



## Greater MN Transit Provider Advisory Committee (GMTPAC)

MnDOT – District 3 St. Cloud Conference Center

Tuesday, April 9, 2013

**MnDOT Staff:** Tom Gottfried, Bev Herfindahl, Jan Klassen, Jean Meyer, Chuck Morris, Shaun Morrell, Sue Siemers

**Advisory Committee:** Cathleen Amick, Western Community Transit; Mark Anderson, Mankato Transit; Tony Kellen, St. Cloud Metro Bus; Jack Larson, Arrowhead Transit; Craig Rempp, Isanti Heartland Transit; Amy Repinski, Three Rivers Hiawathaland Transit and Melinda Skalicky, Steele County Area Transit

### **Call to Order:**

Bev Herfindahl called the meeting to order at 1:07pm and welcomed everyone. Guest, Jillian Linnell, AASHTO Staff to the Standing Committee on Public Transportation was introduced and the committee and staff members present introduced themselves to Ms. Linnell.

### **Committee Administration:**

Bev Herfindahl requested removing all committee and staff member names and titles on future agendas due to the amount of space required to include. Committee members unanimously agreed. Tony Kellen mentioned committee member names are located on the MPTA website under advocacy Greater Minnesota Transit Provider Advisory Committee. Future minutes will also be available on that site.

On behalf of our guest Bev Herfindahl provided an overview of purpose for the GMTPAC committee and what the committee is ultimately responsible for.

### **PTA Update**

Chuck Morris advised committee members that Public Transit Application (PTA, a MnDOT Office of Transit Database Applications) would be going away in the very near future. Office of Transit's intent is to change over to new contract management software that is more specific to Federal Transit Administration (FTA) transit requirements. Currently, reviewed software "Panther" that Ohio and Massachusetts is utilizing.

Request For Information (RFI) was sent out March 26, 2013 and responses are due Friday, April 12, 2013. Chuck Morris would like to have a vendor and contract in place by August 2013 – which is an aggressive schedule. Office of Transit will be interviewing transit provider staff members for input on pros/cons of current PTA utilization and gleaming from the staff interviews what transit providers would like to see as an enhancement to the selected product for reporting, and etc. Jack Larson, Tony Kellen and Amy Repinski indicated they would have staff available to Office of Transit for interviews.

### **2013 Performance Evaluations**

Tom Gottfried advised committee members system performance evaluations will be conducted in CY 2013. Issues with grant contract compliance such as Drug and Alcohol oversight, Request for Funds (RFF) submitted well after the 30 days

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required, route analysis and performance of service as well as a number of other oversight issues have surfaced and need to be addressed and corrected, and in addition to Transit Systems that in the process have reorganized administratively or operationally. Office of Transit has been working on a draft list of transit providers to initially begin performance evaluations and will be finalizing list within the next 30 days. Once list is finalized transit providers will be notified.

### **2013 Drug and Alcohol Program Oversight Change**

Tom Gottfried indicated to committee members Office of Transit has changed its Drug and Alcohol oversight responsibilities from the Transit Project Managers (TPMSs) to Deborah Ellis and Annette Marier effective January, 2013. This change reflects the oversight monitoring of record keeping, policy updates, random drug and alcohol tests and consortium mock collections. However, if there is a non-compliance issue Deborah Ellis and Annette Marier will work closely with the system's Project Manager to bring the system into compliance or the TPM will make determination of grant contract status.

### **Truth in Transit for Our Future**

Bev Herfindahl indicated Transit for Our Future projects will be requested in a different manner than originally requested and received. Transit For Our Future application forms have been removed from the Office of Transit's website and any transit provider interested in applying for Transit For Our Future funding will need to work with their Transit Project Manager and submit a one-page overview of the project detailing specifics of proposal.

Upon receipt of project overview the applicant will be asked to formally present its project to the Office of Transit Program Section for a questions/answer session prior to funding consideration.

Office of Transit is looking to see more system mergers to improve administration, operations and service designs and expect there will be a reduction in the number of grant contracts which ultimately means less transit providers. Office of Transit is not looking to see loss of jobs but rather more efficient use of transit provider services that already exists and to provide more operational flexibility. Example may be, one staff person who oversees Drug and Alcohol for multiple providers; or Safety and Security. There are a number of ways to collaborate, coordinate and consolidate services.

Intent is to have a template for the one-page overview on Office of Transit's website prior to June application workshops.

### **Vehicle Discussion; size and type**

Tom Gottfried, Tony Kellen, Kathy Fuller and Jan Klassen will be meeting within the next 30-45 days to discuss urban providers ordering off the 2014 State Vehicle Procurement for Class 700 buses (Large Bus).

Another topic of discussion is use of Mini-vans in Public Transit service. Tom Gottfried stated Office of Transit will be reviewing the current rationale of not allowing mini-vans to be part of the state vehicle procurement. Current Transit Providers with mini-vans will be a part of this review. Once the review is complete Office of Transit will issue a draft Technical Brief and will request comment from all transit providers.

Cathleen Amick indicated discussions have taken place at the ATP level with local officials as to the relevance and need to have a mini-van in provider fleets. Perception from locals is mini-vans would be operationally cheaper to purchase and operate.

Tom Gottfried indicated statewide the potential justification of need for mini-vans is around 3-5%. Currently, Office of Transit does participate with the operational expense of mini-vans in a few transit systems.

### **2013 Legislative Update**

Following are some of the highlights of various bills under consideration:

- SF 1173 – Budget Proposal: Potential funding increase for Greater Mn Transit of:  
FY 2014: \$22.62 million  
FY2015: \$24.85 million
- HF 761 and SF 772 – Amends the Greater Mn Transit Assistance schedule of state payments (to Quarterly)
- HF 584 – Passenger name joins other personal data as private
- SF 1270 and HF 1110 - \$550,000 for Kandiyohi Bus Garage
- HF 1339 - \$450,000 for Mankato Bus Garage, Phase III
- HF 1334 - \$800,000 for Rainbow Rider in Elbow Lake

### **2014 Application Workshop Schedule**

2014 Public Transit Grant Application Workshops will be held on the following dates: (all application workshops will be posted on the Office of Transit website)

- Wednesday, June 5 (Bemidji);
- Wednesday, June 12 (Mankato); and
- Wednesday, June 19<sup>th</sup> (St. Cloud)

### **Suggestions for Future Topics**

Committee members would like to discuss 29 Hour Driver Operating Threshold (relative to limits per Affordable Health Care Act), of part-time definition at 29 hours or less and Alternative Fuels.

### **Next Meeting**

It was agreed that Bev Herfindahl would review dates in August and be in contact with committee members.

### **Meeting Adjourned**

Bev Herfindahl adjourned meeting at 3:04pm