope based on the most current information before purchasing the land. Strauss said the board needs to see an option where the project-specific debt is substantially reduced from the current configuration, how the agency would procure voter-approved funds and what the accompanying phasing burden would be. Woodrow reiterated that the shared infrastructure and the new facility cannot be delivered without debt. MacArthur said that the board will have to match that financing scenario to the agency's ability to carry long-term debt versus any desire to construct an incomplete facility.

5.10 Chief Executive Officer & General Manager Contract Management

Strauss closed the meeting for this session at 2:09 p.m.

Rocke left the meeting at 2:28 p.m.

MacArthur left the meeting at 2:54 p.m.

6.0 Adjournment

Strauss adjourned the meeting at 3:00 p.m.