



Minnesota Regional Transit
Board: Records.

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REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

270 Metro Square Building
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101
612/292-8789

MEETING NOTICE

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Thursday, February 11, 1988
RTB Offices, Back Conference Room
4:00 p.m.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Discussion of the Metropolitan Transit Planning Report of the Legislative Audit Commission

Elliott Perovich
Chairman

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Lofgren
M O'Hara

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REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD
ROLL CALL AND ATTENDANCE SHEET

R. Severance
Barry Shadec
Kurt Strom

DATE: 2/11/81
BOARD OR COMMITTEE: Comm of whole

MEMBER NAME	PRESENT	VOTE	VOTE	VOTE	VOTE	VOTE
Chairman	✓					
Doris Caranicas	✓					
Ruth Franklin	✓					
Carole Faricy	✓					
Alison Fuhr	✓					
Rochelle Graves	✓					
George Isaacs	✓					
Paul Joyce	✓					
Edward Kranz	✓					



270 Metro Square Building, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101
612/292-8789

Minutes of the Meeting of the
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
RTB offices
February 11, 1988

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Elliott Perovich, Chairman; Doris Caranicas; Carole Faricy; Ruth Franklin; Alison Fuhr; George Isaacs; Rochelle Graves; Paul Joyce; Ed Kranz

OTHERS PRESENT: Gregory Andrews, Mary Fitzgerald, Judy Hollander, Tom Beaver, Linda Ehlers, Ed Kouneski, Jan Hennings, Liz Carpenter, Mark Ryan, Howard Blin, Mike Kuehn, Regional Transit Board Staff; Gregory Korstad, legal counsel; Natalio Diaz and Karen Lyons, Metropolitan Council; Joel Alter, Legislative Audit Commission; Mary O'Hare-Anderson, Rosanne Severance, Kurt Strom and Barry Schade, Minnesota Council on Disability

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. and roll taken. The meeting was called to begin discussion of the Legislative Audit Commission's January 1988 report, Metropolitan Transit Planning.

In response to Fuhr's question, Alter said there is no deadline for the formal response to the report; several months is the rule. There may be some questions raised at the Legislature, but this meeting may be one of several on this topic.

There was discussion of the sources of funds. All the metro agencies are looking at that question and there will be a legislative study commission formed to study the whole subject of transportation funding.

Fuhr said the legislative direction was to delegate responsibility for handling Metro Mobility complaints. Alter said there have been some standards, but due to the staffing problems, they have not been strictly enforced. He expects that to change.

On Page 17, fourth paragraph, Isaacs said the board was criticized for retaining inexperienced staff. He would like to hire some people with more experience. The board should start looking for experienced people in the paratransit field because we have to handle \$70 million per year on regular route and Metro Mobility. The board has other things to handle besides Metro Mobility. Joyce agreed that we need people with street sense who run transit systems. Faricy said this is basically a planning agency and asking if they were talking about operating. Isaacs said even in planning you have to know how things run and have a feel for the operation. Faricy asked who he would add to staff now; Isaacs said he would add another person to Metro Mobility.

Franklin said she hoped the board would more closely follow the recommendation to contract out the total service of Metro Mobility; i.e., the computer service belongs to the region. There has been tremendous staff effort put into Metro

Mobility and, while you cannot meet everyone's expectations, it is better than what we had. We got a slow start in hiring and then complement was limited. In the 1989 budget we should look carefully at need and be sure we have staff to fulfill those needs. Our staff has worked very hard and had a lot of hinderances because of turnover and large assignments for the small number of people. We need to look at hiring someone in charge of Metro Mobility or contract it out. Perovich asked Andrews to gather information on the levels of staff experience.

Kranz said the staff and its direction is a direct result of goals established by the board. The board identified goals and has not followed through and triggered hiring of staff. There have been board priorities agreed upon, but not followed through. Metro Mobility and privatization have taken a lot of board and staff time. The board should redefine its goals. We have directed staff into quagmires.

Faricy questioned the line of authority from the executive director. Perovich said he has not gotten involved with hiring staff except for Judy Hollander, Les Johnson, Greg Andrews and Ghaleb Abdul-Rahman. Hiring is strictly the responsibility of the executive director. Andrews was asked to discuss policy decisions and political issues with the chairman. The chairman is responsible for the assistant to the chair.

Isaacs said he would like advance notice of upcoming issues. Andrews said the calendar in the Friday Report is an attempt to give members advance notice but at some times of the year there is a real crunch on staff and board. Fuhr said since the committee reorganization members no longer receive a six month schedule of committee issues.

Fuhr asked if the metro agencies will combine services when they move. Andrews said many functions are already combined. In 1988 the board is budgeted to look for its own computer system.

Kranz said he is not convinced the board lacks staff but perhaps it should reconsider where staff is spending its time. Andrews said there was a presentation on the 1988 budget, that included discussion of staff priorities and how they relate to the budget. Much more time was spent on LRT than was budgeted and other things suffered. Metro Mobility has required more time than anticipated. Kranz said that will not change.

Fuhr asked if it is possible to cut back on staff by doubling up. Andrews said the Metropolitan Area Financial Advisory Committee (MAFAC) was charged to look at areas where coordination could be enhanced. It was determined that the most potential savings are in the area of capital equipment.

Isaacs said, referring to page 20, the board should communicate more clearly and be clear about the roles of the chairman and the executive director. Perovich said he has asked members in the past to make their requests through the executive director rather than directly to staff. Andrews explained that in the internal process for handling agenda items the staff person responsible for an item puts together a discussion paper. There are internal deadlines and every Tuesday there is a management staff meeting to discuss agenda items and scheduling.

Faricy said that two months ago the board wanted help with a lobbyist and asked why the issue did not resurface. Perovich said the board decided that the lobbyist would report directly to the members and instructed Charles Weaver to put together a proposal. In the interim, letters were received from two legislators expressing their opposition to the additional lobbying expense and Perovich had indicated to the members his own opposition to the proposal. The board accepted the responsibility for dealing with Weaver. The legislative program was on the agenda at the next meeting. Faricy said if the lobbyist had been on the agenda the board would have discussed it. Perovich said the legislative program was approved that day and the board had made it clear that it wanted to deal directly with the lobbyist--there was a misunderstanding. Caranicas said a legislative training session is scheduled next week.

Kranz asked, regarding Page 21, what is the proper procedure is for board discussion; is the intent to foster member discussion or to be chair-directed? The chairman said he will continue to express his opinions as do the other members of the board.

Isaacs said he would prefer that a motion be placed on the table with discussion following the motion.

Fuhr asked what the most effective way is to present ideas. Perovich said members should send policy issues to him and planning issues to Andrews. He would like the board to take some initiative and present some new ideas and programs. Further, members should support board decisions even when they personally oppose them.

Page 22: The chairman said the board has been accused of spending too much time on light rail transit. Fuhr said she disagrees with the stance the Metropolitan Council has taken on LRT. The board should be in the lead on this and the Council backed off, making it very difficult for RTB. LRT should be a regional responsibility. Franklin said Metropolitan Council was directed to go back to the Legislature with a recommendation for coordination. Staff felt this was not the appropriate year to try to change the recommendation because the Legislature gave county rail authorities the authority to go ahead. They felt the new legislation should be presented next year. She questions whether it is wise for the board to hire an engineer before the legislation is changed up because of the restraints on the board's role. Isaacs disagreed, saying the board is criticized for being reactive. The board may be criticized for hiring an engineer but might be criticized even more for doing nothing.

In response to Perovich's question, Karen Lyons said the Council decided it will not seek new legislation but will review any plan or action for consistency with Council policy. Hollander said the Council report is different from the TAB's position that was significantly changed to state that if anything other than county dollars are used, the Council should play a stronger role.

Kranz said the tone of this discussion is justifying things instead of deciding what to do. There is a critical report with specific analysis of things that were not dealt with and he would like members to set more specific goals to deal with those particular issues rather than going back into history. He asked what the board will do with LRT. Andrews said requests for engineers' resumes have been sent out and 30 were received. Hollander reviewed and categorized them. People on the bottom of the list were notified that they were not being considered and the top people were told they are still in the running. Knowing the uncertainty of the role, we cannot tell people where were

are going since most of the action is in Hennepin County. It is difficult to ask an expert to come here on the prospect that we might get the authority. Isaacs said the person would be mature and could decide whether or not to take the risk. We can develop a program of involvement in LRT. If we do not do something it will pass us by.

Regarding suburban service, Kranz said the board delayed it because of Transit Service Needs Assessment or Competitive Bidding, but the report says these things were rarely the topic of discussion. The board should plan how to deal with it. Franklin said the board should consider hiring someone to work only on suburban service, which may be more necessary than an LRT engineer. The Legislature said the board cannot get involved in LRT. If Hennepin County wants an engineer, would they use an RTB employee? The board received a lot of criticism about suburban service and perhaps should concentrate on that. Joyce said we will not have credibility in that area unless we have the people on board. Faricy said Hennepin County did not wait for anyone. We are a totally different agency and may not be able to do that. Kranz said there are lots of reasons not to get involved in suburban service. How are we reacting to the cities that are ready to work on opt-out? If we encourage them and help them provide better service, there would be a better reaction. The chairman said his understanding is that the board wants to move ahead on light rail. (Graves arrived.) The board has placed a high priority on suburban service.

Fuhr said the RTB is supposed to encourage local commissions. We could combine efforts and create a traffic management organization. She asked about a statement Natalio Diaz made on the Rideshare Program. Hollander said RTB does not have a specific policy, but as a product of the evaluation staff will recommend several Rideshare policies to the board.

Perovich said there has to be a high priority on setting goals and getting away from reacting to everyone in the world. Franklin said the most successful city councils hold work sessions, sometimes with a facilitator, and set goals.

Kranz said the board should deal more often with staff expenditures. Andrews said the monthly financial reports present information on expenditures. There is a direct relationship between expenditures and staff time spent on the work program, allowing members to monitor activities. Kranz said staff should inform the board when they are required to spend too much time on an unexpected work product and other work plan elements delayed. Perovich said staff should feel free to tell members during the year that there is no staff time for new projects.

Rozanne Severance, Vice Chair of Transportation Handicapped Advisory Committee, said a rider called at 6:15 a.m. today and could not get a ride. At 11 a.m. she tried to pick up a cancellation and was told she would be notified at 8 p.m. whether a trip would be available. This opens an area where a provider can turn down any person they choose, which means suburban people cannot get the rides for which they contracted. Severance supervises 15 disabled employees, most of whom live in suburbs. Their rides are consistently late and she asked the board to check into it. Legally someone may try to prove discrimination against suburban users and the board could be liable.

Isaacs said the purpose of this meeting is to discuss the Legislative Audit Commission report.

Mary O'Hare-Anderson said she had to spend time yesterday and today with a sobbing girl who needed to get to a job interview. The board has to do something. Isaacs said the issue cannot be solved at this meeting.

The chairman said an agenda was posted and we are in danger of discussing something not on the agenda. Legal counsel indicated that continuing could violate the Open Meeting Law.

Perovich said if members want information they have to direct staff at board meetings.

Fuhr said there was more discussion at smaller committee meetings. Kranz suggested that some items be directly assigned to ad hoc committees.

Graves said she has been asking for an overlay map of providers since May of last year and has not received it. Andrews said staff did not create a map, but had given her a schedule of providers. Fuhr said she also wants an overlay map. Perovich said the cost should be considered.

Isaacs discussed the Friday Report and said he would like to know what the chairman is doing. Fuhr suggested that Mike Kuehn prepare items for the report.

Discussion turned to the Implementation and Financial Plan. Andrews said staff refers to it a great deal and the MTC budget was reviewed against it, although business items brought to the board do not cite references to the IFP.

In discussing recommendations on page 31, Isaacs said staff should build bridges with MTC and get ranges of costs associated with these strategies.

It was agreed that another meeting would be held to continue discussion of the report. Isaacs moved and Farcy seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Fitzgerald
Secretary

A copy of the LAC report
is in the file of the
next meeting - 2/25/88.

RFB
Committee of the Whole

Feb. 11, 1988

Discussion on legislative Auditor report

- EP: Intro. Walk through full report.
- AF: p.4 Reliance on property tax, pot'l use of sales tax not likely to be viewed favorably by legislator, but may be worth pursuing
- EP: May need to deal w/ this when whole funding issue stakes out.
- GA: ITP discusses need for dedicated funding source.
- AF: At Senate hearing, mention of \$7.2M...
- AF: Performance and compliance standards for MTC — why not give it all to MTC
- JA: Staffing issues led to not strictly enforcing past standards
- * GI: Need more experienced staff... acknowledge and acknowledge. Inexperience of staff caused some past problems. Get people who have had some "knocks" and know how to handle situations that deal w/ in transit planning
- PJ: Need people who have run transit systems and know about operations
- GI: Need this background in order to do proper planning
- CF: What would you propose, w/ personnel hiring
- GI: Get another person to do MM paratr. operations — need a streetwise person who can handle "multiplicity," sort things out (free up other staff to do other things)
- RF: Contract out the full MM service — MTC holds contracts, do it all. Many other things have suffered because of all things have had to do

w/ Metro Mobility. Hire contractor — or
general mgr — paratransit operations expert

AF: I'm thinking ambassadors

GI: Not me... paratr. ops. person is needed.

EP: Experience level of staff, in general, questioned —
what about staffing numbers? Need more?

RF: Need to look at complement.

ALSO look at hiring someone who is
completely in charge of MM _____ or
contract it out.

EK: Staff and direction should
follow Board goals —
Board hasn't followed
through ... exception:

Board triggered the URT staff position.

Board has not consciously dealt w/ this.

Metro Mobility and privatization issues,
alone, have taken much staff and Board
time. May need to steer away from these...

TALK TO JUDY ABOUT KETRON, INC.

DC:

EK: Suburban transit improvements have been
accomplished w/o competitive bidding.

EP: Legislature played program w/ us

EK: AS Board, have misdirected staff on occasion

CF: Use of authority betw. Chair and ED/Dir
Are there problems?

EP: Chair does not get inv. in hiring... ~~at~~

TALK WITH ABOUT
THE TASKS IN
MBO'S WE
HAVE MISSED

Hiring is strictly Exec. Dir. responsibility

ASK Exec Dir. to run policy or govt.

reg. staff work through him...

GI: Asked to make decisions, at times, w/o
forewarning. Helps to have mtgs. ahead,
for discussion. Plan ahead. Give Board
idea what may be coming down pipe
Need to address items in a more deliberate
manner.

GA: If Bd feels crowded w/ info., think about
how crowded staff is to produce it!

AF: Use to get Policy Committee agenda of upcoming
items from JH — helpful to re-establish.

GA: yes, but it takes time. we'll do our best.

AF: Are we using computers?

EK: Not sure if we're lacking in staff. Might be
good to re-tush it so Board will see where ~~where~~
staff is spending time. Info. is lacking.
Mgmt. is lacking. Until recently — better
financial info. should be a high priority —
Information Services.

GA: Priorities have shifted since the work program
presentation was given by JH, KT, EK...

E.g. LRT — JH and KT spent much time on LRT.

EK: Spending much time on MM and

GA: Had six staff and 2 Bd at recent mtg.

ER: It spending so much time of MM - idea of contracting it out might be great!

EP: On staffing - probably not enough people spending time on Jansit planning before - Bd may want to comment

MF: UAC report shows net gain of persons, not costs... is it possible to cut back on staff ~~in~~ in certain areas, to economize, consolid. services of Waste Commission, etc.

GA: Have MAFAC committee - Legisl. had changed it to look at areas where coordination would be possible...

EP: Capabilities don't always match up. Eg. computer needs of Met Council and RTB

EP: no problems w/ retreats.

EP: Need for Bd. to communicate more w/ members. no problem with that. (Laughter.)

GI: Two way street - Need for Bd. members to speak up... would like to see duties of Chair spelled out more... where responsibilities stop and Exec. Dir. starts. Possible?

EP: Chair gets inv. w/ staff activities only when there are policy or political implications...

GA: Explains staff process for review and approval of Bd. agenda items... Talks to Bd. too.

CF: Have a problem. One of EP's jobs is to present legist. agenda to Bd. Seems to have dropped. Bd. desire for lobbyist.

EP: Bd. instructed CW to dev. proposal and report directly to Bd. EP received 2 letters from legist. - could not be a part of it

EX: why wasn't CW on the agenda.

EP: did not have anything to do w/ letters.

CF: How did legist. find out?
Newspapers called next day!

CF: What you're saying is that we, as Bd. mbrs., are responsible for not calling CW forth...

EP: Bd didn't decide to bring it up

PJ: Material in box - Special Bd mtg on 18th or 19th

ER: Chair dominant. What is proper role of chair according to Roberts Rules or bylaws. Should chair refrain from discussion? focus more on procedures.

GP: Got wrong chair for that, but consciously do not make motions

PJ: Matter of style

GI: What chair to have opportunity to
express opinions. Prefer discussion
to occur after motion is on the table.

AF: what would like to see as proven for
getting innovative ideas across...
write down, give to Greg, or whom?
what is most effective way to present ideas?

GI: Write it out. Xerox machines work
like crazy.

DC: Ad hoc committee named nicely. small
group, quick discussion.

EP: would like to see Bd. mbrs. take more
initiative of ideas, issues, programs —
grab hold of issues — whether sticky or not —
accept actions as Bd. action —
don't say — I didn't vote for it, I don't
support it. Bd. decisions are Bd.
decisions, whether liked or not. That's
way policy boards should act.

PJ: Board chair should work together.

DC: Obviously you're seen as dominant,
you're full time.

Discussion on URT

EK: What about suburban transit? Cities who want to opt-out. Positive step to give them planning \$s. Instead, staff says no, fund it yourself.

It's not just URT

EP: JH - go ahead interview for Prel. Engineer

EP: Do we have a FT sub. service person...
How are things going here?

EK: current one we don't need staff on.
Oalco City opt-out. Worse thing we can do is take over now.

AF: Response of cities low. Staff not interested. Focus on commissions, like TMO... fulfill function of local response to us... city staff person take both roles

AF: Mado made statement that RRB does not have a policy on R/S.

- EP: Need to set up agency goals — pump that info into staff. Stay focused, get away from reacting to everyone in world.
- RF: Most good city courials where have retreat and do zero in or what goals shall be... retreat seems well suited for this.
- EP: Look to staff for suggest cars or timing — goals to trigger work program
- EK: Oves should monitor staff time — to see that time gets spent on activities that support goals...
- GA: Bd. responsibility to monitor too
- EK: Staff needs to come back and tell Bd we do not have resources, unexpected, to keep program going on specified work activities...
- EP: Realize time when didn't budget for something... bite bullet, tradeoff
- EK: People here on MM —
- RS: "Gal" called for a ride at 6:15 am to get an appt. for job interview
Prouder said: will call back at 8:00pm tonight to tell you whether you have a ride... Prouder can turn down any person it chooses, which means people in suburbs are not getting rides... Asking you, Board, to check into this. Discrimination

may be issue - legally being left open,
should check w/ lawyers.

AF: Given person is certified, if slow
cause, could they call private cab,
get receipt

BR: Some can't use a claim.

GI: Here for single purpose, to discuss
audit. Should stay with that.

MOHA: Spent time on phone w/ sobbing
person, arranged for friend to pick
her up, asked friend to give me
mileage bill. Crisis. It can
all be solved.

GT: We cannot solve it at this meeting!

EP: Attorney in agreement, on the way
to discuss this.

AF: Comes away from Systems Committee
discussion feeling dynamic discussion
and occluded.

EP: Who's responsible.

AF: Bd. mbrs. Discussion Committee has
had about Transp. Policy Plan has been
stimulating.

EC: Issues seem to get lost. One is lobbying.
Other is suburban funding guidelines.

EP: Bd has prerogative to go ad hoc.

*

RG: (Damn it!) give Rochelle the maps. Everyone wants to see a map.

EP: Look at cost to produce it.

RG: Need to see something concrete on paper, instead of grasping a wire over here, over there. Keep some garbage going... nothing is concrete.

EK: 2 people ~ planning vs. 4 people ~ planning

AF: want port chart showing status of projects — see it on the wall when walk in, to check progress.

Plan out length of time, etc.

CF: chart on p. 27 Talked about how much time to run. where's it go — Hardic. Transpo. Pl. or Pgm. Adm.

IGATHY'S
IDEA ON
TARGET

AF: 5700 hours or Pgm. adm. 3 FTE people.

GI: Chairman's Report on weekly basis — sent w/ Friday report. Put in writing.

AF: Mike can do that for you.

EP: May get long.

AF: OK, do it.

EK: Ever use dictaphone?

AF: Board does not adequately use IFF. Don't use it... if asked question, wouldn't know.

EP: Needs to use it as decisionmaking tool

GI: When approve IFF — become a reference, staff use it as a guiding document...
At time know so it is when we have our knowledge of it

EP: utility programs

should reflect IFF.

plan needs to have more specific guidelines in it...

DOGA — INDEX
THE IFF

GA: Perhaps need to reference IFF more when bring items before Board
IFF is key planning document we have.

Council will no longer be approving capital budgets when IFF is final.

when Council renews capital budget, always say: amend IFF.

GI: Staff needs to build bridges w/ MTR when it comes to est. costs, putting dollars and ~~cents~~ ^{cents} on it.
Have MTR partic. in est. costs w/ new services...

AF: will KT be responding to table on p. 32
about what Needs Assessment does
not cover, as required by law

GI: RTB needs to come to a ^{full} agreement w/ MTC
on the four-factor cost model... pick up
discussion here next time.