

**Morgantown Monongalia
Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Board
June 27, 2019 minutes**

Members Present:

Vice-chair Joe Statler-Blacksville, Treasurer Mayor Patricia Lewis-Granville, Mayor Bill Kawecki-City of Morgantown, Dave Bruffy-Mountain Line, Commissioner Edward Hawkins-Monongalia County, Ron Justice-WVU, Mike Kelly-Board of Education, Sean Sikora-Monongalia County

MPO Director: Bill Austin

Members Absent:

Chairman Jennifer Selin-City of Morgantown, Brian Carr-WV DOH, Dominick Claudio-Star City, Councilperson Janice Goodwin-City of Westover, Councilperson Ryan Wallace -City of Morgantown, Commissioner Tom Bloom-Monongalia County

1. Call to Order

Chairman Selin was absent. Vice-chair Statler presided over the meeting. With a quorum present, Vice-chair Statler called the Policy Board meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

2. Public Comments

No public comments

3. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Austin noted that the minutes for the May meeting are included in the agenda package. Commissioner Sikora moved to accept the May minutes, seconded by Mr. Bruffy. With no discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

4. Committee Reports

a. Citizens Advisory Committee

Bill Rice, Chairman of the Citizens Advisory Committee, noted that the CAC recommended approval of the requested TIP amendments. The Committee identified that Alternative 2 is the preferred option in the the Willey St/Richwood Ave intersection study. The Committee recommended adoption of the study and the report of the 2018 traffic count.

b. Finance Committee

Treasurer Mayor Lewis noted the financial report as follows:

-- Beginning balance in May \$34,638.44 with expenditures of \$51,603.57 and one deposit of \$ 43,614.42, leaving a balance of \$ 26,649.29 at the beginning of June.

Mayor Lewis noted that the MPO transferred \$15,000 from the MPO's line credit account. Mr. Austin noted that the transaction is a precautionary measure for a potential delay of reimbursement from the WV DOT. It was confirmed by Mayor Lewis and Chairman Selin in advance of its processing. Mr. Bruffy

asked if the interest on the loan is eligible for city and county funding. Mr. Austin noted that The interest is eligible for State and local funding but not Federal funding.

Mr. Justice moved to accept the Finance Statement as presented; seconded by Mr. Kelly. With no discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

c. Executive Directors Report

Mr. Austin noted that MPO staff attended a two-day pedestrian safety summit hosted by WV LTAP. A wide range of entities participated the summit, including WV DOH, City of Morgantown, and Mon County. Mayor Kawecki noted that the LTAP is to prepare a report summarizing the Summit. He asked when the report will be released. Mr. Austin noted that the report will be available for the public in about six weeks.

Mr. Austin noted that he will attend a meeting about Beechurst Ave project tomorrow in Charleston. The MPO also requested a meeting with the Secretary of Transportation in the middle of July to discuss the Van Voorhis Project and Beechurst Project.

Mr. Austin noted that in the coming fiscal year, the MPO expects to jointly hire an employee with Monongalia County. The primary job for the new employee will include social media outreach, website maintenance, and basic data collection.

5. Transportation Improvement Program Amendments

Mr. Austin noted that West Virginia University Parking and Transportation has requested TIP Amendments for MPRT Modernization Program. The TIP Amendments address the issue of PRT Vehicle Fleet Power and related upgrades. They are in anticipation of submitting a BUILD grant application to the United States Department of Transportation. The proposed amendment has been duly advertised as required by the MPO's Public Involvement Policy.

Mayor Kawecki moved to approve the amendment to the TIP, seconded by Mr. Kelly. With no further discussion, the motion unanimously passed. Mr. Austin noted that the West Virginia Department of Transportation has requested TIP Amendments. They are WV 43 Colonel Zackquill Morgan Bridge project and Caperton Trail project for installation of lighting. Since the proposed TIP Amendments were not received in time for regular advertising under the MPO's Public Involvement Policy. MPO Staff is proposing that the MPO Policy Board tentatively approve these projects in the same fashion as was done with the TIP Amendments in May. Mr. Austin noted that WVDOH also requested three other TIP amendments. Those amendments are not urgent and will be considered at a later date.

Mr. Bruffy moved to approve the proposed amendments as presented; seconded by Mr. Kelly; With no further discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

6. Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program Performance Measures

Mr. Austin noted that the MPO needs to evaluate how the projects in its Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) address the State's and the MPO's performance measures. In the last month, the methodology for evaluating project impacts on the Metropolitan Transportation Plan was presented to, and adopted by, the Policy Board. The same methodology is utilized for the TIP. Mr. Austin noted that the MPO staff will be working with the MPO's committees to evaluate this methodology so we may improve it for adoption next year.

Mayor Kawecki moved to approve the amendment to the TIP, seconded by Commissioner Bloom. With no further discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

7. Draft Willey Street/Richwood Avenue Intersection Study

Mr. Austin noted that a draft report of Willey Street/Richwood Avenue Intersection Study is included in the agenda package. The study was requested by the City of Morgantown and was in the MPO's FY18-19 Unified Planning Work Program. The draft study has been reviewed with the Woodburn Neighborhood Association and the technical work has been completed.

Mr. Justice noted that the intersection is of high importance for both pedestrian and vehicle safety, and he expects the project to continue moving forward. Mr. Austin noted that the study will be handed to the City of Morgantown. MPO Staff will assist the city with public involvement and addressing any technical questions that may arise from the Study.

Commissioner Sikora noted that the property owners are not aware of proposed alternatives in the study. It will be necessary to take actions to engage property owners who will be directly impacted by the project. Mr. Kelly moved to accept the study report as presented; seconded by Commissioner Bloom. With no further discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

8. Draft 2018 Traffic Count Report

Mr. Austin noted that the draft 2018 Traffic Count Report is enclosed the agenda package. This document was delayed by the need to analyze the 2018 count data and by an urgent project that came up unexpectedly. Traffic counts in this report were taken during both the spring and fall of 2018 to develop localized seasonal factors for the urban area. It is anticipated that the 2019 traffic counts will provide enough data to complete the seasonal factors. Mr. Austin also noted that the 2019 traffic count report will be a complete report with peak period volumes and directional volume data available for analysis. The TTAC and the CAC recommend acceptance of this report to the MPO Policy Board.

Commissioner Bloom noted that the report shows that some locations experienced significant traffic volume changes. Mr. Austin noted that the report provides a description of possible causes to abnormal fluctuation of traffic volume. Occasionally, drastic volume changes are due to technical errors in the data collection process.

Mr. Justice moved to accept the traffic count report; seconded by Mr. Kelly. With no further discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

9. Public Involvement Policy Amendment

Mr. Austin noted that the committee to review the proposed public involvement policy changes met on June 18 to discuss the proposed changes to the policy. The committee consisted of Mayor Lewis, Chairperson Selin and Mr. Statler. The committee recommended keeping the requirement that MPO Committee members be notified of any public meetings being held by the MPO. In regard to the policy concerning changes to the MPO's Tier One Project List, the committee recommended that "A proposal to modify the LRTP/MTP fiscally constrained Tier One Project List must include recommendations for projects to be removed or adjusted to meet the fiscal constraint requirements of the Tier One List. The public must be allowed a minimum 45-day comment period and a minimum of two public meetings on the proposed new project and the project(s) proposed to be impacted by the proposed change to the Tier One List." Mr. Statler noted that the committee had a lengthy discussion about the policy changes, and that the recommended changes will bring positive effect for the MPO's transportation planning process.

Mr. Justice moved to adopt the recommended changes to the MPO's Public Involvement Policy, seconded by Mr. Kelly. With no further discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

10. Discussion of Pedestrian and Bicycle Study Implementation

Mr. Austin noted that the MPO is working with a pedestrian safety group to address immediate pedestrian safety concerns in the area. Mr. Justice noted that the group has identified three rapid response projects, which are: the intersection on University Ave near the Pizza Al's, the intersection of University Ave and Falling Run Rd, and the intersection of Campus Dr and Grant Ave. Mr. Justice expressed his appreciation that the City of Morgantown will take the lead on the implementation of the three projects. It is expected that the projects will be completed before the school starts in the fall. Mr. Justice suggested providing students reflective gear and accessories to increase their visibility on streets at night in winter.

Commissioner Bloom noted that the pedestrian safety group will work on other fronts to improve pedestrian safety, including providing channelized crossings, high visibility markings, and education programs.

In regard to the intersection improvements on University Ave near Pizza Al's, Mayor Kawecki asked about the recommendations made by Stantec Consultants in the University Ave Corridor Study. Mr. Austin noted that the recommendations made by that study are subject to DOH's implementation. DOH has not taken any actions on that intersection so far.

11. Other Business

Mr. Justice noted that the University will begin to demolish the Stanberry Hall on Beechurst Ave this summer. The sidewalk in the Stanberry Hall area will remain open for the first two weeks of the demolition and will then be closed. The University has proposed several temporary treatments to ensure pedestrian safety on Beechurst Ave during the demolition, which include temporary crosswalk, signals, barriers, and pavement markings. At the moment, the WV DOH has not approved any of those temporary treatments. The University is working with the DOH to develop an agreement on this issue before the sidewalk closure. Mr. Justice emphasized the importance of providing safe alternative routes for pedestrians in the project areas.

Vice-Chair Statler expressed his appreciation to DOH for roadway improvements on CR7 in the western part of the county. He also noted that CR29 is in poor condition. The oil and gas companies will start to work on several back roads along CR 29. Those projects have been approved by the WV DOH.

Commissioner Sikora asked about the status of the intersection improvement project on Pleasant St and Spruce St. Mr. Austin noted that the City of Morgantown is working on a grant application for this project. The design engineer of the DOH's District Office for the area is aware of the issue at this intersection and will work to improve it in near future.

Mr. Kelly asked about the improvements on Holland Ave in Westover. Mr. Austin noted that there has been re-occurring comments on the water accumulation at various locations along that corridor. Currently, the DOH is looking for a permanent solution to fix the drainage issue there.

12. Meeting Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 PM.