

MINUTES
NILES/BUCHANAN/CASS AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
Technical Advisory and Policy Committees
Joint Meeting
October 23, 2007
Niles City Council Chambers
2:00 P.M.

Members Present:	<p>Joe Bellina, Cass County Road Commission Chuck Collins, Berrien County Road Commission Richard Cooper, Niles Charter Township Neil Coulston, City of Niles & DPW/Airport Dick Fintze, Four Flags Chamber, BCPC Juan Ganum, City of Niles Planning Darrell Harden, MDOT, Southwest Region Debbie Johnson, Cass County Commissioner Ray Lenze, MDOT – Planning John Pleveich, Niles Dial-a-Ride Cliff Poehlman, Cass County Road Commission (Chair) Joe Ray, City of Niles Art Reed, Berrien County Planning Commission Johnie Rodebush, Cass County Commissioner Don Ryman, Berrien County Commissioner</p>
Members Absent:	<p>Brian Berndt, Berrien County Road Commission Georgia Boggs, Niles City Council John Brielmaier, Ontwa Township Supervisor Fred Featherly, MDOT-Multi-Modal John Gruchot, Berrien County Community Development Sarah Koepke, Federal Highway Administration John LaMore, Berrien County Commissioner Mary Beth McAdams, MACOG (ex officio) Jane Mitchell, Buchanan Township John Monaghan, Village of Edwardsburg Public Works Meg Mullendore, City of Buchanan William Myers, Niles Township Sandra Naugle, City of Niles (Dial-A-Ride) Robert Rusch, MI Department of Environmental Quality/Air Quality Division Paul South, MDOT Coloma TSC Sharon Tyler, Southwestern Michigan Economic Growth Alliance/Cass Joe Vandermeulen, City of Buchanan Tim Whitfield, Milton Township Supervisor Sarah Woolcock, MDOT Coloma TSC</p>
SWMPC Staff Present:	<p>Kelly Getman-Dissette Rachael Tupica</p>
Others Present:	

1. Call to Order & Introductions

- Chairman Fintze called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM.

2. Minutes

- Motion by Rodebush, seconded by Poehlman, to approve the minutes of the August 28, 2007 joint meeting. Motion approved.

3. Staff Report

- **SE Data Update** – Tupica reported that an initial visit with St. Joseph Township to verify socioeconomic data revealed many items that required correction. Therefore, an employment location verification process was initiated by SWMPC staff. This process is now complete and visits with local units of government will resume. It is expected that base year data will be ready for NATS approval at the November meeting. An SWMPC intern, Suzann Flowers (who recently completed an MPA from Western Michigan University), will be assisting in the data verification effort.
- **LRP Update** – Tupica and Getman-Dissette have been actively involved in researching other long range plans and best practices in order to effectively update the TwinCATS LRP. A draft table of contents has been established, and work has begun to fill in the plan content.

4. Project Updates

- **Cass County Road Commission** – Bellina reported that work on Barron Lake Road has finished. The 2008 project was under budget, so there will be approximately \$8,100 in 2008 funds available for another project. In addition, Lake Street has gone out to bid, and bids were lower than expected, so there will be approximately \$69,000 in 2009 funds available for another project.

5. New Business

- **Bylaws Membership Committee Report** – Rodebush presented a summary of the work of the bylaws subcommittee. Some new members have been added, including: Southwest Michigan Alliance for Recreational Trails, CSX and Amtrak (consultation only), Berrien Bus, Human Services Collaborative Council, County Drain Commission offices, County Intermediate School Districts (ISD), additional Chambers of Commerce, and Tourist Councils (consultation only). Generally, each voting organization or local unit of government was allocated one vote, with the exception of Niles and Niles Township. These local units hold a significant portion of the population, and the committee felt that they should each be allocated two votes.

Rodebush made a motion, supported by Reed, to accept the subcommittee report as presented and allow staff to proceed with contacting the members listed. Motion approved.

Getman-Dissette explained that the next step would be to send a letter to each entity asking for participation in NATS. A draft of the letter was distributed. Each entity will be asked to provide the name and contact information for an appointed committee member and an alternate. When responses have been received, the bylaws will be updated to reflect the membership changes. Lenze clarified that a similar letter would be sent to municipalities each year in order to keep membership up-to-date. Fintze asked that the letter request both a residential and business phone number for each appointee. Johnson expressed that contact efforts should emphasize the importance of MPO participation.

- **FY 2008 and 2009 CMAQ Projects** – Getman-Dissette reviewed the list of FY 2008 and 2009 CMAQ projects. The projects have been submitted to MDOT and could be ready to amend into the TIP at the November meeting. There were some questions and general discussion on the Cass County truck replacement because this project is not specifically listed as an allowable project and Bellina has been working with MDOT and FHWA to ensure its eligibility.

6. Old Business

- **Website Tutorial** – Getman-Dissette led the group through a tour of the SWMPC transportation website and offered information about how to access various files in order to prepare for meetings.

7. Public Comment

- None

8. Privilege of the Floor

- Tupica announced that she would be leaving the SWMPC in order to accept a position as a Transportation Planner with the FHWA. Her last day at the SWMPC will be Friday November 2nd. The SWMPC is sad to lose such a great colleague, but everyone is happy for Tupica's success. The committees expressed their best wishes to Tupica.
- Fintze expressed that the acceleration lane on east bound US 12 at W. River is not marked. Harden will inquire within MDOT about this situation.

8. Adjournment

- The meeting adjourned at 3:00 PM – Next meeting is November 27, 2007.

Minutes compiled by: Kelly Getman-Dissette, Transportation Planner, 10/24/07