

MINNESOTA RIVER VALLEY TRANSIT

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS

MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING MARCH 9, 2021

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a regular meeting of the Board of Minnesota River Valley Transit was conducted on March 9, 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, Chairperson Marvin Sullivan called the meeting to order at 2:31 p.m. The following members were present: Stephan Grams and Emily Bruflat (City of Saint Peter representatives) and Marvin Sullivan and Dave Swanberg (City of Le Sueur representatives). The following official was present: Saint Peter City Administrator Todd Prafke.

Oath of Office – City Administrator Prafke administered the Oath of Office to new member Dave Swanberg (representing the Le Sueur City Council).

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

Approval of Minutes/Disbursements – A motion was made by Swanberg, seconded by Bruflat, to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2021 regular meeting. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the motion carried.

A motion was made by Grams, seconded by Swanberg, to approve the disbursements from January 1, 2021 – February, 28, 2021. Upon roll call, with all in favor, the motion carried.

Update On Mask Requirement – Compliance Manager Albers reported on the President's executive order requiring face masks which then required Minnesota River Valley Transit to establish a mask requirement to maintain federal funding. Albers indicated the Drivers were required to wear masks as part of the City of Saint Peter's employee policies and the new policy basically formalizes the unwritten policy that has been in place on the buses since last summer. Albers also indicated the policy, which had been signed by City Administrator Prafke and submitted to the State, also laid out the process for dealing with passengers who refused to wear a mask. Prafke noted that as the COVID-19 situation changes, the policy may be reviewed and revised and any changes would be reported to the Board. In response to a question from Member Swanberg, Albers indicated that if there is no ADA or medical issue that prevents a person from wearing a mask, they are encouraged to use other modes of transportation.

Prafke also indicated the Dispatchers were working to ensure that riders are aware of the mask policy as part of the ride reservation process.

Funding Update/Fare Report – City Administrator Prafke reminded the Board of their previous discussion with Minnesota River Valley Transit's Project Manager from MnDOT that indicated the system's 80-20 split funding was being discussed at the State level for a possible change to

a 85-15 split. However, Prafke noted, that representative Melinda Esty, had now taken a different position and was no longer available to advocate on behalf of Minnesota River Valley Transit. Prafke also reported fares continue to be waived through December 31, 2021.

Reports

Operation Manager Report – Operation Manager Owen reported on ridership numbers and directed member attention to the graphs in the meeting packet. Owen noted that the 2019 ride total, which included Gustavus, was 87,093 but the 2020 total was only 44,194 due in part to stopping the Gus Bus once the COVID-19 pandemic started. Owen indicated Gus Bus may resume in Fall 2021.

Owen reported on two new drivers; one full-time in St. Peter and one part-time as a fill-in in both communities. The part-time Driver would also be trained to do Dispatch as a backup.

Owen reported the State Patrol would be doing on-site wheel chair inspections for all the buses in both communities during the month of April.

Finally, Owen reported that by April 1st Minnesota River Valley Transit would discontinue assisting with the Meals on Wheels program. Prafke noted that while MnDOT allowed use of the buses to deliver Meals on Wheel's during COVID-19, with ridership picking up on the buses, MnDOT was no longer allowing use of the buses for the program.

Compliance Manager Report – Compliance Manager Albers reported on the tightly regulated drug and alcohol testing of Driver's which is required under Federal Transit Administration and DOT requirements. Pre-employment drug testing is required of every Driver and all Drivers are subject to drug and alcohol random, post-accident, and reasonable suspicion testing with draws occurring every three months. Albers indicated annual reports include information on the days of service when testing occurs as well as the time of day which must be throughout the entire service hours for Minnesota River Valley Transit with testing being done at River's Edge Hospital for all drivers.

Prafke reported that between 2019 and 2020 the FTA requirements for testing increased dramatically from 25% random tests to 50% causing a resulting increase in testing expenses.

Administration Report – Saint Peter Finance Director Vogel provided a financial update relative to the budget which is being funded with Federal funds at 100% due to COVID-19. Vogel reported MRVT is running below budget due to reduced ridership and noted that in July discussion at the Board meeting will begin on the upcoming budget cycle. Vogel indicated the cash reserve level was at 120%.

Chairperson Sullivan reminded the Board of the next meeting on May 11, 2021 at 2:30 p.m.

There being no further action, a motion was made by Bruflat, seconded by Swanberg, to adjourn. With all in favor, the meeting adjourned at 3:04 p.m.

Marvin Sullivan
Chairperson

ATTEST:

Todd Prafke

Saint Peter City Administrator