

**99th Meeting of the
Metro Area Transit Coordinating Board
March 20, 2024 – 8:00 AM**

Fargo Commission Chambers with Virtual Option

Meeting Minutes**Members Present:**

Kevin Hanson, Chair
Denise Kolpack, Fargo City Commission
Ryan Nelson, Moorhead City Council
Deb White, Moorhead City Council
Amber Borah, Dilworth City Council
John Strand, Fargo City Commission
Suzie Lundsten, M | State
Cindy Girdner, Valley Senior Services

Members Absent:

Paul Grindeland, Valley Senior Services
Brit Stevens, NDSU
Jean Hollaar, MSUM
Brad Olson, West Fargo City Commission
Sarah Orr, Concordia College

Others Present:

Julie Bommelman, City of Fargo
Adam Altenburg, FM Metro COG
Chelsea Levorsen, FM Metro COG
Matthew Pinotti, First Transit
Jordan Smith, City of Moorhead
Lori Van Beek, City of Moorhead
Luke Grittner, City of Fargo
Taaren Haak, City of Moorhead
Shaun Crowell, City of Fargo
Cole Swingen, City of Fargo
Ben Griffith, FM Metro GOC
Anonymous

1. Call to Order and Introductions

A quorum was present and the 99th Metro Area Transit Coordinating Board meeting began at 8:00 AM.

2. Action Items:**2a. Approval of Feb. 7, 2024 Meeting Minutes**

The February 7, 2024 meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

2b. Moorhead Title VI Plan Update

Lori Van Beek & Shaun Crowell presented Moorhead's Title VI Program Update.

Every three years, Federal grant recipients are required to submit a Title VI Program. Moorhead's plan will expire May 31, 2024. The Title VI Program includes:

- Any notices to the public of protections against discrimination afforded by Title VI, as well as a list of their locations.
- A Title VI discrimination complaint form and instructions to the public on how to complete it
- A list of any public transportation-related Title VI investigations, complaints, or lawsuits filed with the recipient since the time of the last submission
- A public participation plan including outreach to minority and limited English proficiency populations within the service area (may also include other traditionally underserved constituencies, such as people with disabilities and low-income populations)
- The recipient's plan for assisting persons with limited English proficiency
- The recipient's service standards and service policies
- Any additional relevant information that demonstrates adherence to Title VI regulations

Council woman White asked if we are doing any direct consultations with organizations of our community that may have better expertise with working with folks who have language proficiency or other 'blind spots' in our community? Mr. Crowell has done outreach to organizations in town, including sending free bus passes. He recently has contacted Global Refuge.

The recommended action of a request for Moorhead City Council's approval of the 2024 Title VI Program and submission to the FTA was motioned by Commissioner Strand and seconded by Commissioner Kolpack.

2c. Route & Service Changes: Temporary Service Reduction Status

Lori Van Beek & Cole Swingen

From 2021-2024, MATBUS has had to enact various reductions in service to provide consistent, reliable service to the Metro. Since Covid 19, MATBUS saw a decrease from 1.8 million rides in 2019 to 1.2 rides in 2023. MATBUS staff have made the decision to make a portion of the previously enacted service changes permanent. A public hearing will be held to gather public input and seek Fargo Commission and Moorhead City Council approval to permanently adopt these changes.

Ridership, community growth, and demand trends will continue to be evaluated in the future and some services may be reinstated or expanded.

Permanent changes:

- End service Monday - Friday at 10:15 PM (previously 11:15 PM)
- End Saturday service at 8:15 PM
- Reduce Route 15-to-30-minute service from 6:15 am to 9:45 am. Route 15 will increase to 15-minute service during peak ridership times, 10 AM to 6 PM
- Eliminate Route 32W and Route 36 (requested from NDSU)
- Reduce Route 33-to-10-minute service all day

- Reduce Route 13 from 30-minute service to 60-minute service on Saturday
- Reinstate in the Future:
- Restore 15-minute service on Route 11 and Route 14
 - Resume Saturday service on Route 16
 - Restore 15-minute service on Route 2 during MSUM academic year (Mon-Fri. 2:30 – 6:30 PM)

The request for MATBUS staff to hold a public hearing to permanently adopt the proposed service changes was motioned by Commissioner Kolpack and seconded by Council Woman White. The motion passed.

Van Beek added that the upcoming TDP Study will ask the public for their opinion on what services they would like to see.

Council Woman White asked if we have looked at data to see if there are areas that see a higher ridership, specifically that third shift? If so, could we consider keeping select routes open until 11:15? Mr. Swingen added that ridership is low, around 1.5-2%, after 10:15 PM, however, it is something they could consider.

Chair Hanson asked for an update on the driver shortages Mr. Swingen said an additional vehicle has been added to route 15 and Saturday service to route 6 and 9 will be returning. TransDev has received a lot more applications due to the increased wages.

3. Informational Items

3a. Transit Reorganizational Study Update

Julie Bommelman & Lori Van Beek presented an update on the Transit Reorganizational Study by KLJ.

- Federal Funding Appointments FY2024:
 - 5307 (operating & Capital)
 - City of Fargo \$2,880,204
 - City of Moorhead \$736,089
 - 5310 (capital)
 - City of Fargo \$265,286
 - 5339 amounts not yet available
- Governance structure of MAT Coordinating Board/Transit Technical Advisory Committee:
 - Structure to become more technical/administrative while keeping one elected official connected from both Fargo and Moorhead
 - Report directly to Fargo City Commission and Moorhead City Council and include one voting member from each
 - Meet monthly and assist with day-to-day decisions and recommendations
 - Serve as citizen advisory committee and hold all necessary public hearings/meetings
 - Current proposed members:

- Fargo City Commissioner, Fargo Transit Director, Fargo Finance Director, Moorhead City Council, Moorhead Finance Director, Moorhead Transit Manager or Assistant City Administrator, West Fargo City Administrator, Dilworth City Administrator, Metro COG Director, NDSU
- Proposed Cost Allocations, Sharing Methodology, and Revenue Sharing
- Next Steps: Commission and City Council meetings, legal review, Joint Capital Improvements Plan, finalize and adopt cost/revenue plan, 2025 budget development, joint powers agreement, and final presentation by KLJ

Council Woman White requested that side-by-side comparison of cost/revenue be presented at MATBUS Moorhead City Council presentation.

3b. Education on FTA Regulatory Requirements

Lori Van Beek & Shawn Crowell will present MATBUS education on select topics at each MAT Coordinating Board meeting. This meeting will cover Paratransit Eligibility and Charter Services.

3b.i Paratransit Eligibility

- What is Paratransit?
- What is ADA?
- MAT Paratransit is a shared ride service
- Application Process
- Qualifications for paratransit service
- Visitor pass
- Eligibility
 - Three categories
- Eligibility appeals process

Commissioner Kolpack asked what the process for determining the most efficient routes?

Mr. Crowell said that the routes are based on scheduling software. Ms. Van Beek added that a new software will be implemented in June.

Chair Hanson asked what capacity does 200 rides per day set MATBUS at? Mr. Crowell added that during the winter that number can reach 250-300. There are generally 9 day-time vehicles and 2 evening vehicles. Additional vehicles are added during peak rider times.

3b.ii Charter Services

- Federal Regulations

Commissioner White asked how LinkFM events are selected, if FM Pride would be considered, and if so, what the process would be. Ms. Van Beek said that federal funds cannot be used, but a state-funded bus could be used. A list of all LinkFM is submitted to the State as part of funding budget. MATBUS is currently below budget for LinkFM, so there is the potential to add FM Pride.

3c. Ridership for January & February 2024

Lori Vav Beek & Cole Swingen presented the 2023/2024 January-February ridership changes by route:

Ridership data for Fargo & Universities as follows:

- Route 11 +10.82%
- Route 13 +21.79%
- Route 14 +4.63%
- Route 15 +10.96%
- Route 16 -21.81%
- Route 17 +.99%
- Route 18 -10.42%
- Route 20 -8.34%
- Route 24 +16.71%
- Link FM +400%
- Industrial Park On-Demand -59.53%
- Paratransit +6.05%
- Route 31 +2.62%
- Route 32 +13.99%
- Route 33 +24.53%
- Route 34 -6.21%
- NDSU on-Demand -2.15%
- NDSU +12.26%
- MSUM +1.10%
- Concordia -12.75%
- M|State +25.75%
- NDSCS +37.21%

Ridership data for Moorhead as follows:

- Route 1 +8.56%
- Route 2 -2.13%
- Route 3 +23.84%
- Route 4 +9.02%
- Route 5 -18.70%
- Route 6 +1.51%
- Route 9 +17.30%
- Mhd. Senior Ride +1.06%

4. Other Business

Hearing no other business, the meeting was adjourned by Chair Hanson at 9:09 AM.