



Minnesota Regional Transit
Board: Records.

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REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD
Mears Park Centre, 230 East 5th Street
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101
229-2700

MEETING OF THE REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

Mears Park Centre Chambers
March 2, 1992
4 p.m.

AMENDED AGENDA

- A. OATH OF OFFICE - BOARD MEMBER THOMAS SATHER, DISTRICT B**
- B. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**
- C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
- D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - 1. Regional Transit Board Meeting, February 18, 1992
- E. CHAIR'S REPORT**
 - 1. Driver of the Month Awards, James Reese and Tom Cassidy, Handicabs, Inc.
- F. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**
- G. REPORT OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE**
Sandra Hilary, Chair
 - 1. Capital Funding and Acquisition Policy for Opt-Out Programs
 - 2. Five-Year Plan Schedule and Process
 - 3. MTC 1992 Fleet Replacement Plan and Analysis
 - 4. Review of Plans for Mall of America Transit Hub
 - 5. Overview of Intermodal Transportation and Efficiency Act
- H. OTHER BUSINESS**
- I. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Michael J. Ehrlichmann
Chair

REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

ROLL CALL AND ATTENDANCE SHEET

DATE: 3/2/92

BOARD OR COMMITTEE: Board

Member Name Present Vote Vote Vote Vote Vote Vote Vote Vote

ISSUE

Mike Ehrlichmann /

Maryann Campo /

Doris Caranicas /

Sharon Feess /

Ruth Franklin /

Val M. Higgins /

Sandra Hilary /

Ruby Hunt /

Tom Sather /

Don Scheel /

Tom Workman /

Visitors

Staff

T. Johnson MTC

MOHA

de Vries

Ken Powers



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612/229-2700

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD
February 18, 1992**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Michael J. Ehrlichmann, Chair; Maryann Campo; Doris Caranicas; Sharon Feess; Ruth Franklin; Val M. Higgins; Sandra Hilary; Ruby Hunt, Don Scheel; Tom Workman

OTHERS PRESENT: Michael Robertson, Larkin, Daly, Hoffman and Lindgren, Ltd., RTB Legal Counsel; Arnie Entzel, Amalgamated Transit Union; Kurt Strom; Christopher Gran, Metro Mobility Administrative Center; Mary Jo Nichols, Metropolitan Center for Independent Living; Sara Lenz Brodt, Ebenezer Society; Judy Hollander, Stephanie Eiler, Howard Blin, Suzanne Hanson, Cynthia Curry, Ed Kouneski, Assata Brown, Mary Fitzgerald, Regional Transit Board staff

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The chair called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. and roll was taken.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was amended and distributed prior to the start of the meeting. The oath of office was deleted because Thomas Sather, the new RTB member from District B, cannot begin his term until February 19. Hilary moved and Workman seconded that the amended agenda be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Franklin moved and Feess seconded approval of the following minutes.

Policy Committee Meeting, January 27, 1992
Regional Transit Board Meeting, February 3, 1992

The motion carried unanimously.

CHAIR'S REPORT

The Driver of the Month award could not be presented because the recipient was not present. The chair announced that Legislative Committee Chair Workman has called for a meeting of the committee at 3:30 p.m. on February 24, immediately before the Policy Committee meeting. All board members are members of that committee.

Blin briefed the board on the Metro Council's transit facilities plan that has been adopted by the council. A great many details have not yet been resolved. The plan includes the basic elements of the first draft. The Regional Transit Board (RTB) would be the lead agency on preliminary engineering for light rail transit (LRT) with an as yet undetermined role for the regional rail authorities. In some areas of the proposed central corridor, preliminary engineering is completed or nearly completed, but the alternatives analysis must be finished. The Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) would control final design and be responsible for construction with the rail authorities' role yet to be determined.

Hunt said she has been briefed by the Ramsey Regional Railroad Authority staff person and is very encouraged. Mn/DOT has tried to address the various parties' issues and present a united front. Ehrlichmann said everyone agrees on what and where LRT should be built and how it should be funded. That is a remarkable consensus and everyone can concentrate their energies in that direction.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Andrews said he attended the American Public Transit Association's General Manager's conference in Houston. Campo, Feess, Andrews and Eiler then toured Calgary and Portland studying LRT. Feess said the trip convinced her of the merits of LRT. Campo said she has pushed this project for the last six years, but our buildings are not being equipped for future LRT, nor have the highways been designed for it. This region is very far behind other cities. Feess said Calgary and Portland officials stressed the need for building consensus and working with all the players, including individual property owners.

REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Committee Chair Franklin reviewed the report of the committee's February 10, 1992 meeting.

Metropolitan Transit Commission Federal Transportation Administration Section 9 Grant Application, Resolution No. 92-02

Franklin moved and Workman seconded:

That the Regional Transit Board approve the Metropolitan Transit Commission's application to the Federal Transportation Administration for federal fiscal year 1992 funding under the Section 9 program as outlined in Resolution No. 92-02.

On a roll call vote, the motion and resolution were unanimously approved.

Metro Mobility 1992 Provider Contract

Franklin moved and Caranicas seconded:

That the Regional Transit Board:

1. Authorize the executive director to execute a Metro Mobility 1992 provider agreement for services to be rendered beginning March 1, 1992 through December 31, 1992;
2. Suspend the Trip Assurance Program effective April 1, 1992, after 30-day notice is provided to riders; this action accommodates the providers' need for improved financial performance;
3. Direct RTB staff to proceed with development of a request for proposals for operation of Metro Mobility service beginning January 1, 1993; and
4. Instruct RTB staff to continue reviewing financial and operating performance data from the providers and to report back to the Administration and Finance Committee as appropriate.

Kurt Strom, speaking as a user of the system, said he is concerned about the suspension of the Trip Assurance Program (TAP). Those who attended the public hearing on the Americans with Disabilities Plan know that the plan met with opposition and a common complaint was that ADA was intended to be a minimum, not a ceiling, but this plan establishes the floor as the ceiling. This action takes the program below the floor. The Federal Transit Administration will have to grant a waiver to suspend TAP. The RTB argues that there is no alternative, but the lack of long-term planning by RTB has created the problem. In the beginning of the program there were more trips than anyone expected so the one-hour leeway was incorporated in an attempt to deal with those trips. What concerns him is that RTB has not put together a working group of users and providers to come up with a way of dealing with the problem. Some providers are threatening to drop out and, since it has been RTB's policy not to consider including other providers in the program, RTB cannot argue. Had RTB considered other providers sometime ago it would not be in a "your money or your life" position. Going along with Metro Mobility is like riding with a student driver who doesn't look beyond the hood of the car and does a lot of weaving.

Workman said he is concerned that this is merely the tip of the iceberg for this program. It was a hard vote last summer to reduce the fares to bring them in line with ADA and most of the board felt it was a short-lived victory. With the news from the Legislature about the state's financial problems, his area may not even have service. The board is carrying a high deficit on this program and will incur more and it is likely the program will be whittled down to a point where we won't recognize it. Campo concurred with Workman and urged Strom and people with whom he associates to contact their legislators to ask for funding for the program. People can contact Sherry Munyon to get legislators' names. Last summer, she, Tom Workman and Val Higgins and abstained from the vote on the fare rollback to demonstrate their concern over the funding shortage.

Higgins noted that a letter had been distributed from HealthEast stating that they will no longer participate in the Metro Mobility program.

Ehrlichmann said the providers have to operate without going into debt. In the six years of this program's evolution it has changed and grown enormously. No one has developed a service like this anywhere in the country and we learned as we went along. Staff had no option except to bring this recommendation to the board.

Hilary said she is always surprised at the animosity surrounding this program. The providers want to provide the service if they can, the board wants to, the constituency wants the service, as do the legislators. The board does not have the money. The situation may not get as serious as Workman expects, but while it is easy to berate people, bring suggestions to the board instead. The dollars are driving the program and there may not be an enemy in this situation. The board would not take this action if there were any way to avoid it. It is illegal for the agency to keep going further and further in debt. Vote was taken and the motion was unanimously approved.

Extension of Consulting Agreement with Mary O'Hara-Anderson

Franklin moved and Fees seconded:

That the Regional Transit Board authorize the executive director to extend the consulting agreement with Mary O'Hara-Anderson until May 31, 1992 in an amount not to exceed \$13,300.

The motion was unanimously approved.

OTHER BUSINESS

Hunt said she was unable to attend the committee meeting when the MTC's long-term liability for health benefit costs was discussed and she would like to know what the board's responsibility is in connection with that financial liability. The chair said RTB is responsible for planning, policy and financing. The MTC is responsible for operations but the RTB can question whether MTC is meeting its fiduciary responsibility. Hunt asked that a legal opinion be obtained.

Franklin said the board has to levy taxes and meet the MTC budget, which puts some responsibility with the RTB. The presentation was made because some questions had been raised in the budget review and members wanted MTC to look at ways of decreasing the liability. Some cities are requiring employees to make a higher co-payment for health coverage and members want to get the message to MTC that they need to find ways to decrease the costs. Caranicas said this highlights the need for a national health policy.

Responding to Campo's question, Hollander said discussions have been held with MTC regarding revenue recovery ratio and other budget reductions. Quarterly reporting has been scheduled with the first report to be at the first Administration and Finance Committee meeting in April.

Scheel said he assumes those benefits are a negotiated item and the board will not see anything until the next round of negotiations are completed. Health benefits will be a major component of those negotiations. Higgins said there are also retirement benefits and other factors included in the memorandum.

Hilary said health insurance and retirement benefits are not the problem, it is their cost. Everyone needs these things. Franklin said it is her impression that the report was an actuarial study of future cost to MTC of the coverage they provide. Their retirement is under MSRS with a small number under PERA.

Entzel said he does not know if RTB is trying to negotiate MTC's labor contract. The suggestion that the employee pick up great share of health care and that wages be frozen is something must be faced. If people do not get health care they will be on welfare roles and a problem for someone else. He asked that RTB let MTC negotiate the contract instead of this board.

Mark Hoisser said his company's health care coverage will exceed fuel costs this year, which affects their rates. They will be asking employees to accept a freeze and contribute 40-percent.

There being no other business, Hilary moved and Feess seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was unanimously approved and the meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

I hereby certify that the foregoing constitutes a true and accurate record of the Regional Transit Board's meeting of February 18, 1992.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Fitzgerald
Secretary

Approved this second day of March 1992.