

Meeting Minutes – August 25, 2022

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

REGIONAL METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY OF OMAHA

2222 Cuming Street

Omaha, Nebraska, 68102

AUGUST 25, 2022

MINUTES

The Regional Metropolitan Transit Authority of Omaha Board met in Regular Session on Thursday, August 25, 2022, at 8:30 a.m., in person at the Authority's Administration Building, 2222 Cuming Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68102, and virtually due to COVID-19. Notice was given in advance of the meeting by publication in the Omaha World Herald. For the benefit of the public in attendance, a copy of the Open Meetings Law is posted in the meeting room and the Agenda is published on the display in the facility lobby. The following persons were in attendance at the meeting:

Authority Board:

Ms. Amy Haase, Chair

Mr. Othello Meadows, Vice Chair (Absent)

Mr. Jay Lund

Mr. Daniel Lawse (Absent)

Ms. Julia Plucker

Authority Staff:

L. Cencic, CEO/Executive Director

I. Maldonado, Deputy Executive Officer

D. Grant, HR Director

E. Simpson, Legal Director

K. Pendland, IT Director

W. Clingman, Finance Director

D. Kelsey, Operations Director

J. Willoughby, Senior Project Manager (Absent)

J. Rumery, Grant Administrator

Others Present:

Other Metro staff

MAPA staff

Members of the public

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Agenda Item #1: Call to order

Ms. Haase called the meeting to order at 8:36 a.m. For the benefit of the public in attendance, a copy of the Open Meetings Law has been posted in the meeting room and is available online at ometro.com, and the agenda was published on the display in the facility lobby.

Agenda Item #2a: Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

Ms. Haase entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the Board Meeting on July 28, 2022.

Motion by Mr. Lund; Second by Ms. Plucker

ROLL CALL:

UNANIMOUS; MOTION CARRIES.

Agenda Item #3: General Public Comment Period

Ms. Haase opened the General Public Comment Period to invite members of the audience to be heard regarding regular topics related to the Transit Authority of the City of Omaha. No members of the public came forward to comment.

Agenda Item #4: Administrative Report

(L. Cencic)

Ms. Cencic informed the Board that throughout the month of August, Metro held All-Hands meetings. These meetings were required for all staff and went well. Metro was being COVID-conscious with these meetings and held approximately 20 meetings covering the same topics to allow for distancing. These meetings covered the topics of converting to a regional transit authority, how the streetcar could affect Metro, upcoming service changes, MetroNEXT, and general safety updates. Ms. Cencic thanked all of the staff who helped coordinate and organize these meetings.

Ms. Cencic updated the Board that Metro staff has been working with the City and the Omaha Streetcar Authority in numerous working groups including those addressing alignment, vehicle selection and specifications, communications, and future contracting. This will ultimately provide for better coordination between authorities.

Ms. Cencic informed the Board that Metro has also been working on on-going coordination regarding the future 24th Street corridor, with the Chamber, Urban Core Group, and a number of others. Metro has also been working with the City of Bellevue on the Fort Crook Road Study. This is a redevelopment plan that they see as being anchored by premium transit service. Metro is very excited that this redevelopment plan passed their Planning Commission as well as their City Council. Bellevue is working with MAPA now to do additional studies to study the feasibility of partnering with Metro to put a BRT on Fort Crook Rd in the future, which was one of the notable projects that came out of MetroNEXT.

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Ms. Cencic shared with the Board that Metro is working on a number of projects internally to help streamline internal processes. These efforts include cleaning up and doing training on the procurement process, developing new programs to expand Metro's staff training, developing new topics that Metro has not historically trained on including some compliance, leadership and transit 101 topics for people to learn more about transit-related issues outside of their immediate departments.

Ms. Cencic updated the Board that contract negotiations are on-going. Metro staff are also working through the annual budget process. Ms. Cencic anticipates bringing the budget to the Board for approval in September. This year will look quite different from previous years, in part because Metro will no longer collect the property tax levy through the city and county. Metro will also be including a capitol budget this year.

Discussion was had.

Agenda Item #5a: Administrative Reports

(D. Grant)

In the month of August, 6 individuals started new roles at Metro. Of these 6, 2 are Paratransit Operators and 1 is a Mechanic. On the Administration side, Metro has a new Network Security Administrator, Dispatcher, and Payroll & Benefits Specialist.

In addition to Recruiting, the HR team has also spent significant time this month developing and rolling out some talent development initiatives and processes. With so many new people, there is a lot to learn, and Mr. Grant is hoping some of these initiatives will help close the gap.

Discussion was had.

Agenda Item #5b: Administrative Reports

(I. Maldonado)

Mr. Maldonado updated the Board that Metro management and supervisory staff continues to work with front-line staff to increase the safety of services, to improve operations, and to enhance customers' experiences.

Since last board meeting, Metro has added three Transit Field Supervisor positions to the team who will work closely with Dispatch and Operators and assist customers in the field. They will provide service delivery and on-time performance oversight as well as customer assistance and conflict resolution. Field Supervisors are currently undergoing training and within the next three weeks will be assigned to their respective schedules.

Metro currently has four new Moby Operators and fifteen new Bus Operators in training, and nine of them will be graduating within the next two weeks. Members of Metro's Planning, Communications, and Project Management teams including Mr. Maldonado have participated in various Streetcar planning operational meetings.

To enhance the aesthetics of the North Omaha Transit Center, after enhancing security at the NOTC, staff removed the chain link fence, cleaned the area previously secured and posted trespass warning and video surveillance signage through the facility. The video surveillance system at NOTC is fully operational. Staff met with members of the Omaha Police Department to gain their support in policing this area and to partner in future neighborhood safety and security initiatives.

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To close, Mr. Maldonado thanked all Metro staff members for their continued efforts to enhance services to customers and for their commitment and dedication to the mission and vision of Metro.

Discussion was had.

Agenda Item #5c: Administrative Reports

(N. Ebat)

Ms. Ebat informed the Board that Metro had 25 stories in 14 different outlets in the month of July. This was partially a result of efforts to work with the City's Memorial Park Concert, concert organizers, and neighborhood organizations. Neighborhood organizers surrounding Memorial Park encouraged people to ride the bus to and from the concert. These numbers were also helped by the launch of Metro's "Wheel Appeal" Art contest which will be wrapped up next week.

Beyond this, Metro also worked with FNBO, Verdis, and our Planning Department to encourage their employees to look into how they can take a more active commuting lifestyle and how public transit can work for them in their day-to-day lives. Communications also worked with the Operations Department to develop and hold several trainings for some of the employees who are responsible for sending out our rider alerts when there are service interruptions or detours. Metro's goal is to help develop and make information more clear so that way riders have an easier time understanding what is going on quickly and be able to go about their day.

The Communications team is also planning and getting ready for some of the messaging surrounding our upcoming route changes.

Discussion was had.

Agenda Item #6: Request Approval to Award Contract to Avail Technologies, Inc.

(I. Maldonado)

Staff is seeking approval to award a contract to Avail Technologies Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$1,351,370 over the next 3 years for the purchase, installation and support of an integrated software, hardware technology solution that will replace the existing fleet management, inventory control and procurement technology.

The new integrated software, hardware technology solution will improve the overall maintenance of Metro's fleet through timely preventative maintenance and the appropriate repair of vehicles, by providing Metro with the essential technology, functions and capabilities needed to support fleet maintenance related activities including the frequent monitoring and scheduling of repairs, tracking and reordering parts and supply inventories, and the seamless integration of the new technology with current and future technologies and financial programs.

This procurement will be paid for with 80% federal 5339 funds. The local match funds for this project will not exceed \$270,275.

This item will be reviewed with the Procurement Committee prior to the Board Meeting.

Discussion was had.

Motion by Ms. Plucker; Second by Mr. Lund

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ROLL CALL:

UNANIMOUS; MOTION CARRIES.

Agenda Item #7: Request Approval of the Addition of a Uniform Allowance Policy to the Operating Policy

(W. Clingman)

Staff is proposing a new operating policy to address how uniform allowances are handled and to provide for guidance on which positions are eligible for the payment of a uniform allowance. Under the proposed policy, for employees covered under a collective bargaining agreement, the uniform allowance will follow the guidelines set forth in that agreement. Several non-union positions are also eligible for a uniform allowance in this proposed operating policy. The proposed operating policy is provided under separate cover.

Discussion was had.

Motion by Mr. Lund; Second by Ms. Plucker

ROLL CALL:

UNANIMOUS; MOTION CARRIES.

Agenda Item #8: Request Approval of the Hourly and Salaried Employees' Pension Plan Actuarial Reports as of January 1, 2022

(W. Clingman)

Staff is requesting approval of the updated Hourly and Salaried Employees Pension Plan Actuarial Valuation reports, which were produced and presented by Becky Spielman of Milliman Retirement Services for both the Hourly and Salaried Pension Plans. Both the Hourly and Salaried Committees met June 28, 2022, to discuss the report presented to them by Milliman. The finalized reports are included in the Board Packet information.

Discussion was had.

Motion by Ms. Plucker; Second by Mr. Lund

ROLL CALL:

UNANIMOUS; MOTION CARRIES.

Agenda Item #9: Board Chair Report

(A. Haase)

Ms. Haase shared with the Board that there is nothing to report this month. Throughout the summer, breaks were taken from the committees. Committee meetings will be ramping up again in the fall and will be back on the schedule.

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Agenda Item #10: Executive Session

Ms. Haase entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session at 9:07 a.m.

Motion by Ms. Plucker; Second by Mr. Lund

**ROLL CALL:
UNANIMOUS; MOTION CARRIES.**

Ms. Haase entertained a motion to return to Regular Session at 9:56 a.m.

Motion by Mr. Lund; Second by Ms. Plucker

**ROLL CALL:
UNANIMOUS; MOTION CARRIES.**

Agenda Item #11: Date, Time and Place of Next Board Meeting

Thursday, September 22, 2022, at 8:30 a.m. to be held at Metro Transit Authority's Administrative Building.

Agenda Item #12: Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, a motion was entertained to adjourn the meeting at 9:56 a.m.

Motion by Ms. Plucker; Second by Mr. Lund

**ROLL CALL:
UNANIMOUS; MOTION CARRIES.**

Ms. Amy Haase – Chair

Recording Secretary