

# MISSOULA URBAN TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT

## Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

December 18, 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

**Guests:** Derek Hitt, Teamsters Local No. 2 Business Agent; Don Groves, Teamsters Local No. 2 Shop Steward; Mike Starmer, Petitioner; Tiffany Stemple & Aurelia Damiani, JCCS

### 1.0 Call to Order and Roll Call

12:01 p.m. Strauss called the meeting to order and asked for a roll call.

### 2.0 Public Comment

Strauss advised that an updated staff report regarding the removal petitions would be presented and item 5.4 regarding the CEO & general manager's contract discussion is subject to the privacy rule dictating that the meeting be closed. He added that Hess had waived his right to privacy and wanted the vote to be open and public. Strauss said the initial discussion would be closed and re-opened again for the vote.

### 3.0 Approval of Minutes & Financial Statements

3.1 November 20, 2025, Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

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

3.2 September 2025 Financial Statements

3.3 October 2025 Financial Statements

Wiener explained that investment income is below budget but should catch up once the county resumes timely financial reporting. The commercial insurance payments are higher than budget as well due to one-time expenses associated from higher paid deductibles. Wiener moved to approve the financial statements, Oliver seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

## **4.0 Reports and Presentations**

### **4.1 Agency Activity Report**

Hess reported that the ongoing court action regarding surveillance videos against the agency had been dismissed. Modifications to the records retention and request policies to comply with the judge's ruling are now required and will be presented to the board in the new year.

Hess reported that he attended a recent legislative fly-in meeting in Washington, DC and had a productive meeting with Senator Daines' staff. He expressed his gratitude to the Senator's staff. He also had productive meetings with various professional associations and advocacy organizations.

Hoyle McCallum accepted the director of operations, maintenance, and safety position and will start on February 17. He is currently serving as director of operations and public safety in Eugene, Oregon. Hess related that McCallum was excited to work with the staff at Mountain Line.

12:08 p.m. – Oliver joined the meeting.

Woodrow said the agency is working on a Department of Environmental Quality grant for conducting a pipeline grid study. The agency signed a purchase agreement for used transformers from Frenchtown High School at a significant cost savings over new equipment. The transit center renovations will start in January with an anticipated completion date in May 2026. The staff anticipates presenting the bus stop improvement plan at the April board meeting. An overview of the new facility guaranteed maximum price will be presented at the March planning committee meeting.

Segal advised that the agency submitted a scope change to the Federal Transportation Administration on December 3 and anticipates a response sometime in early 2026. The next steps entail building an award in the federal grant management platform that could take another 60 days after which the funding package will be presented at the March or April board meeting.

## **5.0 Regular Business**

### **5.1 Petitions for Removal from the Urban Transportation District**

Hess explained that the agency had received four new petitions for removal in addition to the properties contained in the staff report packet. Due to the Montana Department of Revenue's January 1 deadline for processing petitions affecting the next tax year's assessments, staff processed all petitions received on an expedited timeframe. The other relevant entities have explained their processes and provided input and MUTD staff are finalizing a standardized comprehensive process for presenting at the January planning committee meeting. Wiener pointed out that several properties on the list were well within the transportation district boundaries and should not be removed. These discrepancies were missed during the late addition of properties to the agenda. Due to the discrepancies and to allow the

staff to revise the resolution approving the petitions, Strauss suggested moving to the next agenda item.

### 5.3 Charge Management Update – BetterFleet Contract

Strauss suggested moving to the next agenda item to allow time for the auditors to join the meeting remotely. Woodrow explained that the agency received 11 proposals when the RFP closed on November 19. After two rounds of interview, BetterFleet's proposal and estimated \$117,000 first year contract price scored the highest. Specifically, the user interface and dispatch capabilities were a highlight. The goal is to even out the charging demand and costs. Wiener asked if the cost savings justified the price. Woodrow responded that the system would transform how service and maintenance interacts with dispatch and operations. MacArthur urged the staff to evaluate electrification costs as new elements are added given the current funding constraints for electric vehicles. Strauss requested an impact study between using fully electric buses versus incorporating diesel hybrid buses. MacArthur asked for data on the financial impacts of not having low/no emission grants to purchase buses and noted it may be necessary to ask the community for a mill levy to pay for the electric buses. Wiener moved to authorize the CEO & General Manager to sign the contract with BetterFleet for charge management fleet operation totaling \$117,000 with two subsequent \$25,000 annual options. Cilimbung seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Strauss requested a report after the first year showing before and after comparisons.

### 5.2 FY 2025 Financial Audit

Segal introduced Tiffany Stemple and Aurelia Damiani, the auditors from JCCS. Stemple thanked the staff for their professionalism and collaboration during the annual audit process. She highlighted a material weakness regarding the misclassification of receivables from expected grant revenue and discussed significant risks, including incurring expenses for the new facility when federal funds have yet to be obligated. Stemple also mentioned the need for monthly reconciliation of warrants payable.

Damiani provided an overview of the financial statements, emphasizing a clean opinion from the auditors. Key points included an increase in capital assets and operating expenses driven by labor costs and depreciation. She also mentioned the absence of unearned revenue this year and the introduction of a new line item for other post-employment benefits.

Wiener expressed concern over the substantial rise in compensation in the FY25 budget, prompting a discussion on whether this increase was primarily due to overtime or base pay. Stemple confirmed that analytics were being performed to assess salary trends, while Damiani noted that the increase could be linked to overtime due to difficulties in filling certain roles. Segal suggested the need for a historical analysis into budgeted versus expended overtime expenses in relation to the budget. MacArthur emphasized the need to understand the labor cost of operating the buses and how to assess effectiveness in doing so. Wiener moved to accept the FY25 financial audit as presented. Oliver seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### 5.1 Petitions for Removal from the Urban Transportation District

Wally returned with a corrected list of petitioners and Hess supplied a motion to deny the six petitions that were not eligible for removal because the properties are located within the district. He also pointed out that the elections attorney advised verifying property owners instead of registered voters. MacArthur asked if there was a way to encourage residents to stay on the tax rolls. Strauss suggested that the

staff develop a plan for addressing the issue in the coming year. MacArthur moved to deny the six petitions for removal due to their location within the district and the petition for removal because the property was not on the district tax rolls. Sheppard seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. MacArthur moved to adopt Resolution 25-11 accepting the verified petitions for removal and directing the staff to submit the necessary exhibits in support of the resolution. Cilimburg seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

#### **5.4 CEO & General Manager Contract Renewal**

1:51 – Strauss closed the meeting for a discussion regarding the CEO & general manager's contract renewal.

2:09 – Strauss reopened the meeting and moved to approve the CEO & general manager's contract. MacArthur seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

#### **6.0 Adjournment**

Strauss adjourned the meeting at 2:10 p.m.