

MORGANTOWN MONONGALIA
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION POLICY BOARD
JUNE 19, 2014 MINUTES (DRAFT)

Members Present: Chairman Anthony Giambrone-Star City, Vice-Chairman Wesley Nugent-Morgantown, Mayor Jennifer Selin-City of Morgantown, Dave Bruffy-Mountain Line, Joe Statler-Blacksville, Randy Hudak-WVU, Councilperson Marti Shamberger-City of Morgantown, Commissioner Eldon Callen-Monongalia County, Commissioner Tom Bloom-Monongalia County, Mayor Patricia Lewis-Granville, Brian Carr-WV DOH.

MPO Director: Bill Austin

Members Absent: Mike Kelly-Board of Education, Councilperson Janice Goodwin-Westover.

I. Call to Order

With a quorum present, Chairman Giambrone called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM.

II. Executive Session-Personnel Matter

Chairman Giambrone called for a motion to go into the executive session for a personnel matter. Commissioner Callen moved the motion; seconded by Mayor Lewis, with no discussion, the motion unanimously passed. After a short discussion, Chairman Giambrone called for a motion to come back to the regular session. Commissioner Callen moved the motion to come out of the executive session; seconded by Mayor Selin. With no discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

Chairman Giambrone then called for a motion for a review of the executive director. Vice-Chairman Nugent moved to approve a 2 percent salary increase for the executive director. He noted that the amount of this increase reflects the most recent performance evaluation while taking into account local and state funding constraints and current economic conditions. The motion was seconded by Mayor Selin.

Commissioner Callen appreciated Mr. Austin's performance and stated that the amount of increase is not appropriate, considering the currently sluggish economy at state and local level, and he is inclined to vote against this motion. Mayor Selin commended Mr. Austin's performance and leadership as the MPO director.

The motion was passed with Commissioner Callen and Commission Bloom voting no. On behalf of the Policy Board, Chairman Giambrone thanked Mr. Austin for his performance and leadership.

III. Public Comment

None

IV. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Callen moved to accept the May Policy Board minutes as submitted; seconded by Councilperson Shamberger. With no discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

V. Committee Reports

a. Citizens Advisory Committee Report

Mr. Rice, Chair of the CAC, reported that the CAC failed to pass a motion to recommend approval of the WV-7/Brookhaven Rd TIP Amendment. The motion failed with a 2 to 2 vote, after the CAC reviewed the supplemental information provided by WV DOH. He then reported that the CAC recommended approval of the TIP Administrative Adjustment Policy for Transit to the Policy Board. Mr. Rice then noted that the CAC currently has eight members attending the CAC meeting on regular basis for last two years, and urged that the Board review the personnel representing their agencies and appoint new members to fill vacant seats.

b. Financial Report

Chairman Giambone asked Mayor Lewis to present the finance report. Mayor Lewis presented the MPO's March activities as follows:

-Beginning balance in April \$8,301.14 with expenditures of \$18,239.24 and three deposits totaling \$10,547.91, leaving a balance of \$613.81 at the beginning of May. During the May, there are three deposits totaling \$16, 530. 87, leaving a balance of \$934.00 at the end of May.

Chairman Giambone called for a motion to accept the April financial report as presented. Mr. Bruffy moved the motion; seconded by Commissioner Bloom. With no discussion, the motion unanimously passed. Vice-Chairman Nugent moved to accept the May financial report as presented; seconded by Mr. Bruffy. With no discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

VI. Executive Directors Report

a. Van Pool Program Update

Mr. Austin stated that the MPO, cooperating with the Mountain Line, is working diligently to promote the van pool program in the Morgantown area. Currently, there are two pools operating in this program. The MPO and Mountain Lines Mobility Coordinator have contacted WVU and major employers along the WV 705 corridor to expand the program. An event introducing van pooling and the MPO van pool subsidy program will be held at the WVU intermodal transportation center between 9:00 AM -3:00 PM on June 23, 2014. Mr. Bruffy mentioned that the window for the subsidy from the Federal Transit Administration will close in September, and he encouraged anybody who is interested in a van pool to act quickly to take advantage of this federal subsidy. Councilperson Shamberger noted that vehicles are provided for van pool participants in the event of an emergency.

b. Traffic Count Report

Mr. Austin noted that the draft 2014 Traffic Count Report is included in the agenda package as an informational item. He noted that this report is not as detailed as last years' report due to financial constraints. A full blown traffic report will be prepared every three years with less detailed reports such as this one being prepared during the interim years. He also noted that more detailed information for each station, such as peak period and directional volume, are available upon request. Mr. Austin solicited recommendations from the Board to improve this report.

Commissioner Bloom asked about the potential uses of the report and how WV DOH use this information for road repair purpose. Mr. Austin stated that the report provides information useful for developers, business owners, and other interested parties and will be posted on the MPO's website. He then noted that the primary reason for collecting the data is to help calibrate the MPO's travel demand model. The data in this report has been uploaded to a web-based traffic count server and shared with WV DOH. Mr. Austin commented that WV DOH conducts traffic counts and that the MPO does more detailed classified counts at selected locations.

Mr. Statler stated that since most count stations are located in the urban area and WV DOH uses traffic volume as a key criterion in deciding locations for road repair, he has concerns that roads in rural area may not get appropriate resources. Commissioner Bloom concurred with Mr. Statler's opinion. Commissioner Callen mentioned that DOH has been following the procedure stipulated by the state legislators. Mr. Carr noted that besides traffic volume, WV DOH considers various factors when deciding road repair locations, such as crashes, school zones, and types of hazards. Highway staff working in DOH county offices and district offices use their experience and knowledge to evaluate the available information and to decide the priority for road improvements. Mr. Austin added that the local district office takes video tapes on major roads to identify and document locations in need of improvements and maintains a log of repaired locations. These quantifiable objective statistics help district staffs make appropriate decisions.

c. Upcoming Travel

Mr. Austin noted that he will be on vacation in the first week of July and attend conference in Vermont in the middle of July. On June 25, MPO staff will go to Charleston for a training to learn how to access a statewide crash data system, as well as for a WV MPO Association meeting.

VII. Administrative Items

a. Auditor Selection Committee

Mr. Austin stated that the MPO is required to put its auditing services out to bid every three years and the state Auditor's Office has a set process for selecting Auditors that requires an Audit Selection Committee with between 3 and 5 members. Mr. Austin suggested the Policy Board designate two or more members to serve on this Committee with the Executive Director. After a short discussion, Councilperson Shamberger and Mayor Lewis agreed to service on the Audit Selection Committee with the Executive Director.

b. Bylaws Review Committee

Mr. Austin noted that Commissioner Bloom had requested that the MPO create a committee to review the Bylaws. Commissioner Bloom stated that the creation of the Bylaws Review Committee will be beneficial. It will allow the committee to modify the bylaws to promote a practical coordination among local government agencies and to improve the performance of the CAC and the TTAC. Mr. Statler commented that this should be a standing bylaw committee, which reviews the MPO's bylaws annually. Commissioner Callen concurred with Mr. Statler's opinion and added that setting up a bylaw-reviewing schedule will be helpful. He further noted that the Policy Board consisting of various government entities throughout this region has a lot of influence in this region.

Mr. Giambrone concurred with Commissioner Callen's opinion, and asked for volunteer to service on this committee. Mr. Statler, Commissioner Bloom, and Mayor Selin agreed to service on this committee.

c. Greenbag Road Corridor Study Steering Committee

Mr. Austin noted that MPO staff has asked the TTAC and the CAC to participate as members of the Greenbag Road Corridor Study Steering Committee. To date, City of Morgantown staff, Mr. Rich Wood, Monongalia County Planning Director, Fouad Shoukry, DOH traffic engineer, and Mr. Bill Rice, Chairman of CAC have agreed to service on this committee. Mr. Austin further commented that this study focuses on the capacity improvement on Greenbag Rd and is very important to the local community and truck industry.

Mr. Statler suggested that the MPO find a representative from the trucking industry and noted that he will try to attend the committee's meeting once the date and time of the meeting are scheduled. After a short discussion, Commissioner Callen and Mayor Selin agreed to serve on this committee.

d. Public Involvement Policy Revision

Mr. Austin noted that a draft TIP Administrative Adjustment Policy is included in the agenda package. The proposed policy will allow administrative adjustment of TIP Amendments when certain criteria are met. The public will be notified of adjustments during policy board meetings as well as on the MPO's website. Implementing this change requires an amendment to public involvement policy. Mr. Austin also noted that this change of policy will be advertised to the public and publicized on the MPO's website for 45 days before the Board can consider adoption in the August meeting. Mr. Bruffy mentioned that this policy change will benefit the public by promoting an efficient administrative operation dealing with minor changes in TIP amendments.

Commissioner Callen moved to advertise the administrative adjustment as stated in the memorandum including the listed criteria that a project must satisfy and the procedure that the Executive Director of the MPO is required to follow. Mr. Statler added that the motion also include that the Policy Board be notified of an administrative adjustment by email and in Policy Board meetings. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bloom. With no discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

VIII. Transportation Improvement Program Amendments

Mr. Austin asked Mr. Hudak to discuss the first TIP Amendments proposed by WVU. Mr. Hudak stated that WVU received a grant from the Federal Transit Administration to upgrade power system infrastructure for the Personal Rapid Transit. The grant was originally programmed for FY 2015-2016. WVU requested that this grant be removed to FY 2014-2015. Commissioner Callen moved to approve this TIP Amendment; seconded by Mayor Selin. With no discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

Mr. Austin then introduced that the TIP Amendments for WV7/Brookhaven Rd Intersection Improvement Project is included in the agenda package with supplemental information provided by WV DOH. The information includes a proposed intersection configuration and a warrant summary. Mr. Austin noted that in the last meeting, the Board has approved the finding for the right-of-way and engineering phases of this project, but did not approve the project's construction funding. He also noted that the TTAC did not

change their recommendation to approve this project, while a CAC motion to recommend approval for this project failed.

Commissioner Callen commented that the residents living in the Brookhaven area are not in favor of this project, as it may increase their travel time through this intersection on both streets. He also stated that traffic volume alone is not sufficient to justify this project. Mr. Bruffy noted that the traffic light installation will be beneficial for transit system operation. Commissioner Bloom mentioned a similar situation at the three stop signs at CR-856 and Tyrone-Avery Rd intersection, and expressed his concern on the potential backup on WV 7 if the traffic light is installed. Mr. Statler inquired about accident data on the subject intersection. Mr. Carr noted that the decision for improving this intersection was based on traffic volume, rather than crashes. The project is developed based on the perceptions and opinions from the WV DOH district engineers and warranted by criteria defined by a national standard.

Vice-chairman Nugent asked why there are zeros at several traffic count intervals in the warrant summary. He also asked who will be responsible to maintaining this traffic light. Mr. Carr noted that the zero is shown when traffic counter was shut down during certain off-peak hours. Mr. Carr also noted that WV DOH will be responsible to maintain this traffic light.

Mayor Selin asked about the chance that WV DOH revisits this project in respect to a changed traffic circumstance in the future, if the Board vote against this project at this time. Mr. Carr noted that WV DOH develops projects based on necessity, but future funding availability cannot be guaranteed.

Commissioner Bloom asked why WV DOH choose this intersection instead of other locations which are in need of improvements more seriously. Mr. Carr noted that this project uses the CMAQ funding, which is categorized specially for this type of improvement. He also noted that a more serious problem may demand a more expensive improvement and that amount of funding is not available at this time.

Councilperson Shamberger stated that robust development is expected in the Brookhaven area, and she believes that installing a traffic light at the intersection could help to avoid traffic problems in the future.

Mr. Statler asked if the option of installing a signal that would only operate at peak times at this intersection is considered. Mr. Carr noted that he has not been notified that this option was under consideration. Mr. Austin noted that there are at least two actuated traffic signals in the Morgantown area. One is at the WV 705/Suncrest United Methodist Church intersection and the other one is at the WV 705/Office Depot intersection.

Commissioner Callen made a motion to approve this TIP Amendment, with a request that the WV DOH considers two recommendations made by the MPO's Policy Board. One recommendation is to install an actuated traffic signal at this intersection. The other recommendation is to provide a continuous southeast-bound through lane on WV 7 at this intersection. Mr. Bruffy seconded this motion. With no discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

IX. Other Business

None

X. Meeting Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:42 PM.