



POLICY BOARD MEETING

Monongalia Board of Education
1751 Earl L. Core Road. Morgantown. WV. 26505

November 16th, 2023, 6 PM

Members Present:

Chairman Mike Kelly – Board of Education, Tom Bloom - Monongalia County, Mayor Bob Lucci – City of Westover, Joe Statler – Blacksville, Ron Justice – West Virginia University, Steve Blinco – Star City, Bill Kawecki – City of Morgantown, Brian Carr – WVDOH, Joe Abu-Ghannam - City of Morgantown, Jeffrey Arnett – Monongalia County, Sean Sikora – Monongalia County

Others Present: Christiaan Abildso

MPO Director: Bill Austin, AICP

1. Call to Order

With a quorum present, Chairman Kelly called the meeting of the Morgantown Monongalia Metropolitan Planning Organization (MMMPO) Policy Board to order at 6:03 PM.

2. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

3. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Justice moved to approve the minutes as presented; seconded by Mr. Blinco. With no discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

4. Committee Reports

a. Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

Mr. Abildso, chair of the CAC, provided an update. The CAC reviewed the TIP amendment, and noted the incorrect obligation date for engineering for the Industrial Bridge. Mr. Austin explained the date presented was from the older version of the TIP amendment. The correct obligation date is October. The advisory committee unanimously recommended approval of the Harmony Grove TIP Amendment, the Transit Asset Management Targets, and the 2024 Meeting Calendar. Mr. Abildso mentioned they had a productive discussion on the pedestrian study done by MPO Staff.

Mr. Austin noted that the Pedestrian Study will be presented to the Policy Board in the January meeting.

b. Finance Committee

Mr. Ausitn provided the Finance Committee update as Mayor Lewis could not attend. He provided the financial report for the month of October. The beginning balance was \$168,707.66, there were 2 deposits totaling \$21,276.87, 21 disbursements totaling \$39,596.45, leaving the ending balance at \$150,388.08.

Mr. Statler moved to approve the finance report; seconded by Commissioner Bloom. Without further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

c. Executive Director

Mr. Austin provided the Executive Director report. The Mon Valley Green Space Coalition reached out to the MPO in making a Greenbelt Map. Staff will be aiding this effort.

The data collection and analysis are ongoing for the Downtown Microsimulation Study.

MMMPO was contacted by our auditors and our audit will begin November 20th.

The MPO has been working with WVDOH, and Right of Way acquisition should be beginning for West Run/Van Voorhis and Greenbag Rd. The MPO is also working with traffic engineering for signal at exit 155, that project is currently being programmed.

Mr. Austin stated he was been working on the pedestrian initiative as part of Vulnerable Road Users (VRU). And he received results today from the VRU study. He would like to further discuss this in other business.

Mr. Austin is still examining issue of credit card, and would like to further discuss this issue with the chairman and treasurer.

He reminded the policy board there will be an executive session for the executive director review in January.

Mr. Austin will be off some in December around the Christmas and New Years holidays, and is taking vacation in February for about 2 weeks.

5. Transportation Improvement Program Adoption

Mr. Austin noted to find enclosed with the agenda the draft 2023-2028 TIP. This document has been advertised in accordance with the MPO's Public Involvement Policy. To date we have not received any comments from the public on this document. The TTAC and CAC unanimously recommend the adoption of this document.

Commissioner Bloom moved to approve the Transportation Improvement Program Adoption; seconded by Mayor Lucci.

Without further discussion the motion passed unanimously.

6. TIP Amendments

Mr. Austin stated that the West Virginia Department of Transportation-Division of Highways has requested the following TIP Amendments since the development of the draft TIP. The proposed amendments are:

FY 2023-2024

Harmony Grove Interchange

Federal ID: NHPP0079109D. Engineering. FY2024. Construction new interchange. Funding Source: HNPP. Federal Funds: \$3,330,000; Total funds: \$3,700,000.

FY 2024-2025

Harmony Grove Interchange

Federal ID: NHPP0079110D. Right of Way. FY2025. Construction new interchange. Funding Source: HNPP. Federal Funds: \$495,000; total funds: \$550,000.

FY 2025-2026

Harmony Grove Interchange

Federal ID: NHPP0079111D. Construction. FY2026. Construction new interchange. Funding Source: HNPP. Federal Funds: \$22,500,000; total funds: \$25,000,000.

The TTAC and CAC have unanimously recommended approval of the proposed TIP Amendments.

Mr. Statler moved to approve the TIP Amendments; seconded by Commissioner Bloom.

Mr. Statler asked about when construction would begin, and Mr. Austin clarified it should occur in 2025 based on the information available. Mr. Statler asked if this funding was from TIF funding. Commissioner Bloom added he was curious about the TIF funding additionally. Mr. Carr clarified he is unsure of the exact financials, or if the project is completely within the TIF district. Commission Sikora stated it is completely within the TIF district. Mr. Carr said he will ask his office for more information.

Without further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

7. Transit Asset Management Targets

Mr. Austin stated that a memorandum is attached showing the 2024 TAM Targets for West Virginia. Transit Asset Management (TAM), is a model that uses the condition of assets to guide the optimal prioritization of funding at transit agencies to keep transit networks in a State of Good Repair (SGR). WVDOT defines SGR (State of Good Repair) as a system meeting the following criteria: All assets are functioning at their ideal capacity within their design life. The state's asset management system, AVIS, includes consistent, accurate and relatively current information on the status of each capital asset covered by the TAM. Each system has a maintenance program to ensure maintenance is performed per manufacturer requirements and intervals. No rolling stock assets are placed in revenue service with identified safety defects. The

TTAC and CAC have unanimously recommended adoption of these targets the MPO Policy Board. Mr. Austin stated Mountain Line is in support of these targets.

Mr. Kawecki moved to approve the Transit Asset Management Targets; seconded by Commissioner Bloom.

Mr. Statler asked about the criteria. Mr. Austin stated the criteria is from the Federal Transit Administration. Mr. Statler raised concern for busses needing repair or being replaced when they are still of good use. Mr. Austin stated these are national goals.

With no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

8. On Call Consultant Work

Mr. Austin stated that MPO Staff and the MPO's consultant for the Downtown Microsimulation Study have been in discussion with Division of Highways Staff concerning the proper quality control review of the model for the Downtown Microsimulation Study. Currently DOH does not have staff qualified to review the model inputs and operation with the time needed for this work. In discussions with DOH, we have determined that the best way to ensure that the model will be reviewed in a timely fashion will be to engage expert staff from our on-call consultant contract to perform this work. We have funding available for this task in both the UPWP and in the STBG funds we are using to conduct the Study. At this time MPO staff is recommending that we use UPWP funds for this purpose, since the State will provide half of the required match for this work.

It is respectfully requested that the Policy Board authorize the Executive Director to sign a purchase order in an amount up to \$25,000 for AECOM to perform this work.

Chair Kelly and Mr. Statler asked clarifying questions about the funding, and Mr. Austin reiterated the matching.

Mr. Statler moved to approve On Call Consultant Work utilizing UPWP funds; seconded by Mr. Justice.

Mr. Kawecki asked if this approval will affect the timeline of the study, Mr. Austin answered no. Mr. Austin also clarified these firms were preselected as on-call consultants through a dually advertised process.

Without further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

9. MPO Large Project Priorities Survey

As Policy Board members are aware, after discussion with Chairman Kelly and other Policy Board members, MPO staff asked the 13 local members of the Board to identify their priorities for the currently unprogrammed Tier One Projects in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. Staff performed this survey to ascertain which projects they should focus on when considering grant applications and potential presentations to WVDOH management for new funding. All local MPO Policy Board members responded to the Survey by ranking their top three (3) priority projects.

Policy Board Members ranked WV 705, Earl Core Rd., Fairmont Rd., Willey St., and Greenbag Rd.

Staff performed additional analysis of the survey to evaluate the depth of the support for each project by assigning points to each recommendation: A 1st Priority recommendation was valued at 3 points. A 2nd Priority recommendation was valued at 2 points A 3rd Priority recommendation was valued at 1 point Using this scoring system each project received the following score:

WV 705- 8 points
Earl Core Road-12 points
Fairmont Road-21 points
Willey Street-13 points
Greenbag Road-23 points

This analysis was consistent with the actual number of votes each project received. Greenbag Road received 11 votes and scored 23 points. Fairmont Road received 9 votes and 21 points. The results of this survey indicate that the Policy Board has two very high priority projects: Greenbag Road and Fairmont Road. In reviewing grant opportunities and presenting projects to funding agencies MPO staff will bring these two projects forward as the MPO's highest priorities with Greenbag Road as the highest priority. While staff is proposing to use this survey as guidance for future grant proposals and discussions with WVDOH it is also understood that if there are funding opportunities that are especially appropriate for one of the other projects, Staff will certainly take that into account informing the Board of the opportunity and recommending that the MPO seek funding for it.

Mr. Austin stated that it is respectfully requested that the Policy Board accept the results of this Survey as guidance for staff in seeking funding for projects.

Mr. Justice wanted to say he values all of the projects, and that this is an internal process.

10. Appointment of Officer Nominating Committee

Mr. Justice, Commissioner Arnett, and Chair Kelly were appointed as members of the Officer Nominating Committee.

11. 2024 Meeting Calendar

Mr. Austin presented the proposed 2024 Meeting Calendar, and to please note that 11/5 is Election Day. Staff is recommending that the TTAC meet on 11/6 instead. It is requested that the Policy Board adopt these meeting dates.

Mr. Austin stated the Policy Board will potentially meet in City Hall for the March meeting.

8. Other Business

Chair Kelly proposed bringing Morgantown Area Partnership on as a member of the Policy Board, as they would be a good partner. Mr. Statler stated this may be represented in the CAC and TTAC, but Chari Kelly argued they do not have good turnout and would like more participation.

Mr. Blinco requested a copy of the by-laws for the board, and Mr. Ausitn said he will re-send those out.

Mr. Austin brought up the Vulnerable Road Users Report that was done this year, 2023. WVDOH intends to set up a steering committee in the Morgantown Area, and have a task force to improve safety throughout the community. He presented a page from the statewide VRU Report where they did a systemic analysis of street network throughout the state, and shows top 25 roadway segments in state. The first 6 are in Mon County, with 12 total being in the top 25.

Mr. Justice raised concern about action being done on these items. Mr. Austin said he is excited that the state has recognized these problem areas and that they are creating a plan of action. Mr. Justice asked for timing, and that is still unknown.

Commissioner Bloom asked about funding, and Mr. Austin and Mr. Carr clarified it will be state funded.

Mr. Austin stated we have not received allocations yet but allocated greater amount of PL funds if we need them, and this would require an increase in the match. Mr. Carr stated that MPOs will get a greater allocation, but can local entities match that? He also stated when MPOs get extra money, the purpose must be stated in the UPWP.

Mr. Justice asked about a Federal Highway Conference pre-pandemic. Mr. Austin provided an update on conferences that have occurred.

Chair Bloom had a question about the intersection of the bridge at 119 and 73, there have been 3 more serious accidents, and wanted clarification that this project is moving forward. Mr. Austin said the project was advertised by WVDOH and bids were taken on it.

9. Meeting Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7 PM.