



FLAGSTAFF METROPOLITAN
PLANNING ORGANIZATION
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Approved *Minutes*
SPECIAL EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m., December 17, 2008

Coconino County Second Floor Conference Room,
219 E. Cherry Avenue, Flagstaff, AZ 86001

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Overton called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.

On roll call, the following were present:

Scott Overton, Chair
Matt Ryan, Vice Chair
Mayor Sara Presler
Coral Evans (excused absent)
Bob Montoya
Deb Hill

The following FMPO staff was present:

David Wessel, FMPO Manager
Meg Roederer, Administrative Specialist

Others Present:

John Harper

II. PRELIMINARY GENERAL BUSINESS

A. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

B. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Wessel presented Ms. Hill with a certificate of appreciation and a *Roberta Rogers* watercolor print on behalf of the FMPO for her years of service to the organization. Additionally, Mr. Wessel gave Ms. Hill a small bronze elk as a gift because she will be relocating to Montana. Ms. Hill shared a brief story with the Board regarding the significance of the elk sculpture and her positive experiences with the FMPO. Chair Overton thanked her for her insight and explained she has been a valuable member to the FMPO and will be missed greatly.

C. APPROVAL of MINUTES.

Mr. Ryan made a motion to approve the October 22, 2008 Minutes and Mr. Montoya seconded, which passed. Ms. Hill abstained because she was not present for the October meeting.

I. OLD BUSINESS (Continued, postponed, and tabled items.)

1. Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Update

Mr. Wessel provided an RTP update to the Executive Board. The Board discussed the Policy Statements and Evaluation Criteria that will shape development of the regional transportation model, future data collection and development to guide staff in development of public information.

Mr. Wessel stated the traffic model is now calibrated and looking very good. The next improvement is to turn it from vehicle trips to person trips and then start layering in pedestrian, bicycle and transit. Charlier will be providing a template for future land use projections and he has been working closely with city and county on cost estimating. He stated similar to the model and Safety Analysis the FMPO is doing precedent setting work and once again with cost estimating. Mr. Wessel mentioned after talking with Charlier and others they are developing a tool for regional transportation planning that will serve very well in providing a better "hand-off" from planning to programming. Over the next one-two months the primary focus will be on land use projections and developing project descriptions of the various ideas, past plans, studies and input from public and hopefully have a model to test it in by the end of January 2009. Mr. Wessel stated they were unable to have the Survey contract between ADOT and NAU out of the AG office on time for a December survey prior to break and it will be in January with results available after the January meeting. Mr. Wessel expects to have validation for policy statements and insight on valuation criteria.

Mr. Wessel gave a PowerPoint slide presentation with a revised the Draft Policy Statement based on comments from TAC, Board of Supervisors, City Council and from the City Economic Vitality staff. Mr. Wessel incorporated the following revisions:

- importance of including land use more strongly
- support of economy
- character of our area
- safety
- add *green* to high tech industries
- Include tourism (the CVB offered doing a survey at the Visitor Center.)
- Change *tax payers* to *citizens*
- Design to consider aesthetics and not strictly utilitarian

Mayor Presler commented on the issue and the perspective of a citizen (Mr. Hughes) regarding intermodal transportation connection and the difficulty of train parking, safety and logistics to and from the bus/train station. Chair Overton suggested he come in as a guest regarding the rail side of passenger travel because he sits on the National Amtrak Board for customer service.

The Board suggested additional revisions

- Under Emergency section use a different adjective instead of *access*
- Under Alternate Economy add *green energy* to statements and add *new and growing industries*
- Suggested Mr. Wessel meet with Rich Bowen regarding NAU/Education Transportation. Ms. Hill noted that NAU has been invited to previous meetings and does not always attend.
- Design to consider aesthetics and not strictly utilitarian *if possible*

- Under Strategic Direction item A. *Reduce drive-alone frequency through mode-shift: providing balanced travel choices (drive, bus, walk, and bike) to maximize personal mobility.*
 - Needs a time element
 - Add “design features”
- Remove “incentivize” use “encourage”

Chair Overton made a motion to adopt the Draft Policy statements and Mayor Presler seconded, which passed unanimously.

The Board reviewed Performance Measures for “right fit” with budgeting process. There was no action.

FMPO was awarded a grant to do a Safety Analysis for the RTP and it has been completed. The Board discussed the Safety Analysis Report and requested additional review of the entire analysis prior to publishing the findings. The Board will receive the report electronically prior to posting the publication. There was no action.

Mr. Wessel provided a handout to the Board (*FMPO Regional Transportation Plan Project Selection and Prioritization Criteria*) and explained the form will be updated to include additional criteria and emailed to stakeholders and hopefully results will be available for the next meeting. There was no action.

II. NEW BUSINESS

2. FMPO FY 2010 Work Program

Mr. Wessel explained the FMPO work program tasks for FY 2010 and received comment and suggestion from the Board.

Mr. Wessel stated there are key funding initiatives that may be coming up that the MPO should spend time on preparing positions and educational information. Chair Overton commented on the City Council budget retreat strategic plan to set priorities and the transportation elements were a top priority at the retreat such as the Lone Tree Corridor, and that project being a potential Bond question in 2010. Chair Overton posed the question, if this is a good Board to have Council representation on the discussion in order to know where we are headed with tax outlay in terms of bonding, sales tax and BBB revenue renewals. Chair Overton expressed that he believes this group will be influential in the discussion if it goes to Bond in 2010. Chair Overton believes it best to be proactive and “ahead of the curve” and believes this group is needed in order for it to be communicated effectively to become a successful Bond project. Chair Overton inquired about timing regarding first or second quarter to start having the discussion. Mr. Wessel agreed and stated the RTP is lumped with the Lone Tree Corridor and is developing information that is pertinent to a Bond question and in regard to the Work Program will be spending MPO resources.

The Board supported funding initiatives and material information. Ms. Hill commented if the organization name change and boundary study was necessary because it took five years to take the MPO independent and reorganize it. Chair Overton stated it was a request of Ms. Evans and Mr. Ryan stated it was also a retreat discussion. Ms. Hill stated the name change compared to the other issues such as reauthorization, RTP, I-17, funding cuts, transportation initiatives, etc. the name change pales in comparison. Mr. Wessel stated Ms. Evans concern was that the name Flagstaff Metropolitan Planning Organization is not recognized and does not state transportation in the name. Mayor Presler stated that she and

Chair Overton have been mentioning the FMPO at council meetings when there are discussions related to transportation. She stressed the Board advocate for the FMPO.

Mr. Wessel stated there is an ongoing I-17 Study and the I-40 DCR has been bumped from the program and hopefully it will be reinstated. Mr. Wessel has a letter ready for the Chair to sign and will send the letter electronically to the Board regarding the I-40 DCR.

Chair Overton inquired if the MPO is participating in the budget exercise reduction. Mr. Wessel stated the \$30,000 contribution has been reduced 19% and is looking at other areas to reduce as well. Chair Overton mentioned the council will look at grant funds differently and because MPO is not drawn from the general fund. He recommended the MPO go through the budget process.

Mayor Presler mentioned two budget approaches:

1. Zero Base Budget
2. 20% Budget Cut

She stated there will be a Citizen Task Force assigned and some independent benchmarking. Mayor Presler added tha the MPO maximize staff members/resources utilizing city and county staff and cited an example from Housing Authority.

3. Federal Highway Bill Authorization and Stimulus Package

Mr. Wessel explained to the Board his attendance at the ADOT Reauthorization Summit in early December (12/2/08) in Glendale, Arizona. He mentioned the current Bill expires in September 2009 and there are two perspectives.

- 1) Economic downturn means there is a need to set expectations for funding in order to have infrastructure projects move forward that will fast track legislation.
- 2) Expect continued resolutions for a year or two.

Mr. Wessel suggested being safe and preparing for the first perspective regarding the economic downturn. Mr. Wessel mentioned there is a discussion that earmarks will no longer be used and there is speculation that the Chair of the Transportation Infrastructure Committee is not likely to let go of earmarks completely. Ms. Hill added that none of them will stop using earmarks except for McCain. Mr. Wessel stated a possible position may be to state that we approve earmarks should go away but until they provide our request. Mr. Ryan stated there was a discussion to place limitations and place percentages in order for there to be more control. Mr. Wessel mentioned that if we were to receive an amount it has an impact on how state funds are distributed because it will come out of a certain pool of money. For example, there is a state pot of money and out of that pot the earmarks come out of it. Chair Overton stated that it undermines the base program and what ADOT does in this situation. Mr. Montoya stated it has happened before and there will be more discussion. Mr. Wessel clarified the *stimulus* will use money for ready to go projects and will be new money. The *reauthorization* will have earmarks and has ripple effects and may cause discontent because projects may not be selected due to the reduction of money available.

Mr. Wessel stated a key to reauthorization relative to the FMPO is the threshold for MPOs and whether it will be retroactive. Mary Peters released a proposal that may put MPOs as high as 500,000 and other proposals (transportation management areas or large MPOs) start at 200,000 with a large MPO at 500,000

or one million. Mr. Wessel posed the question...will our MPO be grandfathered if the threshold changes or be decommissioned?

Ms. Hill addressed the question.

- FMPO should be in the conversation at many levels.
- This hits the West unfairly because the West tends to have smaller communities than the highly populated states back East.
- Ms. Hill views the threshold as a rural fairness equity issue.
- Flagstaff is a regional hub yet the numbers do not look huge compared to Sacramento and other urban areas.
 - The same service to base population relationship exists and economic development drivers exist and it becomes what moves this part of the rural area forward.
- Ms. Hill suggests arguing loudly and strongly and that there is a fairness equity issue toward the rural west, if they start raising threshold numbers for MPOs. Mr. Ryan added to contact other groups related to the conversation (NATO/NARC/ASHTO) and write a letter(s) stating our position.

5. FMPO Calendar

Chair Overton confirmed future Executive Board meetings will be at City Hall.

III. CONCLUDING GENERAL BUSINESS

D. REPORTS

1) Technical Advisory Committee:

Provided and no discussion.

2) Management Committee Report:

No Discussion

3) Staff Reports:

Mr. Wessel stated the Lake Mary Road bid opening will be on Friday, December 19, 2008.

E. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Hill announced a final thank you to the FMPO and Executive Board members and is looking forward to her move to Montana in the summer of 2009.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Overton adjourned the meeting at 2:55 p.m.