

# MINNESOTA VALLEY TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Regular Board Meeting

September 29, 2021 – 4:30 p.m.

Meeting conducted via video conference

## **Board Members Present:**

Clint Hooppaw, Apple Valley  
Lisa Freese, Scott County,  
for Jon Ulrich  
Tammy Block, Rosemount  
Jenni Faulkner, Burnsville,  
for Dan Kealey  
Gary Hansen, Eagan  
Kevin Burkart, Prior Lake  
Gene Abbott, Savage  
Alyssa Olson, Shakopee,  
for Jay Whiting

## **Others Present:**

Luther Wynder, MVTA  
Richard Crawford, MVTA  
Tania Wink, MVTA  
Tyre Fant, MVTA  
Ben Picone, MVTA  
Aaron Bartling, MVTA  
Grace Vriezen, MVTA  
Vicky Loehrer, MVTA  
Mandy Flum, MVTA  
Samantha Porter, MVTA  
Dan Rudiger, MVTA  
Cody Kruse, MVTA  
Jason DeMoe, MVTA  
Rukia Aden, MVTA  
Cooper Ristau, MVTA  
Casey McCabe, Prior Lake  
Bill Forbord, Schmitt and Sons  
Amanda Novak, Elko New Market  
Tom Lovelace, City of Apple Valley  
Ben Reber, Legal counsel  
Deb Barber, Met Council  
Phillip Sterner, Met Council  
Wendy Wulff, Met Council  
Mike Loeffler

## **I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 4:31 p.m. by Chair Clint Hooppaw. A quorum was present.

## **II. Oath of Office**

MVTA Board Chair, Clint Hooppaw, administered the Oath of Office to Alyssa Olson, Shakopee alternate to the MVTA Board of Commissioners.

## **III. Approval of Agenda**

A motion by Gene Abbott and seconded by Tammy Block to approve the agenda. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **IV. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

MVTA Chief Executive Officer, Luther Wynder, introduced Mandy Flum, MVTA's Procurement and Contract Administrator.

**V. Consent Agenda**

A motion by Gary Hansen and seconded by Kevin Burkart to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. A roll call vote was taken.

Hooppaw – Aye	Burkart – Aye	Freese – Aye	Block – Aye
Hansen – Aye	Faulkner – Aye	Abbott – Aye	Olson – Aye

Abbott asked for clarification to why MVTA's June and July financial statements showed incoming federal revenues behind by 2.9 percent. MVTA Finance Director, Tania Wink, said that MVTA had not received federal CRRSAA funding when the June and July financial statements were prepared but the funding was included in the current board packet for approval.

**VI. Old Business**

**VII. New Business**

**A. Approval of A-10083 for Scheduling Software (Optibus)**

Tyre Fant, MVTA Director of IT, provided an overview of MVTA's bus scheduling software. Since 2006, MVTA has utilized Hastus Scheduling Software by GIRO for production of bus service schedules. Hastus has proven to be an effective scheduling platform for MVTA, but it has also come with its limitations, specifically related to turn-around time for schedule production.

Late 2020, MVTA staff began exploring alternative solutions for a new scheduling software. While initial conversations began with Optibus due to their existing integration with Avail, MVTA decided to issue an RFI in April 2021. MVTA received four proposals. The Optibus solution was deemed the best fit for MVTA. It's expected that the Optibus platform would result in significant time savings for Planning staff related to the implementation of schedule changes.

MVTA Planning Manager, Aaron Bartling, said the Optibus platform appears to be an intuitive platform and the onboarding process is expected to be a lot quicker for our staff and free up time for planners for more route analysis.

Mike Loeffler of Optibus provided an overview of the software.

Faulkner asked whether the funds were budgeted for the new scheduling software. Fant said funds have been budgeted for the next five years. Faulkner also asked how the Optibus proposal compared to the other three submissions. Fant said the Optibus proposal was at the high end of the cost range and that the Optibus proposal meets all MVTA's requirements. The system was ranked highest due to MVTA requirements and functionality.

Wynder said the new software will shorten the onboarding process for MVTA staff regarding scheduling and will result in cost savings over time from an efficiency standpoint.

MVTA negotiated a first-year cost of \$78,200 and year two through five annual cost of \$140,400.

A motion by Faulkner and seconded by Tammy Block to approve the agreement with Optibus for scheduling software. A roll call vote was taken.

Hooppaw – Aye	Burkart – Aye	Freese – Aye	Block – Aye
Hansen – Aye	Faulkner – Aye	Abbott – Aye	Olson – Aye

## **VIII. Committee Report**

### **A. Suburban Transit Association**

Wynder provided a recap of the past two Suburban Transit Association meetings. The August meeting included an update on MVST funding, which continues to be strong, although he cautioned that there has been news recently about automotive part shortages.

STA continues to have presentations about equity and inclusion, similar to other boards in the region. STA is also working on recognizing legislators of the year for 2021 for their support of STA initiatives.

## **IX. Board and Staff Report/Updates**

### **A. Connections**

Bartling reviewed recent MVTA initiatives:

Fall Service Changes, which include reintroducing Route 478 and Route 489 along with additional trip additions to seven other express routes. Additional trips have been added to Route 465 serving the University of Minnesota. September ridership on the route more than tripled August levels.

MVTA is working with CRW Architecture & Design Group to develop new prototypes for customer shelters.

MVTA provided 37,463 rides to the Minnesota State Fair and promoted Vikings service, the new MVTA Connect service coming to Eagan, and MVTA's new Instagram page.

In addition, MVTA has offered special service in 2021 to the Renaissance Festival, the Twin Cities Summer Jam, Vikings games and the 4-Fun Bus serving Mystic Lake, Canterbury Park, Valleyfair and the Mall of America.

MVTA also participated in a September 15<sup>th</sup> Heart of the City Walking Tour along with U.S. Rep. Angie Craig, Burnsville Mayor Elizabeth Kautz, and representatives from Metro Transit, MnDOT and the Metropolitan Council. The primary goal of the tour was to review the need for a pedestrian bridge over Highway 13 and the tour also featured a Connected/Autonomous Vehicle demonstration at Burnsville Transit Station.

### **B. Metropolitan Council Representative(s) Update**

Metropolitan Council Rep. Deb Barber discussed the current status of MVST funding and federal CARES funding distribution from the Met Council. She said the Met Council is erring on the side of caution in terms of what it does in February regarding the distribution of federal funding.

She also said she was pleased to see that MVTA has begun providing service to the Renaissance Festival. She said she was glad that MVTA has taken that on as one of MVTA's special services.

Metropolitan Council Rep. Phillip Sterner said he has had discussions with Gary Hansen about Cedar Grove Transit Station. He said the Met Council has been cognizant about keeping the facility and buses inviting.

Wynder noted that with recent cancellations of Metro Transit service that MVTA is available to assist the region with providing service. Barber said she appreciated the comment and would share that information with Metro Transit staff. She noted it has been a challenging environment to hire operators.

Kevin Burkart thanked Barber for her leadership on transit issues.

Wynder encouraged the Met Council to allocate federal funds so suburban providers can prepare their budgets.

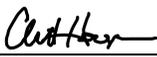
**X. Adjourn**

A motion was made by Burkart and seconded by Abbott to adjourn the meeting at 5:48 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes Prepared by: Richard Crawford

Next Regular Meeting is Wednesday, October 20, 4:30 p.m., to be hosted via video conference.

All regularly scheduled Board meetings will be held at the posted time and location unless otherwise notified.

Approved by: 

Date: October 20, 2021