

**Minnesota Council on Transportation Access (MCOTA) Meeting Minutes**  
**October 23, 2019**  
**MnDOT Central Office Transportation Building**  
**TEC Conference Room (basement level)**  
**1:00–3:30 PM**

**Members present:**

Chair – Tim Henkel, Minnesota Department of Transportation  
Vice-Chair – Joan Willshire, Minnesota State Council on Disability  
At-Large Representative – Victoria Nill, Minnesota Department of Transportation  
Ellen Pillsbury, Minnesota Department of Health (proxy for Susan Bishop)  
Peter Brickwedde, Minnesota Department of Commerce  
Tiffany Collins, Minnesota Public Transit Association  
Kelly Garvey, Minnesota Department of Education (via phone)  
Shawn Kremer, Minnesota Management and Budget  
Ronald Quade II, Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs (via phone)  
Diogo Reis, Minnesota Department of Human Services  
Gerri Sutton, Metropolitan Council  
Jim Varpness, Minnesota Board on Aging  
Jodi Yanda, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

**Members absent:** n/a

**Others present:**

Minnesota Department of Transportation:

Kristie Billiar, ADA Program and Policy  
Sara Dunlap, Office of Transit and Active Transportation  
Tom Gottfried, Office of Transit and Active Transportation  
Jacob Rueter, Office of Transit and Active Transportation  
Sue Siemers, Office of Transit and Active Transportation  
Noel Shughart, Office of Transit and Active Transportation

University of Minnesota:

Heidi Corcoran, Humphrey School of Public Affairs  
Frank Douma, Humphrey School of Public Affairs (by phone)  
Kaydee Kirk, Center for Transportation Studies  
Arlene Mathison, Center for Transportation Studies

Minnesota Department of Revenue representatives

Ashley Eckdahl, East Central Regional Development Commission  
Alan Hermann, Scott County  
Matt Johnson, Mid-Minnesota Development Commission  
Roger Long, Voigt Bus  
Brian McCoy, Headwaters Regional Development Commission  
Heather Molesworth, West Central Minnesota Communities Action  
Sherry Munyon, MPTA  
Thant Pearson, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development  
Kim Pettman, Transit Advocate (by phone)  
Samuel Rodriguez, Voigt Bus  
Mark Schermerhorn, Anoka County Transit  
Troy Schroeder, Northwest Regional Development Commission  
Beverly Sidlo-Tolliver, Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (by phone)  
Courtney Whited, Minnesota Board on Aging

## Call to Order + Introductions

Henkel called to order the October meeting of the Minnesota Council on Transportation Access at 1:05 PM on October 23, 2019 at the MnDOT Central Office, St. Paul, MN. Everyone present and on the phone introduced themselves.

## Review and Approve Agenda

Reis moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Sutton. The agenda was unanimously **approved**.

## Public Comments

Pettman commented on the strategic plan and expressed concern about not having enough public/non-voting voices included. She would like to see the public (citizens, transit riders, etc.) included in a meaningful way. She also mentioned the KSTP story about fixed route bus service and the concerns about the system not providing effective transit to persons with disabilities. She'd like to see MCOTA intentionally include the public and for members to experience transit and shadow disabled transit riders.

## 5/22/19 Meeting Minutes

Yanda moved to approve the May minutes, seconded by Willshire. The minutes were unanimously **approved**.

## Strategic Plan

Mathison walked through the strategic plan draft which has incorporated the comments from members from the one-on-one feedback meetings held in September.

### Member discussion:

- Per member inquiry, it was clarified that in Appendix C is an organized listing of existing and recommended duties and that there is no change statutory duties. Shughart shared some background on how Senator Dibble was instrumental in creating MCOTA duties; many of the legislative duties came from Florida's template.
- Page 2 4A2: It was recommended to strike vehicle standards or provide more clarification on this. It was shared that regarding NEMT, DHS adheres to MnDOT standards, however with taxi service every city has a different standard so this makes it difficult.
- 4A7: More clarity needed. Could it be "ask the authority to provide funding..."? Members expressed the need for clarity on budget and determine what it is we are trying to accomplish.
- New member orientation: MCOTA needs to first determine according the statute what the role of each MCOTA member is as this is not spelled out. This needs to be developed.
- Page 2 on 4E: Some members expressed this is rather prescriptive and not under the purview of this group and not for MCOTA to sort out. TNCs are just one option. Other members added that MCOTA plays a role in the access to accessible vehicles. It was suggested to remove all volunteer language and broaden to include multiple business models.
- Some members shared that RTCCs and TCAPs do different things and they seem distinct. It was also noted that RTC is an acronym that already exists in one of the regions. The timing is not right for a name change and much work has already been done to brand it RTCC.
- Concern about getting state agency involvement to get MCOTA to functional legislatively or with policy (like Homelessness Council). Senior leadership are involved in a direct level, lower staff involved in the day-to-day. MCOTA will transcend the administration since it is in statute.
- Current Governor/administration is very interested in interagency work and this is good timing for MCOTA.
- Need to revise timing on legislative efforts so they are strategically placed to align with the administration's legislative process. There would be a need in the fall for some impromptu meetings to respond to the Governor's budget which is mostly set by October.
- Some members felt that quarterly MCOTA meetings would be too infrequent with the new reset of the structure.
- There needs to be designated people from agencies to ensure work of the MCOTA teams get done.

- Some felt that until the new organizational structure is determined, it is too early for a chair rotation.
- It was acknowledged that many agencies around the table do not have transportation as the main/overriding priority and it is a rather small portion of their work/agency. It would be helpful to think through which are the most appropriate agencies to provide leadership on transportation/MCOTA and have them play key roles in leading/chairing.
- It was also shared that is key to think through if an agency's role is in system delivery or client service – we need a good perspective on this and it relates to the chair rotation.

The large group then split into small breakout groups focused on key topical areas. Upon convening as a large group again, members decided to table the conversation and revise the strategic plan based on these additional comments. The plan will be brought back at the next meeting for final approval.

#### **Draft Annual Report**

Henkel provided a quick overview and timeline of the annual report. Mathison shared the process for the annual report and would email out a Word version for members to add their changes. The draft will then go to the MnDOT Office of Communications by early November. Mathison thanked the MCOTA committee of volunteers who helped with this effort. She will add the feedback provided at the meeting.

#### **Draft Quarterly Stakeholder Communication**

Mathison shared proposed content for the next communication. Based on member feedback, she will update the language for the strategic plan to reflect that the plan is in progress. Members agreed bullet point #1 be modified to use the word “consider.” It was agreed that the communication will be issued after the November meeting.

#### **FY20 MCOTA Budget Update**

Rueter shared that the budget is on track and balanced. The budget for CTS adequate for the tasks being asked. This will be discussed over the next month and will be brought back in November.

#### **Agency Updates:**

- **Olmstead Plan:** Billiar shared that subcommittee meets on October 28 after a summer break. They will go over work plans but don't expect any major changes need to be made. There are also public engagement opportunities to engage on the work plan for Olmstead.
- **Other Member Updates:** No other updates were shared.

#### **Adjourn**

Nill made a motion to adjourn; Willshire seconded. All **approved**. The meeting was adjourned at 3:21 PM.