

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING**  
**REGIONAL METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY OF OMAHA**  
**2222 Cuming Street**  
**Omaha, Nebraska, 68102**  
**July 25, 2024**  
**8:30 a.m.**

**MINUTES**

The Regional Metropolitan Transit Authority of Omaha Board met on Thursday, July 25, 2024, at 8:30 a.m., in person at the Authority's Administration Building, 2222 Cuming Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68102, and virtually. Notice was published in the Omaha Daily Record on July 19, 2024, in advance of the meeting. 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:**

Mr. Daniel Lawse, Chair (Absent)  
Mr. Othello Meadows, Vice Chair (Absent)  
Mr. Jay Lund (Acting Chair)  
Ms. Amy Haase  
Ms. Julia Plucker

**Authority Staff:**

L. Cencic, CEO/Executive Director  
K. Pendland, Interim Deputy Executive Officer  
D. Grant, Human Capital, and Talent Development Director  
E. Simpson, Legal Director (Absent)  
W. Clingman, Finance Director (Virtually)  
J. Willoughby, Senior Project Manager (Absent)  
R. Sherping, Safety Director (Virtually)  
A. Johnson, Civil Rights & Inclusion Director (Virtually)  
J. Beverage, Maintenance Director (Virtually)  
N. Ebat, Sr. Manager of Communications & Community Relations  
S. Perry, Executive Administrator & Board Secretary

**Others Present:**

Other Metro staff  
Members of the public

*Metro connects people, places, and opportunities through quality transit services.*

**Agenda Item #1 Call to Order at 8:34 am**

Notice was published in the Omaha Daily Record on July 19, 2024, in advance of the meeting. 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.

**Agenda #2 Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The first item of business is the approval of minutes from the previous meeting.

- a. Regular Meeting: June 27, 2024

**Motioned by Haase; Seconded by Plucker**

**ROLL CALL:**

**UNANIMOUS (MEADOWS ABSENT, LAWSE ABSENT), MOTION CARRIES**

**Agenda #3 General Public Comment Period**

*This is an opportunity for members of the audience to be heard regarding topics related to the Regional Metropolitan Transit Authority of Omaha, not on the agenda for a maximum of 2 minutes.*

No public comments were presented to the Board

**Agenda #4 Administrative Report**

(L. Cencic)

Ms. Cencic opened her report with ridership updates. For June, Metro's ridership was 253,402 riders averaging over 60,000 trips a week. Metro's K-12 Rides Free Program carried almost 40,000 rides in June making the program total just over 1.1 million rides.

Metro hosted a brief visit from the TSA Administrator, David Pekoske, and staff discussing TSA's role in surface transportation oversight and cybersecurity updates.

Metro along with MAPA, will host Senator Bacon, and staff on Friday, July 26th, and take him on a tour of the building. The discussion will focus on the future of transit in the region.

Metro is continuing conversations, research, and studies on the potential of adding microtransit to its suite of services as a pilot program. This would be an entirely new mode from Metro and would require additional work to both manage and provide the service.

Metro is currently working with the City of Omaha on the Urban Core Street Reconfiguration study and many other groups as Metro strives to stay on top of all the moving parts around the city.

Triennial Review is next week with the Federal Transit Administration.

Metro is entering into a six-month fuel agreement with Petroleum Traders for both diesel and gasoline. Prices are currently under-budgeted for fuel running from August to January. Ms. Cencic did seek approval from the Board Chair, Mr. Lawse who consented. Since Metro is required to provide 24 hours notice before a board meeting due to the Open Meetings Act, the resolution will be brought to the Board in the August meeting.

Mr. Lund asked how the K – 12 Rides Free Program numbers compare this month with a month during the school year. Ms. Cencic advised that in June of this year, ridership was around 40,000 the average during the school year was just over 50,000 and the average last June was 35,000.

## **Agenda #5 Administrative Reports**

### **Administration/Human Resources**

(D. Grant)

Mr. Grant reported that 11 new employees started the month of June including five bus operators, 4 paratransit operators, a mechanic, and a custodian. HR has also identified six others who began in July. Kelli Haverstick has been promoted from HR Coordinator to Paratransit Manager. Mr. Grant thanked her for all the contributions she had bestowed to the position. The new HR Coordinator position has been filled and will be starting with Metro on Monday, July 29th.

This month Metro continued its Metro Leadership Academy work to develop their critical thinking skills. The fifteen participants also learned about the metro transit asset management plan and DEI initiatives. This year's cohort will end in December 2024.

Metro hosted a graduation for eight transit operators for completing the Metro training program. Mr. Grant highlighted this quarter's quarterly newsletter and the various sections included.

Mr. Grant concluded his report and opened up for questions from the Board. There were none.

### **Programs/Operation**

(K. Pendland)

Mr. Pendland, Interim Deputy Executive Officer reported that numbers for June are still below our expectations. While numbers for July are still being compiled, he can report that over the last week, Metro is starting to see improvements in both Service Interruptions and On-Time Performance. While it is too early to say that this is a trend, it is promising and shows that the new initiatives Ms. Cencic and Mr. Pendland have implemented may be meeting some success.

Mr. Pendland further reported that like many agencies, Metro's access to bus parts has been an ongoing challenge and has greatly reduced the overall effective vehicle fleet. Even through these difficulties, Metro's Maintenance team has endured, and Mr. Pendland took the opportunity to thank them for their continued efforts.

Mr. Pendland reported that Metro's partnership with the Memorial Park Celebrate America Concert resulted in a 42% increase in rides on ORBT for that day over historical ridership. Ms. Ebat will have additional details, but he wanted to take the opportunity to thank the staff for working to make that event such a success.

Mr. Pendland concluded his report and opened up for questions from the Board.

The Board asked for clarification on how a 42% increase translated into the number of riders that utilized ORBT during that event. Mr. Pendland deferred to Ms. Ebat.

### **Communications**

(N. Ebat)

Ms. Ebat began by elaborating on Mr. Pendland's report regarding the number of riders for the Memorial Park Concert. Ms. Ebat stated that providing information on how many riders used ORBT after the concert is complicated. At the 62nd & Dodge ORBT stations buses were staged to take riders from the concert. Two waiting westbound two were eastbound and a third was for remaining riders. Because the staged buses are not regularly scheduled trips it was difficult to count the actual number of riders. The 42% increase comes for overall ridership for that particular day. Great feedback on Metro's involvement was received from the organizers.

Further moving into her communications report, Ms Ebat informed the Board that in July Metro's Communications and outreach team participated in the Youth Pride Festival and the Heartland Pride parade, and met with staff members of Omaha Public Schools' family involvement program for refugees ahead of a planned training class. This program helps OPS students who are immigrants or refugees and their families learn English and other skills that will help them adjust to life in the U.S.

Communications has been working with the Planning and Operations departments to put the final touches on snow response plans for the upcoming winter. One of the goals is to have enough plans ready and waiting in case inclement weather forces Metro into a different level of service so information can be sent out to riders within a few minutes of a decision being made.

For August, Metro has the Back to School Bash at the Children's Museum on Friday, August 2nd it's one of the biggest events the museum puts on its calendar to attend. Thousands of families are expected, Metro will be there with information on the K-12 program, how students can successfully navigate riding the bus, and expectations for them.

For Open Omaha on August 3rd & 4<sup>th</sup>, Metro will be partnering with Millwork Commons to park an ORBT out in front of the Ashton building on both days. Open Omaha is an Omaha metro-wide event from Omaha By Design that invites people to visit culturally significant buildings and spaces. Metro will be one of more than 70 participants for the event. Metro has also partnered with Omaha By Design to offer participants free rides on both days with a special code that can be put into our Umo Mobility app. That is already available on Omaha By Design's social sites and will be on Metro's in the coming days.

August 6th, 12th, & 16th, Metro will be participating in Omaha Public Schools' Enrollment fair to make ourselves as accessible as possible to families who have students entering the school system to understand the K-12 Rides Free Program. This will take place at the Omaha TAC Building.

Ms. Ebat concluded her report and opened up for questions from the Board. There were none.

**Agenda #6 Resolution: 2024-19 Request Approval to Award Mobile Cellular Services Contract**

(L. Del Rio Lopez)

Metro sought approval of a contract with Verizon Wireless to acquire and implement a full replacement for all vehicle mobile cellular services for a five (5) year term.

A Request for Proposals (RFP) was published in The Daily Record and Metro's website on April 4, 2024, and multiple potential vendors were contacted. Eleven (11) proposals were received and just one proposal was found not responsive to the terms and conditions established in the solicitation. The remaining were evaluated and interviewed by Metro's evaluation team.

The selected proposal for mobile cellular services was from Verizon Wireless. The proposal was determined to be responsive and responsible. This contract is a firm fixed price contract and the proposal cost is \$281,200.00, billed monthly. The price is fair and reasonable, and the proposal is in accordance with the specifications in Metro's RFP.

This contract will be paid it will be charged to grant No. NE-34-X012. This item was sent and reviewed by the Finance/Procurement Committee.

The Board approved unanimously.

**Motioned by Plucker; Seconded by Haase**

**ROLL CALL:**

**UNANIMOUS (MEADOWS ABSENT, LAWSE ABSENT), MOTION CARRIES**

**Agenda #7 Resolution: 2024-20 Request Approval to Award Mobile Cellular Devices Contract**

(L. Del Rio Lopez)

Metro sought approval of a contract with CDW Government LLC to acquire and implement a full replacement for all vehicle mobile cellular hardware on Metro buses. Included in this procurement is five (5) years of licensing.

A Request for Proposals (RFP) was published in The Daily Record and Metro's website on April 4, 2024, and multiple potential vendors were contacted. Eleven (11) proposals were received and just one proposal was found not responsive to the terms and conditions established in the solicitation. The remaining were evaluated and interviewed by Metro's evaluation team.

The selected proposal for mobile cellular hardware was from CDW Government LLC. The proposal was determined to be responsive and responsible. This is a firm-fixed-price contract, and the proposal cost is \$606,694.55. The price is fair and reasonable, and the proposal is in accordance with the specifications in Metro's RFP.

This contract will be paid it will be charged to grant No. NE-34-X012. This item was sent and reviewed by the Finance/Procurement Committee.

The Board approved unanimously.

**Motioned by Plucker; Seconded by Haase**

**ROLL CALL:**

**UNANIMOUS (MEADOWS ABSENT, LAWSE ABSENT), MOTION CARRIES**

**Agenda #8 Resolution: 2024-21 Request Approval to Award Transit Bus Tire Contract** (L. Del Rio Lopez)

Metro sought approval of a contract with The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company to purchase new tires and retread used tires with snow-rated traction tread for transit buses and vehicles.

A Request for Proposals (RFP) was published in The Daily Record and Metro's website on May 8, 2024, and multiple potential vendors were contacted. Two proposals were received and just one proposal was responsive to the terms and conditions established in the solicitation. Metro reviewed the specifications and found them to be clear and not unduly restrictive and that adequate competition was solicited. The price is fair and reasonable, and the proposal is in accordance with the request.

The responsive, and responsible proposal was from The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company. This contract is a 5-year fixed unit price contract with a maximum not to exceed the ceiling of \$1,116,315.00.

This contract will be paid for with various 5307 grants under the preventative maintenance line item. This item was sent and reviewed by the Finance/Procurement Committee.

Ms. Cencic provided some historical background behind this resolution. In the past, Metro has always leased bus tires with Goodwill and then paid by the mileage usage. Over the past few years Metro has been introducing snow tires into its fleet and because of that, it reduces flexibility in how the tires can be rotated between the

front and rear axles. A cost analysis for leasing vs buying was done and it was determined that while there is an upfront cost to buying the tires it is more cost effective. This will give Metro more flexibility to maximize the value of the tires and once they reach a certain point they will be retreaded as snow tires.

The Board approved unanimously.

**Motioned by Plucker; Seconded by Haase**

**ROLL CALL:**

**UNANIMOUS (MEADOWS ABSENT, LAWSE ABSENT), MOTION CARRIES**

**Agenda #9 Board Chair Report**

(J. Lund)

In Mr. Lawse's absence, Mr. Lund performed as the acting Board Chair therefore he did not have a report for the Board meeting. Ms. Haase indicated that the Planning & Policy Committee met and is continuing to work to review policies around programs and partnerships Metro may want to do in the community. While the Finance and Procurement Committee did not meet, appreciation was shared with Ms. Cencic for ensuring the receipt of the resolutions and documents to review prior to the meeting.

**Agenda #10 Date, Time, and Place of Next Regular Board Meeting**

Thursday, August 22, 2024, at 8:30 a.m.

Authority's Administrative Building

**Agenda #11 Adjournment at 9:00 am**

**Motioned by Haase; Seconded by Plucker**

**ROLL CALL:**

**UNANIMOUS (MEADOWS ABSENT, LAWSE ABSENT), MOTION CARRIES**