

A regular meeting of the St. Cloud Metropolitan Transit Commission was held on the 20th day of April, 2010 at 4:00 p.m. at the Metro Bus Operations Center. Chairman Ringsmuth presided with the following present:

Commissioners:	1. Paul Ringsmuth
	2. Carolyn Garven-absent
	3. Mark Campbell
	4. Dave Kleis
	5. Steve Hennes
Executive Director:	David W. Tripp
Director of Operations & Technology:	Tony Kellen
Director of Planning & Marketing:	Tom Cruikshank
Administrative Secretary:	Libby Dykema
Others:	Hazel Youngmann, Sue Seimers, Linda Friedrich, Derrick Shaney, Shawn Pierce, Jim Studniski, Steve Williams, Nicky Lahr, Deb Studniski, Terry Markfort, Berta Hartig

The Commissioners and staff recognized and congratulated Linda Friedrich for 30 years of dedicated service as an outstanding Metro Bus driver

Additions or Changes to the Agenda. There were no changes or additions to the Agenda. **Commissioner Kleis moved, and Commissioner Campbell seconded a motion, to approve the Agenda as presented. Motion carried.**

Consent Agenda. **Commissioner Campbell moved, and Commissioner Kleis seconded a motion, to approve the Consent Agenda which included the March 16, 2010 Regular Meeting Minutes, February 2010 Budget Statements, March 2010 Balance Sheets, and March 2010 List of Bills. Motion carried.**

Old Business.

9.) Review of Recommended Sartell Route Changes for September, 2010. Mr. Cruikshank discussed proposed changes to the Sartell Route now that "Moving Forward" route restructuring plan has been placed on hold, but meanwhile the Epic Center Walmart and Sam's Club stores are opening in August. The new route is an expansion of the existing route, will serve the Epic Center, and add additional service into the medical complex area along Connecticut Avenue. The route will increase from 60 to 90 minutes in length, will reverse the direction moving through Sartell, while continuing to hub out of Crossroads Center. Weekend hours will be added and additional later runs will be added to week nights. These changes will require an extra 1,700 service hours for an annual cost of \$93,000. Each 90 minute run costs about \$15,000, so the necessity of adding more runs during peak hours can be evaluated in the future. **Commissioner Kleis moved, and Commissioner Hennes seconded a motion, to allow Metro Bus staff to solidify the Sartell Route Changes.** Commissioner Campbell commented that he hopes the counties and cities work together to get some pedestrian/bike access near the Epic Center and Medical Complexes as a much needed safety measure. **Motion carried.**

10.) Update on Transit Center. Mr. Tripp reminded the Commissioners that the Northwestern Mutual Life Building is for sale and a request has been made to the FTA for a Protective Acquisition (not a Hardship Rule as stated at 3/16/10 meeting). Mr. Tripp stated the need to travel to Chicago to meet with the FTA to discuss with them the importance of getting their approval to proceed. Commissioner Campbell suggested calling Igor Lenzner, Sauk Rapids Legal Counsel, about the commercial property appraiser the City of Sauk Rapids has been using. **Commissioner Campbell moved, Commissioner Kleis seconded a motion, to approve a \$260 flight to Chicago for the Executive Director to meet with the FTA and to proceed with finding an appraiser for a reasonable price. Motion carried.** Mr. Tripp will continue to update the Commission via email regarding the appraisal process.

Mr. Tripp mentioned that the operations staff recently conducted a simulation of the proposed future Transit Center set-up, testing bus operations, passenger transfers, safety and efficiency. After meeting with a co-owner of RumRunners, it was discovered that they would also be willing to sell.

New Business.

11.) Operations Reports

a. March, 2010 Ridership. Mr. Kellen reported that ridership has been very stable on the Fixed Route compared to many areas of the country that are losing ridership. The DAR system is seeing a slight increase in recent months compared to overall decreases over the past couple of years. One year ago there was over a 3% denial rate compared to less than 2% today due to increased efficiencies in the call center and the travel training program transitioning riders off the DAR service. Commissioner Campbell commended the DAR staff for the personal service they provide. He has observed firsthand in his neighborhood the professionalism of the drivers and offered his thanks. Mr. Kellen noted that all nine ARBOCs are operating at close to 11 miles per gallon compared to the 6 miles per gallon the Orions got. Fuel costs have been cut by almost ½, parts stocking will drop, and parts usage will drop. Customer feedback has been mostly positive.

b. SCSU Late Nite Updates. Terry Markfort explained that service hours have been trimmed this school year to focus on the core campus area with the reduction of the West route. Ridership is up about 50% from 10,000 last year to an estimated 15,000 this school year. Supervision and coordination has been provided to help the students learn to ride and marketing initiatives have been very successful. SCSU and the city of St. Cloud are very happy with the service as many students are moved quickly and safely from the downtown area after bar close. Commissioner Campbell mentioned that he heard from a person who works late downtown who would appreciate extended hours. SCSU has indicated that they would like to commit to another contract next year.

12.) Northstar Link Updates

a.) Northstar Link Ridership. Mr. Cruikshank reported that the Link ridership peaked during the end of March and first part of April with over 100 passengers per week. When the SCSU semester ends, ridership will probably drop.

b.) Northstar Link Weekend Service Proposals. The proposal under consideration is to eliminate the 4:15 a.m. run and the related reverse commute, and add round trip runs on both Saturdays and Sundays. There is an approximate \$10,000 cost increase. Staff is also working with Northstar staff to add a stop in Becker. The 2nd week in May is the predicted start time for the weekend service. Northstar PMT meets next Monday, April 24th for official approval to move ahead.

c.) Rider Survey Results. 48 surveys were return which included many good comments from people regarding the service and fare. Most use it to get to work or school and 33% have used it since the first day it ran. People use it to save money and for stress-free travel. There is much interest in weekend service.

d.) Resolution #2010-03, Approving Amendment #2 to Joint Powers Agreement Establishing the Northstar Corridor Development Authority. Currently with the Northstar Commuter Rail running and the Met Council overseeing its operation, there is need to amend the Joint Powers Agreement to streamline the operations of NCDA in order to efficiently and cost effectively complete the Northstar commuter rail extension to St. Cloud. All the jurisdictions have been asked to approve the Agreement. **Commissioner Campbell moved, and Commissioner Kleis seconded a motion, to approve Resolution #2010-03. Motion carried.**

13.) Consideration of Establishing Trolley Use Guidelines. Metro Bus will make available its 2005 Optima/Chance Trolley to FTA registered Private Charter Operators (PCO). The “buyer” wishing to charter the trolley will contact the PCO, who will then contact Metro Bus. The clean and maintained trolley with a driver will be provided by Metro Bus at a rate of \$75.21 per hour for a two hour minimum with each subsequent hour at \$65.21. The Trolley cannot travel beyond the cities of St. Cloud, Sartell, Waite Park and Sauk Rapids and can be used for private or public events. The PCO will collect payment from the buyer and Metro Bus will collect from the PCO. Commissioner Campbell suggested that the policies be the same for both the Trolley and the Metro Bus buses. **Commissioner Kleis moved, and Commissioner Hennes seconded a motion, to approve the Trolley Lease Policy as amended. Motion carried.**

Open Discussion. Commissioner Campbell asked if the older trolley had been put on the market yet. Mr. Tripp explained that it may be needed as a back-up for the trolley being leased. Hazel Youngmann voiced her concern regarding the safety of the ramps on the new DAR buses. If the drivers aren’t observant someone could get hit and she asked if a beeper could be installed. Terry Markfort suggested that rather than installing a beeper, they educate the drivers thoroughly on ramp safety.

Adjournment. Commissioner Ringsmuth adjourned the meeting at 5:12 p.m.