



FLAGSTAFF METROPOLITAN
PLANNING ORGANIZATION
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Approved Minutes
Executive Board
8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., Wednesday, September 26, 2012

Coconino County Administration Building – 2nd Floor Conference Room
219 E. Cherry Avenue, Flagstaff, AZ 86001

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

Roll Call

Present: Chair Hank Rogers (telephonic), Arizona Department of Transportation; Vice Chair Matt Ryan, Supervisor Coconino County; John Harper (designated alternate), Arizona Department of Transportation; Mark Woodson, Councilmember City of Flagstaff; Mandy Metzger, Supervisor Coconino County; Coral Evans, Councilmember City of Flagstaff; Jeff Oravits, Councilmember City of Flagstaff

Others Present:

David Wessel, FMPO Manager; Justine Otto, FMPO Administrative Specialist Temp; Audra Merrick, ADOT; Julian Avila, ADOT

I. PRELIMINARY GENERAL BUSINESS

A. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

B. ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

C. APPROVAL of MINUTES.

Ms. Metzger made a motion to approve the Minutes of June 27, 2012 and Mr. Woodson seconded, motion passed unanimously.

D. ROTATION of OFFICERS

Mr. Wessel stated that the County would assume chairmanship and the City would assume vice-chairmanship. Mr. Ryan was nominated for Chair and Ms. Evans was nominated for Vice Chair. Ms. Metzger moved to approve the nominations, Mr. Woodson seconded, motion passed unanimously. Chair Ryan assumed leadership of the meeting.

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

1. Legislative and Regulatory Update and Review

Mr. Wessel provided a legislative review and update to the Executive Board. He stated that general revenue was up, which may lead to better use of the Highway User Revenue Funds. He added that the 1% sales tax was scheduled to come to an end but was on the ballot for renewal, which would lead to an estimated \$100 million in transportation funding. The funding would fall under ADOT's

purview and could be used for construction. Mr. Ryan stated that while additional funding was useful, the bill was not solely focused on transportation funding and other sources needed to be found for more stable financial support. He added that the Rural Transportation Advocacy Council had also discussed the topic and had elected to remain officially neutral on the subject. Mr. Woodson pointed out the difficulty of knowing where to go for funding. Mr. Wessel stated that there were protections in place to prevent "raids" on HURF, though from a governance perspective preventing legislative access to funds may not be the wisest move. Mr. Ryan stated that the protections were limited. Mr. Rogers stated that overtaxing was not a solution to limited funds, responsible leaders who could work within limits was. He added that that the state would go forward with its decisions regardless of the MPO's position on the subject. Ms. Metzger stated that the County Supervisors Association would be meeting at their legislative summit the following week, which may be an avenue for exploration in protecting funding. Mr. Oravits pointed out that while funding was needed the original tax was given a definite end date, which the new tax does not have, a fact that he objects to. The Board discussed the implications of the tax and its impact on transportation funding. **Mr. Oravits moved to remain officially neutral on the subject, Mr. Woodson seconded, motion passed unanimously.** The Board continued its discussion, touching on funding and the I-11. Ms. Evans requested that Mr. Wessel follow up with Scott's potential public meeting with the City Manager. Mr. Woodson suggested bringing the topic of the I-11 to the City Council for discussion. Mr. Wessel overviewed the MAP-21 presentation (Agenda packet pp. 17-25) and discussed federal funding, stating that the \$18 billion federal funds could be subject to sequestration, leading to a 3% cut in funding. He confirmed that the TIGER Grant program has been discontinued with its federal funding moving into national goals, and that the TIFIA program had expanded. The transit program would be the same as before the consolidation and the environmental streamlining would be beneficial, allowing projects to go through without any unreasonable delays despite the challenging implementation. There is a national freight policy but no national freight funding. Different agencies are working to update the freight study done in the previous decade and apply it. Mr. Wessel added that performance measures would be implemented for all MPO activity, but local agencies would help with the implementation, making it a straightforward transition. He stated that small MPOs had a threshold of 50,000 population, and that Sierra Vista, Casa Grande, and Lake Havasu each had their own MPO now in need of funding and other aid. Ms. Metzger inquired what Mr. Wessel planned to deal with the impact on roads, and Mr. Wessel responded the State was looking to shift funds into road maintenance to compensate for the increased truck traffic, and that Lake Mary Road would be the biggest issue locally. Ms. Metzger added that it would not be difficult to calculate the increase in truck traffic, and long-term plans to deal with the projected increase would be a good idea. Mr. Ryan stated that clustering of funding was being encouraged for rural projects and Mr. Wessel added that a process would need to be worked out with the State to help balance the distribution of funding. There was discussion only.

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

1. Retreat Planning

Mr. Wessel outlined the retreat process, stating that circulation would likely be the main topic of discussion at this year's session. He stated that the Regional Plan was on a 5-year cycle and the new one, currently being worked on by the Citizen Advisory Committee, was scheduled to be voted on in 2014, following which the agencies could adopt a new Regional Transportation Plan. He stated that they would use the retreat to get feedback from the transportation community, particularly the County and State, as well as discuss performance measures and work out some multi-year strategic plans. Mr. Oravits inquired if the RTP would focus on specifics or be a broad plan, and Mr. Wessel responded that they were looking to implement a larger policy level. Mr. Wessel overviewed the retreat topics, such as how to manage circulation from a policy perspective, what they specifically wanted to accomplish, and what sort of growth was expected and desired in the corridor and mesa. They could also get feedback on the start of the modeling and discuss such things as arterial capacity, expansion and restrictions, and network improvements. Mr. Oravits

pointed out that altering arterials can poorly impact businesses in those areas, and Ms. Evans countered that decreasing major traffic can encourage multi-modal access. Mr. Wessel stated that they community was evolving and decisions were needed, and his agency would try to complete some analysis to aid the decision-making process. He added that members of the CAC would be attending for mutual education and updates. Mr. Ryan suggested that an "MPO 101" introduction be given at the start of the retreat for those not familiar with the agency's functions; Ms. Metzger suggested a glossary of terms be included in the packet for further ease of comprehension. There was discussion only.

2. Transportation Improvement Program Amendment - Transit

Ms. Metzger left due to time constraints, quorum was maintained. Mr. Wessel stated that NAIPTA received a "Clean Fuels" program grant to fund hybrid busses that needed to be included in the TIP. The TAC had already approved the amendment. Mr. Wessel confirmed for Mr. Oravits that hybrid busses were more expensive than regular ones (estimated \$600,000 and \$350,000 respectively,) and agreed to forward on information on the cost-saving and environmental benefits of switching. It was mentioned that the decision to purchase hybrid busses had come from a voter initiative. Ms. Evans moved to adopt the amendment, Mr. Woodson seconded, motion passed unanimously.

3. Operating Procedures Amendment

Mr. Wessel presented the amendment and the changes it included. First was the need to designate the ADOT Deputy Director for Policy as an alternate for the State Transportation Board. He also stated that the Management Committee may have run its course, but may also be needed again in the future. Mr. Woodson moved to adopt the amendment, Mr. Rogers seconded, motion passed unanimously.

4. Current Topics of Interest

The Board discussed the I-11 and I-15 highways, stating that while they were maintained by rural funding they provided little rural benefit. Mr. Harper stated that the Twin Arrows Casino was scheduled to open in May 2013, that a traffic impact survey had already been completed, and that an updated interchange might need to be created to accommodate the traffic generated from the new businesses, but if done in increments it may fall under ADOT's purview, which would interfere with funding for other projects. Ms. Evans stated that there had been mentions of a road being created from Cameron to Twin Arrows, providing a direct link between the casino and the Grand Canyon. Mr. Ryan informed the Board that due to oversaturation, truck safety was becoming an issue in Bellemont. Mr. Woodson pointed out that the east Grand Canyon entrance should be looked in light of the regional impact of visitors once the snow-making process begins. Mr. Wessel stated that the lack of parking created a natural cap on visitors. Mr. Rogers added that the addition of the potential Love's truck stop would help relieve some traffic pressure from the casino and well as increasing safety. Mr. Oravits pointed out that traffic could increase if Snowbowl opened its lower parking lot and bussed visitors up to the facility. Mr. Harper suggested careful wording in the recommendation to widen the I-40 as it was not a local corridor. There was discussion only.

5. FMPO Working Calendar

There was no discussion.

IV. CONCLUDING GENERAL BUSINESS

A. REPORTS

Mr. Wessel directed the Board to the agenda packet for details and gave a brief overview of the Staff Reports.

B. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Board presented Mr. Harper with a certificate of recognition in honor of his retirement and thanked him for his years of dedicated work. There was discussion only.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Ryan adjourned the meeting 9:35 a.m.