

RAMSEY COUNTY REGIONAL RAILROAD AUTHORITY

September 8, 2009

The Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority met in the Council Chambers, Third Floor Court House, with the following members present: Bennett, Carter, Ortega, Parker, Reinhardt, Rettman, McDonough – 7. Absent: 0.

Chair McDonough called the meeting to order at 10:55 AM

AGENDA

Commissioner Parker moved approval of the Agenda of the September 8, 2009 Board Meeting, seconded by Commissioner Ortega. Roll Call: Ayes – Carter, Ortega, Parker, Reinhardt, Rettman, Bennett, McDonough – 7. Nays – 0.

MINUTES

Commissioner Parker moved approval of the Minutes from the September 1, 2009 Board Meeting, seconded by Commissioner Carter. Roll Call: Ayes – Carter, Ortega, Parker, Reinhardt, Rettman, Bennett, McDonough – 7. Nays – 0.

1. Presentation of the 2010-2011 Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority Budget

Julie Kleinschmidt, Ramsey County Manager, presented the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority (RCRRA) proposed budget for 2010-2011. Ms. Kleinschmidt spoke of the RCRRA mission, which is to provide effective and efficient transit alternatives for Ramsey County and its surrounding regions. She also mentioned its goal of promoting multi-modal transit and transportation solutions that effectively serve its citizens. She said the RCRRA advocates for, coordinates, funds, plans and implements transit for county residents and businesses. It is working to create a seamless, multimodal transit network that will benefit St. Paul, Ramsey County and the East Metro region. The RCRRA has developed a long-range vision of transit services to meet the changing needs of today and the future by preserving rail corridors and providing rail transit services.

Ms. Kleinschmidt discussed Ramsey County's long term financing strategy. In 2005, the RCRRA Board directed staff to:

- Adopt a long-term capital plan for funding RCRRA's share of the transit projects between 2006-2014.
- Keep property tax levy stable, borrowing costs low and keep within County debt benchmark goals.
- Provide flexibility to take advantage of federal funding.
- Stimulate economic development of the entire East Metro region.
- Receive a broad community support for the financing strategy.

This strategy has allowed RCRRA to implement a property tax levy that has remained stable since 2007. Ms. Kleinschmidt proposed keeping the levy stable for 2010 and 2011. This proposed property tax levy is less than the maximum amount that the RCRRA could levy.

Ms. Kleinschmidt discussed the Union Depot, saying it is the only construction project submitted by the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) for High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail federal stimulus funding. The estimated cost for renovation and reconstruction of the Depot to be operational by 2012 is \$247.4 million and the 2010-2011 budget provides funding to complete the project at this cost. The 2011 proposed budget does assume that the RCRRA will receive \$135.8 million in federal funds. If federal funds are not received, then the RCRRA will need to develop a new financing plan but it will not require an increase in the property tax levy. Ms. Kleinschmidt also discussed Central Corridor project, which is the corridor that will connect downtown St. Paul's Union Depot to downtown Minneapolis and the Hiawatha Light Rail Line. The RCRRA obligation to this project is \$65.9 million. It is expected that the federal full funding grant agreement will be received and construction of this corridor is scheduled to begin in 2010 and operational in 2014.

The proposed budget provides funding to fulfill the Central Corridor obligation through 2011, primarily with funding from prior year budgets. The proposed 2010-2011 budget also provides funding for the studies of other corridors such as Rush Line, Red Rock, High Speed Rail, I-94 East, Robert Street, Northeast Diagonal and Riverview. Most of these corridors are in the early stages of study and project development.

Ms. Kleinschmidt closed her presentation with a timeline of the next steps for the proposed 2010-2011 budget.

- September 8, 2009: RCRRRA will set the 2010 maximum levy
- October 30, 2009: Public hearing #1 – public testimony on the budget
- November 10, 2009: RCRRRA budget hearing
- November 30, 2009: Public hearing #2 – public hearing on the budget
- December 15, 2009: Final approval of the budget and 2010 levy

2. 2010 Budget – Proposed Maximum Tax Levy for the Truth in Taxation Notice

Commissioner Bennett moved approval of the following resolution, seconded by Commissioner Ortega. Ayes - Carter, Ortega, Parker, Reinhardt, Rettman, Bennett, McDonough – 7. Nays – 0. (R09-36)

WHEREAS, The Truth in Taxation Law (M.S. 275.065) requires the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority to certify a proposed maximum tax levy to the Property Records and Revenue Department (County Auditor) by September 15, 2009; and

WHEREAS, The Certified Proposed Maximum Tax Levy will be the amount that is used for the Truth in Taxation notices that will be mailed to each property owner in the County after November 10, 2009, but no later than November 24, 2009; and

WHEREAS, The Truth in Taxation Law includes a provision that the approved tax levy for the 2010 budget cannot be more than the proposed tax levy certified by the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority by September 8, 2009; and

WHEREAS, In order to continue to improve the quality of life and access to services in the region, to remain a partner in transit activities in the region with other agencies, including the Minnesota Department of Transportation, the seven metro county Regional Railroad Authorities, Metropolitan Council and Metro Transit; Now, Therefore Be It

RESOLVED, That the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority hereby approves the proposed maximum tax levy of \$19,938,811 to finance the 2010 Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority Budget, which in accordance with the Truth in Taxation Law, must be certified to the Department of Property Records and Revenue by September 15, 2009.

There being no further business, Chair McDonough declared the meeting adjourned at 11:10 AM.