



Greater Minnesota Transit Provider Advisory Committee (GMTPAC)

Room 360 Transportation Building, St Cloud

Thursday, January 31, 2013

Advisory Committee:

Present:

*Cathleen Amick (Western Community Transit),
Marc Hall (Pipestone County Transit),
Tony Kellen (St. Cloud Metro Bus),
Greg Negard (Paul Bunyan Transit),
Craig Rempp (Chisago/Isanti County Heartland Express),
Amy Repinski (Three Rivers),
Melinda Skalicky (Steele County Area Transit),
Daryn Toso (Transit Alternatives).*

Absent:

*Mark Anderson (Greater Mankato Transit System),
Chad Gessell (RiverRider Public Transit),
Jack Larson (Arrowhead Transit)*

MnDOT Staff: *Lora Bennett, Tom Gottfried, John Groothuis, Bev Herfindahl, Sarah Lenz, Jean Meyer, Shaun Morrell, Mike Schadauer, Sue Siemer*

Call to Order:

Bev Herfindahl called the meeting to order at 1:10 pm.

Welcome/New Members

Mike Schadauer welcomed new members Marc Hall, Craig Rempp and Melinda Skalicky and everyone introduced themselves.

GMTPAC Administration

Bev Herfindahl found a volunteer to take minutes and set the next GMTPAC meeting for Tuesday, April 9 at 1:00 pm at the St Cloud MnDOT facility. This will be the day before the spring workshop. The following meeting will be in the summer at a date to be determined.

There was a review of the purpose of the group:

- Help guide MnDOT on transit business
- Communicate GMTPAC issues and outcomes to non-member peers
- Discuss transit issues raised by members

Topics were set for future meetings along with GMTPAC members to work on them.

For April:

- Impact of new national health care law on transit providers—Sarah, Cathleen, Marc, and Greg
- Asset management—Tom, Craig, and Tony

For later:

- Fleet management (replacement, alternate fuels, maintenance, etc)—Jan, Melinda, and Tony will designate someone from St. Cloud



2013 Contract Review

Tom Gottfried said 2013 operating grant contracts were delayed by a lack of current federal certifications and assurances. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is still updating them to comply with the new transportation law—Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21). MnDOT eventually chose to execute the operating contracts without the new certifications and assurances, but will have to amend the contracts when the certifications and assurances become available. Capitol grant contracts will go out for execution the week of Feb 4. They refer to the certifications and assurances from the operating contracts so they will not need amending.

Sarah Lenz said District Transit Project Managers will send technical assistance briefs about tracking new service for expansion/unmet needs. These are tracked to check if the new service is a good investment.

John Groothuis announced Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom grant contracts will go out for execution in February. They will cover service beginning January 1 for most projects. However it will cover service beginning on the Surface Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) modification date for three projects that were not already in the STIP. John will notify the affected projects of the date the modified STIP is approved.

John said he expects the Section 5310 (Elderly and Disabled) program to fund 18 metro area and 13 Greater Minnesota vehicles. This will occur after the JARC and New Freedom grant contracts are completed.

Tom briefly described changes to the JARC and New Freedom programs caused by MAP-21. Cathleen Amick asked if there were any New Freedom support group. John said there isn't. Shaun Morrell said the intercity bus solicitation is about to be advertised in the State Register. Significant changes being implemented with this application cycle include:

- Network of routes desired for new service or enhancements
- Opportunities for new providers to participate, including public systems and smaller private providers
- State match availability to continue 50/50 operating match program

Annual Spring Workshop Agenda Topics

Lora Bennett listed the agenda topics planned for the Spring Workshop, scheduled for April 10 at the MnDOT training center in St. Cloud:

- Contract compliance
- Buffalo Ridge coordination panel
- Computer aided routing technology
- Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP)
- MAP-21

Safety and Security Training Update

Sarah Lenz announced that day 2 of the Spring Workshop on April 11 will be a Bus Safety and Security Workshop. Transit providers should consider bringing all their safety/security people including people from non-transit parts of your organization. The main speaker will be Ream Lazaro.



Bus Replacement Beyond 2013

Bev Herfindahl described how the funding that will be available to Area Transportation Partnerships (ATPs) for local funding decisions will be greatly reduced as MAP-21 starts to take effect. This will hit in 2017. She encouraged transit providers to continue to communicate with their ATPs to keep bus replacement a priority.

2013 Legislative Initiatives and Issues

Mike Schadauer said he gave a presentation to the Senate Committee on Transportation and Public Safety on January 23. He showed the committee how fairly nice looking revenues must be balanced by the concerns for capital funding described in the topic above. Unless new federal funds are found, Minnesota will have to use state funds on bus replacement.

Mike reiterated the two requests MnDOT has in for legislative changes:

- Change the language about the schedule of grant contract payments to make it more flexible. This will make it easier to use General Fund or Motor Vehicle Sales Tax revenues, whichever is available, to make contracted quarterly payments.
- Split out \$1.2 million of the General Fund appropriation for Greater Minnesota Transit for the state's share of the portion of Northstar commuter rail operating outside the metro area and make it exempt from the requirements of §174.24 subd. 1. This will enable MnDOT to move the money directly to Met Council/Metro Transit and avoid the administrative efforts currently required by MnDOT, Sherburne County and Metro Transit.

Sarah Lenz described new Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) language that will be proposed through the Department of Human Services. The content was similar to proposals made by Sarah and Noel Shughart and is somewhat modeled after transit. It calls for centralized distribution at the county level through a coordinated program. It includes a hierarchy of seven levels of service.

Other – Set Future Meeting Dates

The next meeting was set earlier in the meeting for Tuesday, April 9 at 1:00 pm at the St Cloud MnDOT facility.

Adjourn

Bev Herfindahl adjourned the meeting at about 3:30 pm.