



POLICY BOARD MEETING

Jan 21, 2021

This meeting was held virtually on
<https://cityofmorgantown.my.webex.com/meet/cityofmorgantown>

Members Present:

Chair-Joe Statler, Vice-chair Commissioner Tom Bloom, Treasure-Mayor Patricia Lewis, Commissioner Jeffery Arnett-Monongalia County, Recorder Steven Blinco-Star City, Brian Carr-WV DOH, Councilperson Bill Kawecki-City of Morgantown, Councilperson Dave Harshbarger-City of Morgantown, Mike Kelly-Board of Education, Commissioner Sean Sikora-Monongalia County

MPO Director: Bill Austin, AICP

Others Present: Christiaan Abildso

1. Call to Order

Mr. Austin noted that due to the COVID 19 pandemic, the Policy Board meeting was held as a teleconference. The phone number and web address to access the teleconference were publicized.

With a quorum present, Chairman Statler called the meeting of the Policy Board to order at 6:00 PM.

2. Election of Officers

Chairmen Statler noted that the officer nomination committee has nominated Commissioner Bloom for the Chairman of the Policy Board, Mr. Ron Justice for the Vice-Chair of the Policy Board, and Mayor Patricia Lewis as the Policy Board Treasure.

Mr. Kelly moved to accept the nominations as proposed; seconded by Councilperson Kawecki. With no discussion, the motion was approved.

3. Public Comments

No public comments.

4. Approval of Minutes

Chairman Bloom noted that the minutes of the last meeting were included in the agenda packet. Mr. Kelly moved to approve the minutes as presented; seconded by Councilperson Harshbarger. With no further discussion, the motion was approved.

4. Committee Report

a. Citizens Advisory Committee

Mr. Austin noted that Mr. Abildso, the Chairman of CAC, is not in the meeting. Mr. Austin noted that the CAC has reviewed and recommended approval of the amendments to the MPO's Transportation Improvement Program.

b. Finance Committee

Treasurer Mayor Lewis presented the financial statement as following:

-- Beginning balance in November \$29,793.28 with expenditures of \$23,249.87 and one deposit of \$2,268.46, leaving a balance of \$8,811.87 at the beginning of December.

-- Beginning balance in December \$8,811.87 with expenditures of \$33,415.27 and one deposit of \$46,065.44, leaving a balance of \$21,462.04 at the beginning of December.

Councilperson Blinco moved to accept the Finance Report as presented; seconded by Mr. Statler. With no discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

c. Director Report

Mr. Austin noted that he informed the board about the potential use of line-of-credit in December. The DOH transmitted the funding in a timely fashion and the MPO did not use the line-of-credit. Mr. Austin noted that the CAC has three new members appointed by the Mountain Line and the WVU. The MPO staff is working on a newsletter which will include an update on the status of Van Voorhis Rd project and the 2021 Calendar. The MPO staff is also working on a crash report on Don Knotts Blvd between the Westover Bridge and Smithtown Rd. The MPO received four responses to the RFQ for the MTP update from four major consulting firms. The selection committee will hold interviews with them on Jan 28th.

Mr. Austin noted that the consultant is reviewing the public comment on the design for the Greenbag Rd project. Draft designs will be submitted to the DOH management for final decision. The Mileground project is under right-of-way phase, pending on court rulings on two disputed parcels along the corridor. Commissioner Sikora asked the status of project on Collins Ferry Road intersection on University Ave. Mr. Austin noted that the project is also in the right-of-way phase, going through legal proceedings.

Commissioner Bloom noted that he is concerned that the Mileground project could be held up for years in court. Commissioner Bloom asked about potential ways to expediate the case. Commissioner Arnett suggested identifying the judge of this case and talking to the judge if someone has a good relation with him/her. Commissioner Bloom noted that he will reach out to the judge once identified. Mr. Austin noted that he will find the case number to check the court information. Mr. Statler noted that the public should be informed about the status of the project.

6. TIP Amendments

Mr. Austin noted that the Division of Highways has proposed three TIP amendments. The first amendment is to delete the Decker Creek Landslide Repair project, which is superseded by Deckers Creek Trail Undercut Repair project. The second amendment is to add the information of Highway Planning and Research for the MPO's operation to the MPO's TIP. Mr. Austin noted that the federal regulation does not require that the highway planning and research funds be shown in the TIP. The DOH and the MPO are adding this information for transparency purpose.

The third amendment is to increase the funding for the right-of-way phase of Van Voorhis Rd project associated with installation of sidewalk and drainage. Mr. Austin noted that the DOH will install sidewalk throughout the entire length of the project.

Mr. Statler asked if the project includes crosswalks and lighting at appropriate locations. Mr. Austin noted that he has not reviewed design specifics for the crosswalks for the project. The DOH is expected to build crosswalks in accordance with Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices to ensure pedestrian safety. Mr. Austin noted that lighting is included in the project. Councilperson Harshbarger moved to approve the TIP amendments as presented; seconded by Mr. Statler. With no discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

Mr. Abildso, the Chair of Citizens Advisory Committee, joined the meeting.

7. Acceptance of Audit

Chairman Bloom noted that the draft audit for FY2019-2020 is enclosed in the agenda packet. The auditor had no findings concerning the MPO's operations. Councilperson Kawecky moved to accept the audit as presented; seconded by Mr. Kelly. With no discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

8. First Review of the Draft FY 2021-2022 UPWP

Mr. Austin noted that the primary items on the UPWP are a request for \$200,000 in additional funding for the Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update. The project will include extensive public involvement and regional travel demand model update. It will also include the public involvement portion of the comprehensive plan update for the local municipalities. The MTP update will integrate the recently adopted pedestrian and bicycle master plan, as well as the Mountain Line mid-term strategy plan that is expected to be adopted later this summer. Mr. Austin noted that the MPO staff will perform two studies for Mountain Line Transit. The UPWP also includes a proposed 2.75% cost of living increase for MPO staff.

Mr. Carr noted that numbers of the amount of total cost allocation are not consistent. Mr. Austin noted that he will correct this error and submit the corrected version to the Policy Board for adoption in the March meeting.

9. Other Business

Chairman Bloom noted that the MPO received a letter from the community, concerning the Harmony Grove interchange project on I-79.

10. Executive Session-per WV 6-9A-4-2a Personnel Matters Executive Director's Review (if needed)

Mr. Statler noted that he had received executive director's evaluation forms completed by the policy board members. The review is favorable and some members made suggestions. Mr. Statler noted that he will share those comments with the executive director and board members. Chairman Bloom noted that he will schedule a meeting with the executive director to discuss the evaluation and make a public statement on this matter in the March meeting.

11. Meeting Adjournment

The meeting adjourned on 6:44 PM.