



# FLAGSTAFF METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

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## *Approved Minutes* **Executive Board**

**8:00 a.m., Wednesday, March 23, 2011**

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Flagstaff City Hall Staff Conference Room,  
211 W. Aspen Avenue, Flagstaff, AZ 86001

Chair Overton called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m.

### **Roll Call.**

**Present:** Chair Scott Overton, Councilmember City of Flagstaff; Carl Taylor, Supervisor Coconino County; Matt Ryan, Supervisor Coconino County; Jennifer Toth, Arizona Department of Transportation; Coral Evans, Councilmember City of Flagstaff

### **Excused Absent:**

Art Babbott, Councilmember City of Flagstaff;

### **Others Present:**

David Wessel, FMPO Manager; Meg Roederer, FMPO Administrative Specialist; Jeff Meilbeck, NAIPTA General Manager

## **I. PRELIMINARY GENERAL BUSINESS**

### **A. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

### **B. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mr. Wessel requested an adjustment of the agenda and move New Business Item 1: NAIPTA Update and Organizational Study Proposal as the first item of discussion, Chair Overton and the Board agreed.

### **C. APPROVAL of MINUTES.**

Mr. Taylor made a motion to approve the Minutes of January 26, 2011 and Mr. Ryan seconded, which passed unanimously.

## **II. NEW BUSINESS (Continued, postponed, and tabled items.)**

### **1. NAIPTA Update and Organizational Study Proposal**

The agenda was adjusted to discuss this item first. Mr. Wessel introduced the topic and Mr. Meilbeck, NAIPTA General Manager, presented a PowerPoint presentation to update the Board on NAIPTA activity including the Mountain Links Bus Rapid Transit project.

The Board discussed the possibility of hiring a consultant to investigate a NAIPTA and FMPO merger. Mr. Meilbeck stated the strategy to lay out is developing a stakeholder list and to get clear on risks and opportunities including fatal flaws before investing money and time of looking at a project that may not go anywhere. The Board approved Mr. Meilbeck's approach to gather a team

that is based on Board recommendation consisting of Mr. Wessel, Mr. Meilbeck, a TAC member, FMPO Board member, NAIPTA Board member, a Cottonwood member (that could participate by phone), and one or two stakeholders from an economic development perspective to meet a few times before hiring a consultant, in order to develop a scope of work that would examine organizational relationships between NAIPTA and FMPO, including merger options, and avoid a consultant driven process.

### **III. OLD BUSINESS (Continued, postponed, and tabled items.)**

#### **1. FY 2011 Highway Safety Improvement Program & Projects**

Mr. Wessel provided a brief status update of the FY 2011 Highway Safety Improvement Program And Projects and stated the Benefit/cost analyses were completed and eligibility requests submitted. Mr. Wessel stated we are receiving the full \$600,000 to be allocated to the program and now the critical path is the JPA and we are taking steps to get it taken care. Mr. Wessel stated that eligibility is not secured but the paperwork is in to approve all the projects eligible. Mr. Wessel stated the safety program training was canceled for 3/23/11 and will be rescheduled.

#### **2. Legislative and Regulatory Update and Review**

Mr. Wessel stated this is the standing item that was requested. Mr. Wessel stated he seeks action to authorize a letter from the FMPO on several federal issues related to secure rural schools, payment, limit taxes and other things. Mr. Wessel stated it sounds like unfunded mandates where the Feds have large tracks of land with transportation facilities through them with the primary function to serve the federal lands and yet there is talk of not reauthorizing the bills that puts the responsibility on the County. Mr. Taylor stated he has well prepared bullet points, position papers, and statistics on County impacts especially on HURF and can supply that from Joanne Keene to Mr. Wessel. Mr. Wessel stated he met with Mr. Ryan and Ms. Keene to discuss these things and found he did not see any of them that were not in concert with MPO policy or positions and there is an impact in terms of our ability to support transportation in the region as the County gets spread thinner and thinner. Mr. Wessel stated it is appropriate to authorize the Chair to send a letter to delegation in support of the County position.

Mr. Wessel asked Ms. Toth if the five year construction program that is out anticipated the Republican budget proposal. Ms. Toth stated "no" and explained the Senate put forth a budget proposal with \$250 million being removed from HURF, which will drastically affect the five year program and at this point in time have not come up with a plan B. Ms. Toth stated they have moved \$112 million out of the program and reduced a tremendous amount of the sub programs and it would be detrimental. Ms. Toth also stated at the national level they are looking at a reduction in appropriations as well. Ms. Toth thinks once there is discussion and a settled path that we can look at the impacts. Chair Overton reported on the RTAC meeting in Phoenix the day after they passed the Senate side. Chair Overton stated Rep. Karen Fann was present and relayed her suggestion which was to look at programs across the state and find out which ones can be suspended or just not do. Chair Overton stated as an elected body and appointed FMPO Board members what can we do to assist ADOT as they navigate the budget. Ms. Toth stated we need to know the numbers we are working with before we can move forward with options. Chair Overton mentioned RTAC discussed with the general contractors association and the topic of P3s came up and the RTAC Board pushed hard to have them drive the process with solutions from the private sector and not the legislature otherwise there is no buy-in from the public sector and have them facilitate more of the conversation. Mr. Wessel commented on P3 and Yavapai Capital Group financier, John Sellers, that there is a bill introduced in Congress to set up a national infrastructure bank along the lines of Obama's national construction proposal and apparently it is in line with Yavapai. Mr. Wessel explained the project is to do an I-11 type development and improving 93 and to do alignment further north that is parallel to the facility.

Mr. Ryan reported on his trip to Washington DC and stated the discussions covered many issues and they had John Mica from the House present to his committee. Mr. Ryan stated they were

suggesting to have less than what currently exists and innovation and inefficiencies will solve things. Mr. Ryan stated since his return the current allocation is \$250 billion and now it is suggesting its over \$300 billion and the President is over \$500 billion and does not know where Boxer from the Senate stands. Mr. Ryan mentioned they are all talking about doing a reauthorization because they do not want a continuing resolution to occur and mentioned it will be six years but "they are all over the place." Mr. Ryan suspects there will not be a reauthorization until the election is through. Mr. Ryan relayed Mica's staff member wants to hear from people indexing is a good idea. Mr. Ryan stated if we are investing in infrastructure and if we have a cost index modification we are adjusting for that when it comes to infrastructure. Mr. Ryan stated this was the healthiest thing he had heard. Mr. Ryan handed out information on a freight conference April 27-29, 2011 in Chicago, Illinois. Mr. Ryan recommended Mr. Wessel attend and he could come up with transportation costs. Mr. Wessel will check his schedule and look at the opportunity.

Mr. Wessel stated next month to have a discussion on positions of federal reauthorization issues and if we don't have a full set of policy we should support indexing in the short term. Mr. Wessel stated the growing concern about the ability to sustain infrastructure that is outweighing the fiscal concern of increased costs and indexing is a small first step to get momentum going.

Chair Overton made a motion to authorize the Chair to submit a letter to support County positions on delegation opposing permitting lapsed authorization of secure schools and payment in lieu of taxes that impacts the County's ability to maintain roads through the USFS and Ms. Evans seconded, which passed unanimously. Chair Overton stated it echoes the City position in HURF funding and they parlay regionally and that is great.

#### **IV. NEW BUSINESS (Continued, postponed, and tabled items.)**

##### **2. FMPO FY 2012-2016 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

Mr. Wessel explained the TIP "call for projects" for projects has been released. Mr. Wessel stated we are looking at moving forward on routine draw downs of STP funds to support the planning operations such as the traffic count program. Mr. Wessel stated the more immediate issue is the opportunity to partner with ADOT on the federal "Every Day Counts" initiative for Adaptive Signal Control technology. Mr. Wessel has attended two trainings. The first on the Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Architecture, which is the state's growing intent to update the architecture with the strategic plan for applying certain ITS elements. Mr. Wessel's second training was yesterday (3-22-11), Systems Engineering, to look at the network and identify the best strategies for each corridor and should one of those be the Adaptive Control System then we start laying out the requirements and pursue it. Mr. Wessel stated early on it looked like we were going to do a demonstration project of the technology but there are actually formal steps one must go through per federal regulation and Systems Engineering is one of them. Mr. Wessel thinks there is a good opportunity both in the Work Program and the TIP to evaluate from a more operational perspective and in our Regional Transportation Plan has been capital driven looking at widening and new facilities with a broad policy discussion on operations. Mr. Wessel stated this is a good way to take a look at each corridor strategically and it may be multi-phased. Mr. Wessel requests permission from the Board to commit \$100-150,000 to put up against what is tentatively \$150,000 commitment from ADOT to fund a pilot project. Mr. Wessel stated we may end up amending an old TIP because the FY11 TIP is not authorized by the Feds but it is submitted and under review and so, if we get to that point we may amend the FY10 TIP. Mr. Wessel stated this could be pushed off until the April meeting until there is stronger action and more planning. Chair Overton requested more information on the significance of funding it at this time and if it is truly a priority of the state and why we are doing this and if it can be deferred and wants more background. Mr. Wessel explained the Every Day Counts program is looking at 15 proven initiatives from processes to technologies that the federal government believes should be main stream and incorporated, adopted, put into standards and put into practice. Chair Overton asked for an example. Mr. Wessel cited one that is in practice is the safety edge at Lake Mary Rd., which is a simple technology to take the edge of the pavement and bevel it at 30 degrees to make it much easier that if a car that

has gone off the road can to come back onto the road safely – the feds believe that should be an adopted standard everywhere. Mr. Wessel cited another example, as the Adaptive Signal Control System. Mr. Wessel stated the technology has been around for thirty years and it has come into its own but there have been question marks such as how well does it work? What does it mean to our agency from a cost and maintenance perspective? What does it mean to our agency from a capital perspective? Mr. Wessel stated typically you need more detectors by shifting green time utilization and it adapts from reading the data. Mr. Wessel stated that the feds believe it is mature and ready- and the feds are working with the states and the states have selected the priorities for their state to get it out there in the field. Mr. Wessel stated there are challenges in Flagstaff with the railroad and a number of other issues with our signals and what he learned in Sacramento is that this looks like an opportunity to get better performance in Flagstaff, builds momentum and a now there is a partnership with ADOT on the potential project. Ms. Toth commented the EDC Initiative is about doing projects better, faster and cheaper. Ms. Toth stated better - being safety, and operate the system more efficiently. Ms. Toth stated Flagstaff is a prime example with the railroad crossings and how to clear the queues in a quicker manner. Ms. Toth stated if it can read and see the continual traffic there but not from the opposing lane it can make those adjustments automatically. Ms. Toth stated they have not done the ITS Architecture Strategic Plan since 97 or 98 and next year they will be doing the development of a strategic plan of the ITS Architecture to start piecing off on how to implement adaptive signal control. Chair Overton understands streamlining it but is concerned about the capital side and how to afford it at the end of the day and then not be able to afford it in two years. Ms. Toth stated the effort is to capitalize on the existing system in order to operate it more efficiently. Ms. Toth stated part of that is the congestion without continuing adding lanes which costs more than retro fitting a control cabinet to use this technology. Mr. Ryan stated the one area where the feds are going to spend money is on safety. Mr. Wessel stated the sense of urgency has diminished but is still enthusiastic. Mr. Wessel stated the cost on the upper end is about \$12,000 per intersection. Chair Overton stated that is on the implementation and is fine with that but expressed a concern of spending \$150,000 to study it. Mr. Wessel stated based on what he learned yesterday stated an option may be to do this in-house and work a process that arrives at a reasonable conclusion that says this technology is appropriate for this project without having to invest a lot of money on a study but eventually designing and implementation will require some consultant expertise. Mr. Wessel stated the issue that was raised at the ACS-Lite training session by Mr. Kent Link, ADOT Traffic Engineer and Jeff Bauman, City Traffic Engineer going forward we have more equipment in the field that requires care and monitoring and if we have the commitment to maintain it long term. Mr. Wessel stated that is part of the evaluation process and the City signal system is in good shape but still needs upgrades and additions with questions on the ADOT system. Mr. Wessel will report back on moving forward with the topic next month.

### **3. Doney Park Multimodal Transportation Plan Update**

Mr. Wessel stated the plan is moving ahead on schedule with a technical meeting next Monday (3-28-11), public outreach has been done and putting together the program of projects. Mr. Wessel stated the big issue and primary focus was non-motorized connectivity and equestrian issues. He referred the Board to a map on page 17 of the agenda packet and the agenda PowerPoint presentation and explained the boundaries. Mr. Wessel commented on a trail as an extension of Burris Lane and there is vehicular connectivity through the area has potential prospect that needs to be more fully discussed. Mr. Wessel stated there would be an advantage on Burris Lane connection from a school bus circulation perspective. Mr. Wessel commented on transit options with commuter service from Silver Saddle and make a loop within Doney Park or Silver Saddle to Campbell with park-n-ride as part of the scenario with the prospect at the country store at Silver Saddle as well as Burris Lane. Mr. Wessel stated part of the challenge with park-n-ride is most people would have made a one or two mile trip to get to the park-n-ride and only have another five-eight miles to go and the industry rule of thumb if you have been in your car for more than 20% of the trip you will probably stay in your car. Mr. Wessel stated the service would need to be exceptional or the cost of gas exceptional to make this type of service viable and from a performance matrix the most transit needy are being served. Chair Overton inquired if there is data

collection on perspective ridership being conducted. Mr. Wessel stated there has been work on a conceptual level and the history of transit polling is a disparity between the people that want it and the people that actually use it. Mr. Ryan stated there is a density problem. Mr. Wessel stated under the RTP he has started to develop a tool to get at the ridership question and the density guideline issue. He stated this study is entering the program of projects phase and the major issues identified by the public are the need for bike lanes and trails along key routes and transit service.

#### **4. US 180 Winter Congestion Study and Travel Time Study**

Mr. Wessel stated HDR, Inc. received the contract and the Notice to Proceed will be issued shortly. Mr. Wessel is looking for synergy with the Regional Plan 2012 effort. The Board made comments on the issue. Chair Overton commented on the need for private participation. Ms. Evans commented on the need to seek funding now, importance of involving the businesses on Milton, stressed the need to include the residents in the neighborhoods and that they need to be heard and offer solutions that work for them. Mr. Ryan commented on the confusion between the Highway 180 and Fremont project and this Study and it needs to be made clear with the public. Ms. Evans expressed she understands transportation takes a long time but the delay is unacceptable and inquired about a master plan and stressed implementation of solutions. Mr. Taylor stated we know what we know but supports a study to verify what we know. Mr. Taylor stated he appreciates what Mr. Wessel is doing.

#### **5. Regional Plan 2012 Planning Assistance for Rural Areas Grant**

Mr. Wessel explained the information on data collection, contract award and status on this project and referred the Board to the PowerPoint (page 18 of the agenda packet). He stated the PARA grant has been awarded. Scope coordination issues between ADOT, Core Team, Technical Consultant, Public Involvement consultant, ASU Decision Theater, Rural Policy Institute and modeling consultant is underway. Mr. Wessel stated focus will be on asking the right questions and fashioning the scenarios accordingly.

#### **6. FMPO Calendar**

Mr. Wessel covered important dates as indicated in the PowerPoint (page 19 of the agenda packet) and future agenda items.

- April Agenda
  - I-40 DCR
  - Steves/Fanning Railroad Crossings
  - TIP & UPWP
- May Agenda
  - Corridor coalitions
  - TIP & UPWP
- Special Events
  - Corridor retreat: local, state or multi-state
  - What Moves You Arizona
    - March 21, 2011 – release of video and survey
    - April 13, 2011 – focus groups
  - Intermodal Planning Group: March 28
  - ADOT Dinner & 5-Year Construction Program: May 19 & 20, 2011

Ms. Toth explained pavement preservation programming. Ms. Evans commented on the discussion of adding a project, which is the Fourth Street corner of Cedar and Locket. Ms. Roederer will schedule a meeting with Mr. Wessel and Ms. Evans to discuss project process. Mr. Ryan suggested a site meeting with Mr. Wessel and Ms. Metzger regarding the Bypass Study. Ms. Roederer stated the May regular meeting will need to be rescheduled due to County budget meetings and will be contacting the members on a new May meeting date and time. Chair Overton stated he will not be available at the April meeting. Ms. Evans stated it is on her calendar and plans to attend.

**V. CONCLUDING GENERAL BUSINESS**

**D. REPORTS**

There was no discussion.

**E. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Ms. Toth announced possible new ASTB member, Hank Rogers, from the town of Eagar and that he is pending confirmation from the Senate. Ms. Toth stated his background as the director of a non-profit economic development group, a local insurance agent, he builds log homes, has been part of the school board and his wife is on the Eagar City Council. Ms Toth stated they are hopeful he will be confirmed and be able to attend the April Board Meeting. Chair Overton offered to make contact with him when the confirmation comes through.

Mr. Wessel requested feedback on the agenda packet. Chair Overton wanted more information on the rationale of the technical side for example on the adaptive signal control. Ms. Evans stated try not to exceed more than five more pages.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Overton adjourned the meeting 9:54 a.m.