

MINNESOTA RIVER VALLEY TRANSIT

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS

MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING JANUARY 12, 2021

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a regular meeting of the Board of Minnesota River Valley Transit was conducted on January 12, 2021 through the virtual GoToMeeting platform. Under M.S. 13D.021, the Board is able to conduct meetings by electronic means in the event of a state-wide emergency. Governor Walz has declared a state-wide peacetime emergency and as such Minnesota River Valley Transit meetings will be conducted remotely using GoToMeeting software until further notice.

A quorum present, Saint Peter City Administrator Prafke called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m. The following members were present: Stephan Grams (City of Saint Peter representative), Marvin Sullivan (City of Le Sueur representative), and Emily Bruflat (City of Saint Peter representative). Absent was Nick Loose (City of Le Sueur representative). The following official was present: Saint Peter City Administrator Todd Prafke.

Approval of Agenda – A motion was made by Sullivan, seconded by Grams, to approve the agenda. With all in favor, the agenda was approved.

Oath of Office – City Administrator Prafke administered the Oath of Office to new member Emily Bruflat (representing the Saint Peter City Council).

Election of Officers – City Administrator Prafke indicated that under the Board's operational policy it was appropriate to elect a Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer.

A motion was made by Grams, seconded by Bruflat to nominate Marvin Sullivan as Chairperson. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the motion carried.

A motion was made by Sullivan, seconded by Bruflat to nominate Stephan Grams as Vice-Chairperson. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the motion carried.

A motion was made by Sullivan, seconded by Grams to nominate Emily Bruflat as Treasurer. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the motion carried.

Approval of Minutes/Disbursements – A motion was made by Grams, seconded by Sullivan, to approve the minutes of the November 10, 2020 regular meeting. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the motion carried.

A motion was made by Bruflat, seconded by Grams to approve the minutes of the December 8, 2020 special meeting. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the motion carried.

A motion was made by Grams, seconded by Bruflat, to approve the disbursements from November, 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the motion carried.

2021 Fares – City Administrator Prafke reminded the Board of their previous action to establish fares for the period March 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021. Prafke noted that the State had notified staff that funding was available to cover the system's operational costs through the end

of 2021 and as such the Board may wish to consider waiving fares through the entirety of 2021 for all but the contracted (hourly and Gus Bus) charges.

Member Grams questioned whether the money from the State could be used for other purposes. Prafke noted the grant agreement did not specify, but stated that if not used for fares, the future audit by the State could result in decreased funding as the additional State monies were designed to provide reduced or free fares for users.

In motion by Bruflat, seconded by Grams, Resolution No. 2021-01 entitled "Resolution Establishing Fares For The Period March 1, 2021 To December 31, 2021" was introduced. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the Resolution was declared passed and adopted. A complete copy of Resolution No. 2021-01 is contained in the Minnesota River Valley Transit book entitled Board Actions 1.

Prafke noted that promotion of the free fares would be initiated right away in both communities.

Reports

Operation Manager/Compliance Manager Reports – Operation Manager Owen was unavailable to attend the meeting and Compliance Manager Albers reported in her place. Albers reported a new full-time Bus Driver, Grant Nelsen, was currently in training and recruitment for a part-time Bus Driver was still underway.

Prafke directed Members attention to the information in the meeting packet on ridership and, more specifically, the impact of COVID-19 on ridership. City Administrator Prafke discussed TRU Transit and cooperative efforts for corridor service, a comparison of costs per ride for TRU Transit which is in excess of thirty times what Minnesota River Valley Transit costs per ride, and COVID-19 impacts on both systems.

City Administrator Prafke also pointed out that the RMPay (EZ Pay) program would not be promoted at this time as fares have now been waived.

Albers also reported that with the new driver on board he expected operational hours, which had been reduced due to a lack of available Driver's during COVID-19, would go back to the full schedule on the 18th or 19th of January.

Administration Report – Saint Peter Finance Director Sally Vogel reported system reserves were in excess of \$150,000. Sullivan questioned whether the same auditor would be used. Prafke noted it would be the same firm and the Auditor had confirmed a yearly audit was necessary even though the budget cycle was for multiple years.

City Administrator Prafke reported on an increase in requests for short rides (a couple of blocks in length) which may be happening because there is no fare. Prafke noted Drivers were attempting to accommodate those riders, but taking it on a case by case basis. Prafke also reported that Drivers were experiencing a higher than usual amount of "no shows" where rides were requested and when the Driver arrived there was no one there. Prafke indicated that if the problem were to persist, repeat offenders may be put at least temporarily on a "no ride" list.

Members had additional discussion on the "GUS BUS" service and whether it would continue into the future. Staff consensus was a belief that the service would not resume until the end of the COVID-19 emergency because of an inability to provide for social distancing on the buses

There being no further action, a motion was made by Grams, seconded by Bruflat, to adjourn.

In response to a question by Member Grams, Chairperson Sullivan reported on the City of Le Sueur's representation on the Minnesota River Valley Transit Board. Sullivan indicated the Le Sueur City Council had designated a first term Councilmember to serve on the Board, but the person had also missed the first regular Council meeting and City staff were attempting to contact him to determine what was going on.

With all in favor, the meeting adjourned at 3:09 p.m.

Marvin Sullivan
Chairperson

ATTEST:

Todd Prafke
Saint Peter City Administrator