

MVTA Update March-April 2007

STRATEGIC AREA LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Next Board Meeting: April 18 at Eagan Bus Garage

Members of the Metropolitan Council representing the MVTA service area - Daniel Wolter, Brian McDaniel and Jules Smith - will be in attendance at the next meeting of the MVTA Board on Wednesday, April 18 at 4:30 p.m. at the Eagan Bus Garage. Please be sure to notify MVTA staff if you will be unable to attend this meeting.

Strategic Planning Workshop Set for April 11

The follow-up Strategic Planning Workshop is set for Wednesday, April 11 from 8:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m. at the Eagan Bus Garage. Coffee and a light breakfast will be served. Again, please contact the MVTA if you are unable to attend.

Personnel Committee to Meet April 3

The MVTA Personnel Committee is scheduled to meet at 8:30 a.m. Tuesday, April 3 to review items to be presented at the April 18 Board meeting. Please contact the MVTA if you are unable to attend.

Suburban Transit Association Providers Meet Friday, April 13

The Suburban Transit Association Providers (STAP) will NOT meet on Friday, April 6. The meeting has been rescheduled for Friday, April 13. The meeting will be at 1 p.m. tentatively in the Itasca Room on the third floor of the League of Minnesota Cities Building.



The MVTA celebrated its Driver of the Year following the February Board meeting. Pictured, from left, are: Back Row: Ruth Grendahl (Apple Valley City Councilmember/MVTA Treasurer), Elizabeth Kautz, Burnsville Mayor and MVTA Secretary; Margaret Schreiner, at-large representative; Jon Ulrich, Scott County Board of Commissioners/MVTA Chair; Beverley Miller, MVTA Executive Director; Meg Tilley, Eagan City Councilmember and MVTA Vice Chair; Wally Lyslo, At--large Alternate; Jane Victorey, Savage City Councilmember; Bill Droste, Rosemount Mayor/ Seated are Bob Gangloff, Schmitt & Sons Transit Driver of the Year; Damon Banks, Special award winner; and Liban Hassan, Laidlaw Transit Driver of the Year.

STRATEGIC AREA PLANNING

Facilities Update

Concrete Pedestrian Ramp to be Added at AVTS

A concrete pedestrian ramp will be added to the bus way access on the south side of the Apple Valley Transit Station this spring. Currently the existing ramped pavers do not provide direct access from the south door to the bus way. Adding a ramp to the existing step will provide convenient, safe, direct access between the building and the adjacent waiting area. Funds are available in the MVTA's facilities budget to cover this cost.

Improvements Planned at Palomino Hills

The city of Apple Valley will include, as an add/alternate to a spring road improvement project, the construction of a bus pullover lane and crosswalk on the west side of Pennock Avenue at the Palomino Hills Park & Ride. Currently riders must exit southbound buses onto the boulevard and cross in front of buses to reach the Park & Ride on the other side of Pennock Avenue. Construction of the crosswalk (cost to be shared by MVTA and Apple Valley) will provide a functional and safe boarding area for southbound passengers. This has been a project that has been long hoped-for by the MVTA to improve rider safety.

STRATEGIC AREA SERVICE DELIVERY

2006 Provider Records Standards Audit

MVTA Operations Manager is in the process of conducting the annual Records Standards Audit to monitor provider adherence to the terms and conditions set forth in the contract. The purpose of the audit is to ensure providers maintain proper records and documentation in key areas of MVTA service.

To facilitate the annual audit, the MVTA selects particular areas to evaluate, and then selects at random a month (or months) from the previous year to examine. Providers then submit records for the requested areas and month(s) to the MVTA. The MVTA then reviews the submitted information and produces written assessments and recommendations for providers.

The 2006 audit will focus on driver training, staffing, driver incentives, and job site safety.

Eagan Police Request MVTA Buses at Scene of Fire

Schmitt and Sons Transit sent two 40-foot buses to the scene of a major fire at the townhomes on Duckwood Drive, after receiving a request from the Eagan Police Department at 9:30pm on March 18. Buses were used to provide temporary shelter for displaced residents while authorities worked to contain the fire.

In an effort to further solidify relationships with local law enforcement agencies, MVTA staff previously supplied these agencies with contact numbers in case MVTA assets are needed for emergencies.

Planner, Transit Fleet Maintenance Manager Review Gillig Production

Planner Michael Abegg and Transit Fleet Maintenance Manager Glenn Boden recently traveled to San Francisco to tour the Gillig plant and to participate in pre-production meetings regarding the Gillig buses on order by the MVTA. Reports are that the staff at Gillig was helpful and detailed to make sure we get the bus we want. We sat down and covered all of the operating systems, body options, driveline, and electrical options, seats, windows, etc. that they have available. MVTA staff reports that Gillig takes great care and pride

in the product they build with good attention to detail. The buses are slated to go into production in the early part of December 2007.

MVTA to Operate Modified Service Day on April 6 (Good Friday)

Due to anticipated reduction in ridership, the MVTA will operate a modified weekday scheduled on Friday, April 6 (Good Friday). This plan eliminates a total of 15 express trips, and shifts another 10 express trips to better use resources.

STRATEGIC AREA IMAGE

MVTA Participates in Miller Free Rides Promotion

Again this year, the MVTA joined other providers in offering Free rides on March 17 (St. Patrick's Day) as part of the Miller Free Ride promotion. Rides after 3 p.m. were free.



Eastview High School students created interior panels as part of a school projects. Winners were: School Activities – junior Kevin Lass; and Transit – senior Jenny Zanatta

Access Minneapolis to Host Public Meetings

MVTA planner Michael Abegg has participated in a number of meetings regarding service in downtown Minneapolis. Access Minneapolis will host two public meetings about the proposed plan on Wednesday, April 11 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Central Library, 300 Nicollet Mall, Doty Room and on Thursday, April 12 from 5-7 p.m. at St. Olaf Catholic Church, 215 South 8th St., Gathering Room. MVTA riders and others are invited to participate and offer opinions about the proposed solutions.

STRATEGIC AREA PERSONNEL

Facilities, Operations Manager Attend Homeland Security Conference

MVTA Operations and Facilities Managers attended the 42nd Annual Governor's Homeland Security and Emergency Management Conference in Brooklyn Park, March 13-15. The purpose of the conference is to better



prepare for disasters and emergencies by benefiting from the knowledge, experience, and skills of emergency management professionals from across the state. The conference featured guest speakers and various Emergency Management sessions in an effort to "Keep Minnesota Ready."



Given that the MVTA Facilities and Operations Managers will be first-line responders in the event of a local or regional emergency response, this conference, intended to provide training for municipi-

pal employees in disaster and emergency response, was an opportunity to learn as well as to create and strengthen the network of first-responders in the state.

In addition to the general sessions, break-out sessions of value to MVTA staff included an overview of insurance and liability issues in cooperative responses; a review of emergency planning resources for people with disabilities and the elderly; and an introduction to the planning already underway for the 2008 Republican National Convention. MVTA staff spent some time with Federal Secret Service personnel and state and local public safety officers discussing the need to coordinate RNC convention transit requirements with regional transit capabilities.

MVTA Staff Attend NIMS Training

To further the transit security efforts of the MVTA, MVTA Operations, Facilities, and Provider staff attended National Incident Management Systems (NIMS) Training at Metro Transit's Transit Control Center during the month of March. NIMS Training focuses on the command and management of incidents by identifying functional areas within the incident command system, reviewing information management, managing resources, and applying NIMS principles to real life scenarios.

NIMS Training was funded through the Regional Transit Security Grant.

STRATEGIC AREA FINANCE

News from the Finance Department

- MVST revenues for the first two months of this year are lower than all comparable months in previous years. However, the revenue does appear to be in line with the February 2007 forecast.
- Work continues on drafting the Provider Request for Proposals. The first draft of the main contract provisions has been completed and the attorney and staff are currently reviewing and revising the contract.
- The external auditors (Kern, DeWenter, Viere) will be here the last week in April to start their field work. Staff is putting the finishing touches on the 2006 financial records.
- Staff has been analyzing draft legislation concerning the distribution of MVST for the STA providers to ensure we receive our fair share.

FirstGroup Plans to Purchase Laidlaw International

Laidlaw International, the parent company of Laidlaw Transit Services, has entered into an agreement with FirstGroup plc of the United Kingdom. The merger was unanimously approved by both boards of FirstGroup and Laidlaw International. Laidlaw management has indicated that there will be no changes in its current relationship with the MVTA.

Ridership Reaches Record Heights

The American Public Transit Association (APTA) recently reported that Americans took 10.1 billion trips on local public transportation in 2006 – the first time in 49 years. Over the last decade, public transportation's growth rate outpaced the growth rate of the population and the growth rate of vehicle miles traveled on our nation's highways.