

**Meeting Minutes – June 24, 2021**

**MINUTES**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**TRANSIT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF OMAHA**  
**2222 Cuming Street**  
**Omaha, Nebraska, 68102**  
**June 24, 2021**  
**MINUTES**

The Transit Authority of the City of Omaha Board met in Regular Session on Thursday, June 24, 2021 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  
E. Simpson, Legal/Human Resource Director  
C. Distefano, Finance Director  
K. Shadden, Operations Director  
L. Barritt, Marketing Director  
K. Pendland, IT Director  
J. Willoughby, Senior Project Manager (Absent)  
J. Rumery, Grant Administrator  
Rebecca Mahr, Recording Secretary

**Others Present:**

Other Metro staff  
Members of the public

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### **Agenda Item #1: Call to order**

Ms. Haase called the meeting to order at 8:34 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 the Agenda is published on the display in the facility lobby.

### **Agenda Item #2: Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings**

Ms. Haase entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the Board Meeting on May 20, 2021.

Motion by Mr. Lund; Second by Ms. Plucker

#### **ROLL CALL:**

**UNANIMOUS; MOTION CARRIES.**

### **Agenda Item #3a: Administrative Reports**

(E. Simpson)

- Applications for posted positions remain low.
- Gregg Schaffer, Finance Manager, retired this month.
- The Procurement Administrator position was accepted by Marlon Phoenix.
- Metro's Workers' Compensation self-insurance certificate application is still pending. I have provided additional information to the Court.
- Required documents have been submitted to the Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles for renewal of Metro's casualty self-insurance certificate.

### **Agenda Item # 3b: Administrative Reports**

(K. Shadden)

Mr. Shadden and a representative from Scheduling continue to meet with Union Leadership concerning the currently sign-up and the next sign-up. Metro has two run cuts that look good, and the Union is currently reviewing them. Metro anticipates having the next sign-up effective the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> week of July.

Mr. Shadden has completed his portion of the National Transit Database data input for 2020. That portion is currently under review in Washington.

Mr. Shadden is working on procurement of several new mobile radios for service trucks, an additional console radio for MOBY Dispatch, and additional handheld radios for Maintenance, Custodial, and Dispatch. Mr. Shadden is also working on a procurement of a new/used SUV for use by Dispatch as Metro begins the process of adding a new Road Officer position.

Metro, with approximately 10 other users of the Trapeze OPS software that Metro uses in Dispatch, are working collaboratively with Trapeze to improve the user interface for the OPS product in the 2023 version upgrade.

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This is an opportunity for our Operations Department to weigh in on different processes and the functionality we want to see in the software upgrade.

Yesterday, Gillig brought an all-electric demo bus to Metro for our mechanics and other employees to inspect, for some employees to ride in, and for some personnel to drive. Mr. Shadden found the electric technology to be quite impressive. The braking system made for the smoothest bus ride he has ever encountered. The bus included a regenerative braking system and provided a very smooth stopping experience.

Ms. Cencic conducted mandatory All Hands meetings this month and Mr. Shadden participated in those meetings with her.

Mr. Shadden continues to meet with Ms. Cencic to help identify gaps Metro has and how the organization can work to close those gaps to make Metro a better place for all employees.

In Mr. Shadden's absence on Monday, June 21, 2021, Mr. Shumate, Ms. Simpson, and Mr. Wells set up additional ORBT service to run late into the evenings to better support College World Series attendees.

### **Agenda Item # 3c: Administrative Reports**

(J. Rose)

Metro continued to gain followers across all social media platforms, with major focuses for May being on Art+ ORBT and service changes. We continue to push reminders for the new K-12 Rides Free program. Outreach and presentations remain low, with two given in May. However, we are getting more opportunities and expect this to trend upward in the coming months.

On Thursday, June 10, we announced that ORBT will remain fare free until we have installed the ticket vending machines at stations this fall. The announcement was made with a web story and posts on all of our social media channels.

On Sunday, June 13, we updated our bike policy to include e-bikes and Heartland B-cycle bikes. Prior to the change, training events were held at the Metro offices to help riders prepare and feel comfortable.

### **Agenda Item #4: Request Approval of Assumption Changes for Both the Hourly and Salaried Pension Plan Actuary Studies**

(C. Distefano)

Staff is requesting approval of a change in the rate of return for the 2021 actuarial studies for both the Hourly and Salaried Pension Plans. This change is based on the recommendation of Metro's actuary, Becky Spielman of Milliman Retirement Services. The proposed change reduces the rate of return from 6.5% to 6.25% for 2021. This reduced rate of return is anticipated to reflect a more realistic depiction of the state of the plans.

This item was reviewed and approved by the Pension Committee on June 17, 2021. Assuming Board approval, this new rate of return will be reflected in the 2021 Actuarial Valuation Reports for both the Hourly and Salaried Pension Plans.

Discussion was had.

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Motion by Ms. Plucker; Second by Mr. Lund

**ROLL CALL:**

**UNANIMOUS; MOTION CARRIES.**

**Agenda Item #5: Request Approval of Revised Investment Policy Statements for Both the Hourly and Salaried Pension Plans**

(C. Distefano)

Staff is requesting approval of modified investment policy statements for both the Hourly and Salaried Pension Plans. The investments of both pension plans are governed by these policy investment statements. Currently, the plans are invested in 60% equities and 40% fixed incomes. On the recommendation of our Investment Team at Bridges Trust, the revised investment policy statements will be updated to change the investment allocation from 60% equities / 40% fixed income to 75% equities / 25% fixed income. This change would be phased in as a part of the normal quarterly rebalancing of the portfolios. This change is proposed to improve plan performance, account for a reduced return on fixed income assets and more closely mirror the proposed rate of return in the Actuarial Valuation Reports for both plans.

This change to the investment allocations was reviewed and approved by the Pension Committee on June 17, 2021.

Discussion was had.

Motion by Mr. Lund; Second by Ms. Plucker

**ROLL CALL:**

**UNANIMOUS; MOTION CARRIES.**

**Agenda Item #6: Request Approval of the 2022 Transportation Improvement Program**

(J. Rumery)

Staff requests approval of the 2022 element of the 2022- 2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). This amendment is to program funds and create the 2022 Program of Projects (POP).

Staff recommends programming new Urbanized Area Formula Apportionment Funds (5307) and new Bus and Bus Facility Apportionment Funds (5339) in the FY 2022 element of the TIP.

Additionally, staff is recommending approval of the 2022 Program of Projects in the following manner:

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<b>PROJECT</b>	<b>SOURCE OF FUNDS</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
REVENUE ROLLINGSTOCK	5307	Fed: \$85,000 Local: \$15,000 Total: \$100,000	Create 2 swing units to be used for rapid replacement of motor and transmission in units which have failures.
SUPPORT EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES	5307	Fed: \$1,128,000 Local: \$282,000 Total: \$1,410,000	Replace, repair and upgrade fuel equipment, procure software, complete security project.
TRANSIT ENHANCEMENTS	5307	Fed: \$248,000 Local: \$62,000 Total: \$310,000	Procure and install up to 20 new solar powered bus shelters.
UNIFIED WORK PROGRAM	5307	Fed: \$160,000 Local: \$40,000 Total: \$200,000	Offset costs of long range corridor planning study.
CAPITALIZED OPERATIONS	5307	Fed: \$60,000 Local: \$15,000 Total: \$75,000	Employee and Staff Training.
REVENUE ROLLINGSTOCK	5339	Fed: \$573,750 Local: \$101,250 Total: \$675,000	Procure up to 9 new MOBY buses. Gas, CNG.
SUPPORT EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES	5339	Fed: \$1,500,000 Local: \$375,000 Total: \$1,875,000	Engineer, Design and install new electrical and fire panels throughout the Admin/Maint Facilit.
CAPITALIZED OPERATIONS	5339	Fed: \$44,843 Local: \$11,210 Total: \$56,053	Quarterly and ongoing training for employees and staff

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Board approval will allow the projects to be committed for FY 2022. Projects will be submitted to MAPA for consideration at the June 2022 MAPA Board Meeting. Total new encumbrance of federal funds from these changes will be: \$3,799,593. Total new encumbrance of local funds from these changes will be: \$901,460. Total new encumbrance of all funds will be \$4,701,054.

Approval will ensure Metro's compliance with FTA planning requirements.

This item will be reviewed by the procurement committee prior to the Board Meeting. Assuming committee concurrence, staff requests the Board approve the Resolution as presented.

Discussion was had.

Motion by Mr. Lund; Second by Ms. Plucker

**ROLL CALL:**

**UNANIMOUS; MOTION CARRIES.**

### **Agenda Item #7: Request Approval to Award Task Order 16 – MetroNEXT Support for IDIQ Contract with SRF**

(E. Schweitz)

The A&E Contract with SRF is split into multiple task orders. Task Order 16 – MetroNEXT Support - scope of work was developed and reviewed by both Metro staff and SRF to include the following items: a transit service assessment for low-density areas of the region, development and assessment of future transit scenarios, onboard passenger surveying, and supporting technical documentation. This information will contribute to the broader MetroNEXT effort to establish short- and long-term improvements to guide our agency in the future.

Metro negotiated with SRF in three steps. The first step was agreeing on the scope of work. Second, we negotiated hours required to complete the task order, agreeing on 1,604 hours. The negotiated hours were 1.4% higher than the original Independent Cost Estimate. The third step was the negotiation of fee. Metro and SRF agreed to a fee of \$108,397.70. The negotiated fee amount was 2.6% higher than the original Independent Cost Estimate.

We are requesting Board authority to enter into Task Order 16 – MetroNEXT Support - A&E IDIQ Contract with SRF for the amount of \$108,397.70.

This item was forwarded to the Procurement Committee prior to the Board meeting for their review.

Discussion was had.

Motion by Ms. Plucker; Second by Mr. Lund

**ROLL CALL:**

**UNANIMOUS; MOTION CARRIES.**

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### **Agenda Item #8: Administrative Report**

(L. Cencic)

Ms. Cencic informed the Board that Metro is currently working with Mr. Bourne from Bourne Transit. Mr. Bourne has been here the last 2 weeks and will be here for several more, looking at some of the things we are doing and making recommendations on how we can do things more efficiently. He is focusing primarily on safety and maintenance, but he is delving into a few other areas. R. Sherping, our current MOBY Manager, has been helping out with this effort, as well as our Maintenance Supervisor. Mr. Sherping is trying to put together a plan to improve safety overall.

Ms. Cencic updated the Board that Metro is wrapping up the annual review process. Metro has received a final draft and is waiting for the final printed version. Metro had 2 findings out of 21 areas of review, one in Procurement and one in the 5307 Grant requirements. Metro is currently working to resolve both of those issues.

Mr. Cencic informed the Board that Metro also has new staff starting, one new employee in Procurement as well as Metro is bringing in the new Deputy Executive Officer at the end of this month. Ms. Cencic added that Metro conducted multiple All Hands meetings. Those were a gargantuan effort and Ms. Cencic thanked Mr. Shadden for his help with those meetings. Mr. Shadden spent nine meetings in total with all staff to promote social distancing. Topics covered were the vision of where Metro is going, what Metro is doing well, and dialog that included questions and answers. Ms. Cencic wants to continue this process in the future.

Mr. Cencic took a moment to thank staff who have gone above and beyond to help out during this time of transition. As the Board is aware, Metro is short some key staff members right now. Everyone is pitching in, but Ms. Cencic wanted to call out specifically Mr. Sherping who for his help with the safety issues, Mr. Shadden for his help with the All Hands meetings and for stepping up by doing a tremendous additional amount of work to help in a number of ways and to keep us moving forward, Ms. Simpson who is not only doing the HR stuff but is helping out in any other ways that she can, and Ms. Bressman who is the new Finance Administrator. Ms. Bressman was thrown very quickly into the Pension Committee Meetings and has been helping with her new job and with payroll. There are many more Ms. Cencic could thank but those are a few shining stars to thank right now.

Discussion was had.

### **Agenda Item #9: Board Chair Report**

(A. Haase)

Ms. Haase thanked everyone for all efforts over the last few weeks and months to keep Metro running smoothly. Ms. Haase informed the Board that the Program and Policy Committee was recently updated on MetroNEXT efforts. Mr. Schweitz gave a very good update of where Metro is in that process and how the screening has been done on the different route options. It is exciting to see that process move forward. Ms. Haase passed the floor to Ms. Plucker to report on the Finance Committee.

Ms. Plucker updated the Board that the Finance Committee has been staying on top of procurement duties and will be meeting in the near future to begin talking about the preliminary budget and the preliminary tax levy coming to the July meeting. Ms. Plucker passed the floor to Mr. Lund to report on the Operations Committee.

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Mr. Lund informed the Board that Operations has had several lengthy discussions about the issues faced by everyone in the workforce right now. The labor shortage in particular continues to be a common problem across the board right now. The Operations Committee is looking forward to reconvening and discussing more ideas that will ultimately come to fruition in the future.

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

**Tuesday, August 26, 2021, at 8:30 a.m. to be held at Metro Transit Authority’s Administrative Building.**

**Agenda Item #11:      Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Board, a motion was entertained to adjourn the meeting at 9:03 a.m.

Motion by Mr. Lund; Second by Ms. Plucker

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

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**Ms. Amy Haase – Chair**

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**Recording Secretary**