



FLAGSTAFF METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

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Minutes **Executive Board**

8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., Wednesday, February 22, 2012

Arizona Department of Transportation – Flagstaff District, Conference Room
1801 S. Milton Road, Flagstaff, AZ 86001

Chair Rogers called the meeting to order at 8:06 a.m.

Roll Call

Present: Chair Hank Rogers, Arizona Department of Transportation; Vice Chair Matt Ryan, Supervisor Coconino County; Scott Overton, Councilmember City of Flagstaff; Mandy Metzger, Supervisor Coconino County

Excused Absent:

Coral Evans, Councilmember City of Flagstaff; Carl Taylor, Supervisor Coconino County (designated alternate)

Others Present:

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

I. PRELIMINARY GENERAL BUSINESS

A. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

B. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Wessel requested an agenda adjustment with discussion of New Business Item 1: Legislative and Regulatory Update and Review to follow Old Business Item 1: FMPO Regional Transportation Plan Amendment and New Business Item 1: Transportation Summit Update. Chair Rogers approved the agenda change.

C. APPROVAL of MINUTES.

Ms. Metzger made a motion to approve the Minutes of January 25, 2012 and Mr. Ryan seconded, which passed unanimously.

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

1. FMPO Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Amendment

Mr. Wessel explained at last month's meeting there was a proposal for the RTP to clarify the 89 bypass relationship to the Picture Canyon section four area in order to better communicate the relationship to the state land department and state parks and recreation department. Mr. Wessel stated the TAC took it under advisement and made a recommendation to the Board for an amendment to the language and map changes in the 2009 RTP related to project #70 US 89 Bypass. The amendment refers to the project as the "US 89 Mobility Study," clarifies the need for a full environmental review, identifies a more complete range of alternatives, and amends the map to reflect a more general and broad approach to resolving mobility issues. Mr. Wessel referred the Board to page 10 of 21 in the agenda packet for the specific language and map amendment. "US

89 Corridor Improvements – Extraordinary circumstance: Additional north south capacity with improved connections to Interstate 40 can resolve system vehicular delay at a rate 300 times more than most other projects. That it can only score 33% more than any other project in the scoring matrix indicates the value the community places on other criteria. A full design concept report, compliant with the National Environmental Policy Act will be required. Alternatives may include "no build," improvements to existing facilities such as US 89, Country Club Drive, and I-40 exit 201, and parallel bypass or connector road options at different distances and configurations. In addition to the congestion to be resolved, the impacts to be investigated and mitigated are biological resources including wildlife habitat and movement corridors, archaeological resources, historic resources, open space and recreation resources, and socio-economic impacts to neighborhoods and businesses. Mr. Wessel stated that through the language it is made clear that it is a concept that needs full NEPA review and a full evaluation of alternatives including a no-build alternative. Mr. Wessel stated the map displays an area of study options that look at mobility. Mr. Wessel stated the TAC discussed minor changes such as references to the 89 bypass and elimination of shadow lines in order to make the document consistent.

Ms. Metzger commented the Picture Canyon State Land Department Hearing (February 14, 2012) had approximately 250 people and they were supportive and she received good feedback from the state land commissioner. Mr. Ryan mentioned the positive language change, the need to study the area and that it allows for analysis of the area. Ms. Metzger made a motion to approve the amendment as recommended and Mr. Ryan seconded, which passed unanimously.

III. NEW BUSINESS (Continued, postponed, and tabled items.)

1. Transportation Summit Update

Mr. Wessel provided a transportation summit update to the Board. Mr. Wessel explained the task force is comprised of FMPO, NAIPTA, Flagstaff Chamber of Commerce, and ECONA. Mr. Wessel stated the purpose is to look at regional relationships and go beyond our borders. Mr. Wessel mentioned the task force has been meeting weekly and established a draft program referring to page 13 of 21 in the agenda packet. Mr. Wessel stated the idea is to paint a picture of the economy and various transportation needs by sector as well as current plans, funding status, and vision to help guide decisions. Mr. Wessel stated the vision will be tentative because of the work currently being conducted by ECONA and by the Regional Plan update process on economic development and will make sure the vision is in line. Mr. Wessel explained the theme "All Modes Lead to Flagstaff," reviewed the summit agenda and stated the time is from 1:30-3:30pm on April 20, 2012. Mr. Wessel stated "a save the date email" will be going out shortly and the FMPO will be the lead on invitations and tracking. It will be sent to Boards of major organizations and key businesses with attendance anticipated from 50-70 people. Mr. Wessel stated the invites will also include the mayors and chamber presidents of Williams, Winslow as well as the Phoenix chamber president. Mr. Wessel mentioned a survey will be done through the umbrella organizations with survey monkey and will be circulated to as many businesses as possible in order to get an idea of type of business, business size, their market(s) and the transportation issues they are facing. Ms. Metzger commented on truck traffic (moving, livestock, freight) and suggested reaching out to them. Mr. Overton mentioned SCA Tissue, Swift and Knight. Chair Rogers mentioned trucking associations. The Board suggested inviting the participants of the survey to the summit that include carriers (Swift, SCA, Knight). Mr. Wessel stated carriers are being invited such as Horizon and BNSF and will invite representatives from the trucking industry as well. Mr. Wessel explained a question to explore at the summit is the transportation issue at the destination point. For example, if Phoenix or southern California is the destination and if transportation issues are preventing our businesses from expanding into that market - should we join a corridor coalition (I-10) or be an impetus to an I-40 corridor coalition. Mr. Wessel stated the intention of the summit is to look at multiple modes and transit issues within the region, outside the region, access for employees, cost of living for employees and this information will be folded into the broader economic Regional Plan elements.

Mr. Meilbeck provided background information regarding vision refinement and that the summit will provide momentum and clarity. Mr. Meilbeck recognized the partners and stated the summit idea came from a discussion at FMPO retreat last fall. Mr. Meilbeck mentioned the theme "all modes lead to Flagstaff" was Mr. Wessel's idea, the graphics were done by the Chamber of Commerce, and NAIPTA and ECONA are involved bringing the public and private sector involvement. Mr. Meilbeck stated we have been successful despite a coherent vision that we could attach major projects to. Mr. Meilbeck added we could be more successful with a coherent and compelling vision with an economic backdrop to know what projects to do and why with clear consensus from a broad constituency to get them done. Mr. Meilbeck mentioned the survey will overlay with planning and come up with a vision, which will be suggested to the stakeholders and continue to be developed and refined to confirm that it resonates with everybody. Mr. Meilbeck stated the summit is not the end but the beginning and will provide momentum and clarity to move forward.

Mr. Wessel reviewed the schedule of events for the Summit (4/20 at 1:30pm), ASTB Hearing (4/20 at 8:00am) and Board Dinner (4/19 at 5:30pm). Mr. Wessel confirmed with Mr. Omer the April 20 ASTB Hearing agenda was not anticipated to extend into the afternoon. Mr. Overton asked if the outcome of the summit is to set an action plan or brainstorm and move to an action plan afterwards. Mr. Wessel replied if a vision can be obtained to layout a strong set of possibilities or solid priorities for boards to look at that will set up an action agenda as well as the taskforce setting a program from the summit results for presentation to the boards on coordinated strategies. Mr. Overton expressed that we are at a point to set the direction and offer priorities for Boards to implement. Mr. Meilbeck recognized Mr. Overton's point and stated the idea is to seek a vision that is further out and go through the process of a survey overlaid with the economic development and transportation for a nexus of projects to be revealed such as airport expansion, I-17 or freight. Mr. Meilbeck stated projects will become clear and based on the work, projects and strategic alliances can be attached to it to move projects forward because they fit in with the bigger picture. Mr. Meilbeck stated the idea is to approach it globally to avoid projects competing with one another. Mr. Overton asked if the idea is for the group to focus on one project or decide on projects. Mr. Meilbeck stated that one project may be revealed but believed it would probably be four or five projects. Mr. Wessel suggested a solid action plan may be necessary and survey results will be received by March 16 and schedules permitting through the taskforce go to the boards and coordinate before the summit to layout a challenge and commitment for the group to follow at the summit. Mr. Overton expressed that it has been laid out already on what we need and what we can't afford. Mr. Ryan stated he believed that we are close with some sectors and to be cautious because it can be nebulous. Mr. Ryan added that he likes what we are doing but to avoid the fatal flaw of only doing presentations. Mr. Ryan commented on regions and sub-regions. Mr. Overton suggested P3 as an example and stressed groups (ECONA, Chamber) are ready for tasks.

Chair Rogers suggested inviting Native American tribes and Ms. Metzger concurred. Mr. Wessel stated the gaming commission will be invited because of the Twin Arrows development and could be expanded to include Navajo transit. Ms. Metzger commented on the planned and on-going activity in the I-40 East corridor. Mr. Adam suggested for political reasons inviting the two legislatures (Hale and Jackson.)

Mr. Meilbeck summarized the Board comments on the summit and stated in addition to a vision that we suggest projects to galvanize support around the projects. Mr. Meilbeck appreciated the feedback and will refine it with the taskforce and report back at the March Board meeting. Mr. Wessel expressed a concern the information will be gathered after the March meeting and if as a taskforce committing to projects prior to a Board discussion. Mr. Overton suggested moving forward with project suggestion. Mr. Ryan commented on private sector involvement. Mr. Wessel stated he will begin focusing on a vision that supports specific projects for a consensus.

Ms. Metzger asked for more information regarding speaker, Alan Maguire. Mr. Wessel stated Mr. Maguire's role will to briefly talk about funding availability and opportunities. Mr. Ryan inquired

about the Board dinner presentation on April 19. Mr. Wessel explained the AzTA conference is the following week and as a launch to the conference AzTA and NAIPTA will participate in the dinner. Mr. Meilbeck stated NAIPTA will present an update on Mountain Link success. Chair Rogers suggested addressing I-15 and the costs that will be incurred by rural Arizona and the significant funding impact. Mr. Ryan suggested it as a topic at the Board Hearing on April 20. Mr. Wessel mentioned funding for the dinner and summit events at the High Country Conference Center. Mr. Wessel stated the summit is not a budgeted expense and requested feedback if the event is moved to a free facility at City Hall Council Chambers or to charge a registration fee for attendance or gather sponsorships. Chair Rogers stated Board members receive a reimbursement for registration. Mr. Overton suggested not charging for the summit attendance. The Board supported the summit location at City Hall Council Chambers. Ms. Metzger encouraged summit attendee participation with an opportunity for discussion. Ms. Meilbeck stated there will be opportunity to provide feedback at the summit.

There was discussion only.

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

2. Legislative and Regulatory Update and Review

Mr. Adam presented a status update of legislative and regulatory review regarding transportation funding raids. Mr. Adam stated a decision was made on Monday, February 20 by legislative leadership to drop the ten budget bills for the year and schedule appropriation committee hearings the next morning at 8 a.m. and the results of the provisions are being assessed. Mr. Adam stated it is clear the House and the Senate have coordinated and introduced mirrored bills; however, there did not coordinate with the Governor's Office. Mr. Adam explained the final budget is unclear particularly with transportation.

Mr. Adam mentioned the fund sweep of \$120 million (same amount as last year) was being taken from highway money and it appears \$110 million in vehicle license tax (VLT) money was redirected to the state highway fund and it will not be raided but held and not put to use. Chair Rogers requested clarification. Mr. Adam stated the \$110 million will be placed in the state highway fund but the amount that has been appropriated (what ADOT can use for construction) will not increase. Mr. Adam commented the issue needs further assessment.

Mr. Adam explained DPS operations are being divided up with \$24 million of the \$120 million coming out of state highway funds and the practical impact resulted in approximately \$12-\$13 million less taken from the locals. Mr. Adam explained locals will fund half of the MVD operations - a \$40 million hit. Mr. Adam stated the numbers are available in an update that was provided earlier to the Board.

Mr. Adam stated the results with the state losing \$33 million and the locals losing \$87 million and compared it to last year with the state losing \$133 million and the locals losing \$100 million. Mr. Adam reiterated that it does not appear it will be appropriated and there are "mixed signals" but it is better than last year. Mr. Adam explained a majority of the appropriations committee members, rural legislative caucus and transportation committee members indicated their opposition to fund sweeps but the quick turnaround and timing prevented a defense therefore their reaction is unclear at this point.

Mr. Wessel reviewed the legislative review PowerPoint slides with the Board as it was presented in the agenda packet. Mr. Ryan stated he will be traveling to Washington DC and requested information to convey to contingents and Mr. Overton mentioned March 20-23 he will be in DC as well. Mr. Adam stated he will update the talking points and provide it to them in order to coordinate key points such as reinforcing the support to maintain current levels and to work through the funding sources. There was discussion only.

V. NEW BUSINESS (Continued, postponed, and tabled items.)

2. Regional Plan 2012 Update – Scenario Development Status

Mr. Wessel explained the Regional Plan development scenarios and provided a status update to the Board. Mr. Wessel reviewed the scenario maps as presented in the agenda packet. Mr. Wessel stated the next steps are to continue with analysis, transportation modeling and commented that the circulation working group is making good progress. Mr. Wessel added the circulation element may go through the TAC and Board process to provide opportunity to comment because it will become the basis for a revised Regional Transportation Plan. There was discussion only.

3. Current Topics of Interest

The Board commented on the I-15 toll road that was turned down by the Feds. Mr. Adam explained a pilot program on the toll road had momentum with Nevada and Utah support but the situation changed and the Utah Governor came out opposed. Mr. Adam mentioned the pilot program also required new facilities to be built with new capacity or new lanes. Mr. Adam discussed the topic with Mr. Victor Mendez. Mr. Adam stated three other sites were selected but the challenge still exists of having new lanes and not being allowed to toll existing lanes. The Board also discussed infrastructure and the strain of triple trailers on bridges. There was discussion only.

4. FMPO Working Calendar

Mr. Wessel reviewed the working calendar and stated *What Moves You Arizona* will be an agenda item at the March 28, 2012 meeting. Mr. Ryan asked if there will be a replacement ready in regard to former Board member, Art Babbott. Mr. Overton stated in the next few weeks there should be a decision and hopefully by the March meeting the vacancy will be filled. There was discussion only.

VI. CONCLUDING GENERAL BUSINESS

D. REPORTS

Mr. Wessel stated the US 180 Study will be presented at the joint meeting of City Council and County Board of Supervisors on March 26, 2012.

E. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Rogers adjourned the meeting at 9:46 a.m.