



## POLICY BOARD MEETING

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

March 16, 2023, 6 PM

### Members Present:

Chair Mike Kelly – Board of Education, Treasurer Mayor Patricia Lewis – Town of Granville, Joe Abu-Ghannam - City of Morgantown, Commissioner Jeffery Arnett – Monongalia County, Recorder Steve Blinco – Westover, Commissioner Tom Bloom – Monongalia County, Mr. Brian Carr – WV DOH, Ron Justice – West Virginia University, Councilperson Kawecki – City of Morgantown, Commissioner Sean Sikora – Monongalia County

**MPO Director:** Bill Austin, AICP

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### 1. Call to Order

With a quorum present, Chair Kelly called the meeting of the Morgantown Monongalia Metropolitan Planning Organization (MMMPO) Policy Board to order at 6:00 PM.

### 2. Public Comment

Matt Cross, the Chair of Morgantown Municipal Pedestrian Safety Board, noted that Collins Ferry Rd needs sidewalks and crosswalks near Suncrest Elementary School. He noted that the Pedestrian Safety Board has contacted the Mon County Board of Education and WV DOH regarding this issue.

### 3. Completion of Executive Directors Review (May require Executive Session per WV 6-9a-4.2A)

Commissioner Bloom made a motion to move the meeting into executive session; seconded by Mr. Justice. With no discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Bloom moved to move the meeting out of executive session; seconded by Mr. Kelly. With no discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

#### **4 Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Austin noted that the minutes of the last meeting were included in the agenda package; Commission Bloom moved to approve the minute as presented; seconded by Mayor Selin. With no discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

#### **5. Committee Reports**

##### **a. Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)**

Mr. Austin noted that Christiaan Abildso, the Chair of CAC, is not able to attend this meeting. Mr. Austin noted that the committee had a quorum. It reviewed all action items and unanimously recommended approval of them.

##### *b. Finance Committee*

Mayor Lewis briefed the Board on the financial report:

At the beginning of January, the balance was \$33,353.61. There was one deposit from DOH for \$22,037.45. There were 19 disbursements totaling \$20,416.53, leaving \$43,974.53 at the end of January.

At the beginning of February, the balance was \$43,974.53. There were three deposits totaling \$52,236.57. There were 19 disbursements totaling \$21,613.6, leaving \$65,597. 50 at the end of February.

Mr. Justice moved to approve the finance report as presented; seconded by Mayor Selin. With no discussion, the motion was unanimously approved.

##### *c. Executive Director*

Mr. Austin noted that the MPO staff had a meeting with the Secretary of Transportation during the Monongalia/Preston County Day in Charleston. The MPO has issued a memo reporting on the discussions. MPO staff has been working with DOH on the contract for the Greenbag Rd project funded by the RAISE grant. MPO staff is expecting to have a new full-time employee in May. The employee will take a shared position between the MMMPO and the Monongalia County Planning Commission. MPO staff has been working on the MPO's Travel Demand Model in response to inquiries from Federal Highway Administration.

#### **6. Draft FY 2023-2024 Unified Planning Work Program**

Mr. Austin noted that a draft of the MPO's FY 2023-2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) has been included in the agenda package. The tasks in the draft UPWP includes oversight of the Downtown Traffic Study, oversight of the Greenbag Road Design Study, initial implementation of the pedestrian/cyclist data collection initiative, and normal MPO operations including enhanced outreach. MPO Staff also intends to perform an areawide charging station study. The draft UPWP proposes a 4% cost of living increase for primary MPO Staff along with enhanced pay for the MPO's shared employee upon completion of their probationary period. Mr.

Austin noted that the MPO anticipates additional funding being available once the WVDOH has evaluated the recently released 2020 Census data.

Commissioner Bloom moved to approve the UPWP as presented; seconded by Mayor Selin. Councilperson Kaweckı asked when the downtown traffic study will start. Mr. Austin noted that the funding for the study will be available by July and the study team will start data collection in August and September. With no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

### **7. Draft RAISE Grant Agreement**

Mr. Austin noted that included in the agenda package is a draft agreement between the MMMPO and WVDOH for the use of the MPO's \$4.2 million RAISE grant for the completion of the design of Greenbag Road and the feasibility study for the off-road path. MPO staff requests that the Executive Director be authorized to execute this agreement, if it is substantially the same as the version of the document as presented. Mr. Austin noted that as an administrative matter, this agenda item was not reviewed by the MPO's advisory committees. Mayor Selin moved to authorize the MPO's Executive Director to execute this agreement as requested; seconded by Commissioner Bloom. With no discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

### **8. Draft Title VI Plan**

Mr. Austin noted that as a recipient of Federal funds, the MPO is required to meet Federal requirements for underserved communities and communities of concern. This requires the MPO to update the Title VI Plan every four years. MPO Staff has reviewed our Plan and updated the base information needed for our analysis as well as reviewed the plans provisions to ensure that they meet current requirements for outreach to these communities. Except for the update of the data used to evaluate the population of our community this Plan is essentially the same as our last Plan. Commissioner Bloom moved to confirm the consultant selection; seconded by Mayor Selin. With no discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

### **9. On Call Consultant Selection**

Mr. Austin noted that a memorandum of the on-call consultant selection is included in the agenda package. Mr. Austin noted that the Selection Committee identified that two firms' submittals effectively separated themselves from the pack. These firms were Kimley Horn Associates and AECOM. After review of these firms' other documentation the Selection Committee recommended that the MPO enter into contracts with both firms for On-call services. Mr. Austin noted that if the Policy Board confirms this recommendation, Staff will enter into contract negotiations with both firms. Mr. Austin noted that the TTAC and CAC both unanimously recommended the selection of both firms to the MPO Policy Board.

Mr. Carr asked about tasks that are expected to be given to the on-call consultants for the next fiscal year. Mr. Austin noted that for the next fiscal year the MPO intended to use the consultant for annual traffic count.

Commissioner Bloom moved to confirm the consultant selection; seconded by Mayor Selin. With no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

## **10. TIP Adjustments**

Mr. Austin noted that WV DOH has requested several adjustments to the MPO's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The adjustments require no action from the Board. The great majority of these adjustments are District Four wide projects such as the installation of roadway striping. The two most significant adjustments are increasing funding for the Walnut Street Streetscape project and the delay of the Brookhaven Road intersection project (the intersection of Brookhaven Road with WV 7) from FY 2024 to FY 2026. Mr. Austin noted that MPO Staff is working with a WVU student capstone project looking at potential solutions to the concerns at this intersection. We hope that the WVU student work will help WVDOH develop a consensus on this question.

Commissioner Bloom expressed his concern about the delay of the Brookhaven project. Mr. Austin noted that the delay was partly caused by a disagreement over the intersection design between the DOH district office and DOH's central office. Commissioner Bloom noted that the project has been postponed for many times. He suggested sending a letter to DOH expressing concerns over the project's delay. The Board agreed.

## **11. Other Business**

Mayor Selin asked how to get the Suncrest Elementary School sidewalk project started. Mr. Carr noted that the such project usually needs a champion. An agency needs to put pieces together, including scope of work and funding resources. The crosswalk should be included in the project scope. Mr. Kelly noted he will work with Mr. Austin on the project and coordinate the Board of Education to set up this project.

Commissioner Bloom noted that the County Commission has set up a working session with WV DOH on April 19 at 1 pm. He welcomed participation from Board members.

Councilperson Kawecky asked about DOH's initiative to improve pedestrian safety in the area. Mr. Austin noted that as a part of the State Highway Safety Improvement Program, the DOH established a regional forum on pedestrian safety. Currently, the initiative is at its inception phase.

Councilperson Kawecky asked about the Mileground project. Mr. Justice noted that he heard different messages about the project. Some said it will be complete by early May; others said the construction will continue until this fall.

Chairman Kelly noted that this year is the MMMPO's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. He expressed his appreciation to Board members for their service.

## **12. Meeting Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 PM.