

**MORGANTOWN MONONGALIA**  
**METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION POLICY BOARD**  
**JULY 27, 2017 MINUTES (SPECIAL MEETING)**

**Members Present:**

Chairman Ron Justice-WVU, Vice-Chairman Mike Kelly-Board of Education, Treasurer Mayor Patricia Lewis-Granville, Dave Bruffy-Mountain Line, Councilperson Janice Goodwin-City of Westover, Commissioner Edward Hawkins-Monongalia County, Perry Keller-WV DOH, Councilperson Jennifer Selin-City of Morgantown, Commissioner Sean Sikora-Monongalia County, Councilperson Ryan Wallace -City of Morgantown

**Members Absent:**

Commissioner Tom Bloom-Monongalia County, Brian Carr-WV DOH, Dominick Claudio-Star City, Bill Kawecki-Mayor of Morgantown, Delegate Joe Statler-Blacksville

**MPO Director:** Bill Austin

**1. Call to Order**

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

**2. Public Comment**

No public comment

**3. Approval of Minutes**

Chairman Justice noted that the minutes of the July meeting were included in the agenda packet. Mr. Kelly moved to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Commissioner Sikora. With no discussion, the motion was unanimously approved.

**4. Reports**

*a. Citizens Advisory Committee*

Mr. Bill Rice, the Chairman of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), noted that the CAC supports the proposed freight routes in the area. The CAC has also reviewed the proposed TIP process and agreed that

the changes will expedite the approval of non-controversial and routine projects. The CAC suggested that if the TAP projects were to be included in the group project category, there should be a clearly defined role for the MPO in the TAP grant application review process. The CAC also recommended that a committee consisting of the Executive Director, the Policy Board Chairman, at least one additional member of the Policy Board and a member of the CAC and the TTAC should be authorized to approve the proposed TIP process.

***b. Finance Report***

Mayor Lewis presented the finance report of July as the following:

-- Beginning balance in July \$ 17,805.09 with expenditures of \$38,723.46 and a deposit of \$51,956.05, leaving a balance of \$ 31,037.68 at the beginning of August.

Mr. Bruffy moved to accept the May Finance Report; seconded by Councilperson Selin. With no discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

***b. Executive Director Report***

Mr. Austin noted that the MPO staff has been collecting data and developing alternatives for the Beechurst Ave Study. The MPO is also working with the DOH on several issues, including designating urban freight network routes in this region and improving the TIP approval process for non-controversial and routine projects. Those issues are to be discussed under the following agenda items of this meeting.

**4. Designation of Proposed Freight Route**

Mr. Austin noted that in response to the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act passed by Congress last year, The Federal Highway Administration has been developing a National Highway Freight Network (NHFN). As a part of the freight network development process, the MPO is working with the WV DOH to designate approximately 9 miles of local routes as a part of the freight network. Mr. Austin noted that the freight network will enable additional federal funding to improve designated freight routes. MPO staff recommended that Greenbag Rd, WV 7, and CR 73 be part of the freight network route. The proposed freight route network is shown on the attached maps. The MPO's Freight Advisory Committee, the MPO's TTAC and CAC, reviewed and recommended approval of the proposal.

Mr. Kelly moved to approve the proposed freight route as presented, seconded by councilperson Selin. With no discussion, the motion was unanimously approved.

**6. Proposed TIP Process and Meeting Schedule Changes**

Mr. Austin noted that the MPO is developing a process to expedite the approval of non-controversial and routine projects. Those projects are proposed to be categorized as "groupable projects". The WVAMPO and MMMPO Staff have been in agreement with this process for most items except there has been concern about the Transportation Alternatives and the pavement management programs.

Mr. Austin noted that The MPO Association and WVDOH have worked out an agreement on these projects whereby MPO's would provide input into the Transportation Alternatives Program and the maintenance program at the beginning of the project selection process for these and the other programs to be included in "groupable projects". Both the TTAC and CAC expressed concern that there be a clearly defined and documented "groupable projects" process including the definition of "regionally significant projects" and the role of MPOs in the project selecting process. The Citizens Advisory Committee recommended that a committee consisting of the Executive Director, the Policy Board Chairman, at least one additional member of the Policy Board and a member of the CAC and the TTAC should be authorized to approve the "groupable projects" process.

Mr. Keller explained the current process of selecting TAP projects. He noted that a project could receive extra credits, if it is endorsed by the MPO of its region, or if it is included in the MPO's transportation plans. He noted that the proposed TIP process encourages the involvement of MPO in early stages of project selection for TAP grant and it will help MPOs more focusing on long range transportation planning.

Chairman Justice noted that he is in favor of the proposed process in general, and that the MPO should work with the DOH to prepare a formal memorandum as a written policy outlining the process. Mr. Bruffy noted that the TIP process should include local input on appropriate TIP amendment projects, especially when they are related to road widening, pedestrian/bicycle facilities, or signal timing. Mr. Kelly noted that the TIP project should be consistent with the current long range transportation plan and the process should be flexible for future modification. Councilperson Selin noted that she supports the idea of groupable projects. She noted that a memorandum which specifies the proposed TIP process will be essential to establish a clear defined process, that will benefit the the community.

Mr. Bruffy moved a motion to authorize a committee of 4 to finalize the agreement with the WV DOH on the proposed TIP process. The committee shall consist of the Chairman of the MPO's Policy Board, the Executive Director, a member of the Citizens Advisory Committee, and a member of the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hawkins. With no discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

The Policy Board then decided that the members of the committee are: Chainman Justice, Mr. Bill Austin, Mr. Bill Rise, and Mr. Chris Fletcher.

## **7. Beechurst Avenue Study Status Report**

Mr. Austin noted that the MPO has completed the data collection for the Beechurst Ave Corridor Study and is develop preliminary alternatives at key intersections and segments in the corridor. The Steering Committee of the study has met earlier today and identified 5 alternatives for the corridor. The alternatives will be evaluated using VISSIM model and Synchro model. Mr. Austin noted that the Beechurst Ave spot improvements project is included in the MPO's transportation improvement program. The bond referendum currently proposed by the state government will greatly help the implementation of this project.

## **8. Other Business**

Mr. Rice noted that the MPO is a viable organization and he is looking for a more effective partnership between the MPO and the WV DOH. He also noted that the proposed state general bound will have significant positive impact on regional transportation system and he encourage the community to participate in the bound referendum.

Mr. Austin noted that in September MPO staff will attend and make presentations at the annual statewide planning conference at Wheeling and West Virginia Bicycle Summit at Morgantown. MPO staff will attend the national conference held by the Association of MPOs in October. Mr. Austin also noted that the next meeting on October is cancelled unless otherwise notified.

## **8. Meeting Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 7:15 PM.