



## Bis-Man Transit Board Meeting

September 28, 2023, 11:30 AM  
Via Zoom and In-Person at  
3750 E Rosser Ave. Bismarck, ND 58501

**Attending:**

**Lynn Wolf, President**

**DeNae Kautzmann, Secretary**

**Lacey Long, Vice President**

**Karel Sovak**

**Helen Baumgartner**

**Glenn Lauinger**

**Andrew Stromme**

**Steve Heydt**

**Royce Schultze**

**Commissioner Connelly**

**Commissioner Rohr**

**Staff:**

**Deidre Hughes**

**Mike Mundahl**

**Taylor Kitzan**

**Craig Thomas**

**Tom Reisenauer**

**Danae Thiery**

**Guests:**

**Trevor Vannett**

**Susan Dingle**

**Paulette Jacobsen**

**Rachel Lukaszewski**

**Jacey Enget**

**Meeting was called to order at 11:30 A.M.**

**Approval of Agenda:** Steve moved to approve the Agenda. Karel seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**Consent Agenda:** Karel moved to approve the Consent Agenda. DeNae seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**Public Comment:** Susan congratulated and thanked anyone who has been working with the Mandan City Commission to get the funding request put on their meeting agenda. Lynn thanked Susan for her monetary donation to Bis-Man Transit.

**Unfinished Business: N/A**

**New Business**

1. **Printing Contract Recommendation:** Deidre discussed that United Printing and Image Printing bid on the printing contract. United Printing came in lower in price. Staff recommends approval to award United Printing with the printing contract. DeNae commented that the Finance Committee also recommends to award the printing contract to United Printing. DeNae moved to award the printing contract to United Printing. Karel seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.
2. **West River Lease:** Deidre discussed that the West River Lease agreement expires at the end of this year. West River asked if their next Lease Agreement could be a three-year lease per their auditor's request. Staff recommends approval of the three-year West River Lease agreement with a 3% annual increase. DeNae commented that the Finance Committee also recommends to approve the West River Lease agreement for three years with the 3% annual increase. DeNae moved to approve the West River Lease agreement for three years with the 3% annual increase. Lacey seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.
3. **Bus Purchase Discussion:** Deidre explained that Transit has received 5310 funding to replace four 2017 paratransit buses that have exceeded useful life, but the funding awarded is now not enough to cover the full purchase. NDDOT is able to provide gap funding to cover the full federal amount for the purchase. Federal amount is \$520,540 and local match required is \$91,860. Staff recommends approval to purchase four new paratransit buses and to decommission and sell the old buses. Anticipated arrival of these buses would be Spring 2024. Andrew moved to approve the purchase for four new paratransit buses and to decommission and sell the old buses. DeNae seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.
4. **National Express Liquidated Damage Request:** Deidre discussed that Craig requested to waive September and October 2023 performance liquidated damages. Performance liquidated damages include on-time performance, excessive trip duration, and missed trips. Deidre explained that the background to this request that there has been an increase in trip



denials for paratransit rides. The operations team made a change to the software to increase capacity on the vehicles to allow more trips in a day, but this does not increase the number of drivers or fleet, causing higher trip duration and lower on-time performance. FTA sees trip denials as worse than trip duration or on-time performance. Deidre supports waiving September and October 2023 performance liquidated damages. DeNae commented that the Finance Committee also recommends the approval. DeNae moved to approve waiving September and October 2023 performance liquidated damages. Steve seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

## Executive Director Report

1. Funding Update: Deidre discussed that she will be present at the October 3<sup>rd</sup> Mandan City Commission meeting with a funding request for non-ADA complimentary paratransit service on the agenda. Deidre asked any board members if they were able to attend the meeting and that if there are five or more board members, then it would have to be posted as a Special Meeting. Commissioner Connelly commented that Deidre can phrase the meeting as an announcement as well as a possible Special Meeting because all board members are invited. Commissioner Rohr commented that he does not see any opposition to the funding request and that he fully supports it. Lynn commented that he encourages members of the public to attend the meeting to speak on the need of public transportation.

Deidre discussed that Transit was awarded the ND Community Foundation grant for new CAT bus route signs. Most signs have been installed on-route in Bismarck and Mandan and old sign removal is still in the process. Deidre attended the Foundation dinner event and thanked them for the grant award. Deidre also mentioned American Legion and Susan Dingle made donations to Transit.

Advertising revenue is over \$91,000, with \$25,000 projected by the end of the year. The advertising goal was \$90,000 for this year. Deidre thanked Mike and Taylor for their efforts on exceeding this goal. Deidre mentioned that the FY2024 State Aid amount will be \$442,113 and is \$99,000 more than what was received last year. Andrew asked why there was an increase in State Aid funding. Deidre answered there was no explanation except that the State of North Dakota received more funding.

2. Transportation Training Grant: Deidre discussed that Transit was awarded the Transportation Training grant for training individuals with disabilities on paratransit and fixed route. The amount of the grant is \$5,560. The project begins on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. Mike will champion the project and Deidre will act as support.
3. Transit Development Plan: Deidre discussed that the TDP is in the review phase. Deidre and Rachel from the MPO have reviewed the draft and made their comments. The final



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document should be received by October 20<sup>th</sup> and will be presented to the Board at the next meeting. Deidre commented that the financials were reviewed by Glenn and there were no concerns. Glenn commented that there is a surplus in the August 2023 financials and that both Transit and SRF Consulting projected a deficit by this time. Glenn thanked the staff for maximizing money in the budget and it would be a big accomplishment to carry this out to the end of the year. Glenn also thanked Taylor for transitioning the books from a cash basis to an accrual basis, as well as obtaining the FY20 Fuel Tax refund with interest by continually contacting the IRS. Lynn also thanked Taylor for her efforts in lining out Transit's finances.

4. Dakota Transit Association Conference Update: Mike and Deidre attended the DTA Conference in Minot last week. Mike was able to attend a marketing seminar that was beneficial to Transit marketing efforts. Deidre was able to attend a procurement presentation and benefitted from the information presented. Transit hosted a "Meet and Greet" at the facility for FTA, NDDOT, and City of Bismarck employees. FTA Region 8 advisor Cindy Terwilliger, recommended to reach out to Sioux Falls to visit with them about lack of funding support with agencies.

**Operations Report:** Danae updated that recruitment is the top priority for the Operations team. Eight drivers are needed and there are currently three new hires in training, with another training class starting on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. The biggest hiccup with hiring is applicants not showing up for their scheduled interviews. Since July 2023, 28 out of 39 interviews have no-showed and Job Service has been contacted. Continued recruitment efforts include two new hiring banners coming in early next week, social media ads for all open positions, cold-calling potential applicants from recruiting sites, \$2,000 full-time sign-on bonus, paid CDL training, and wage increases taking place in November. Craig has been in contact with Matt from United Tribes Technical College who has a class of students with CDL permits. Applicants from that class have the option to receive paid CDL licensing training through National Express to become fixed route drivers. The Operations team completed training for the new fixed route operating system, Passio. The target start date is October 16th, and more information will be posted on the Transit website soon.

**Other Business:** Commissioner Connelly shared that Andrew and himself were in a meeting with AARP yesterday and there is a strong concern for Missing Middle Housing and how to address the issue. It's highly expensive to expand transit services to center line roads between University of Mary, Lincoln, Bismarck, and Mandan, so it's important to increase the knowledge of services that are already in place for these locations. Commissioner Connelly discussed that there was a presentation given by the Regional Refugee Coordinator for the State of ND at the Bismarck City Commission meeting that asked for permission to apply for a grant that would create a coordinator position to work within the cities of Bismarck, Grand Forks, and Fargo. The position should be able to help refugees find jobs in the communities served. Commissioner Connelly commented that Transit should work with the colleges and education systems to see if students who use the system



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as it is today and as it evolves, are able to give their feedback to help the system grow into a greater asset in the community. Lynn thanked Commissioner Connelly for the information shared.

Karel moved to adjourn the meeting. DeNae seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**Meeting adjourned at 12:10 P.M.**



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