

**NILES/BUCHANAN/CASS AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY (NATS)
 Joint Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) & Policy Committee (POL) MINUTES
 February 27, 2018**

Present		Committee	
Name	Representing	TAC	Policy
Michael Majerek	Berrien County Board of Commissioners		x
Evan Smith	Berrien County Community Development	x	
Brian Berndt	Berrien County Road Commission	x	
Kim O'Haver	Buchanan Dial A Ride	x	x
Robert Ziliak	Cass County Board of Commissioners		x
Roseann Marchetti	Cass County Board of Commissioners		x
Barbara Cook	Cass County Planning Commission	x	
Don Ryman	City of Buchanan	x	x
Georgia Boggs	City of Niles		x
Serita Mason	City of Niles		x
Jan Personette	Four Flag Chamber of Commerce	x	x
Jim Sturdevant	MDOT Bureau of Transportation Planning	x	x
Jonathon Smith	MDOT Coloma Business Office	x	x
Brian Sanada	MDOT Southwest Region	x	x
Jon Roberts	MDOT Urban Travel Analysis	x	
Susan Flowers	Milton Township	x	x
Kelly Getman-Dissette	Niles Dial A Ride	x	x
Dawn Bolock	Ontwa Township	x	x
Brandon Kovnat	SWMPC	Staff	
Kim Gallagher	SWMPC	Staff	

Absent		Committee	
Name	Representing	TAC	Policy
Andrea Dewey	Federal Highway Administration*	x	x
Craig Bradfield	Howard Township	x	x
Joe Bellina	Cass County Road Commission	x	
Joe Ray	City of Niles	x	
Richard Cooper	Niles Charter Township	x	x
Sandra Seanor	Cass County Road Commission		x
Bob Sutton	Mason Township	x	x
Butch Payton	Bertrand Township	x	x
Eric Lester, M.D.	Berrien County Planning Commission		x

Absent		Committee	
Name	Representing	TAC	Policy
Fred Featherly	MDOT Office of Passenger Transportation*	x	
Malinda Cole-Crocker	Buchanan Township	x	x
Rich Low	Village of Edwardsburg	x	x

1. Call to Order / Introductions and Pledge of Allegiance

Serita Mason, policy vice chair, called the meeting to order at 1:30 and led the group in introductions and the pledge of allegiance.

2. Changes to the Agenda

Brandon Kovnat asked to add an amendment for the City of Niles to the Agenda.

3. Public Comment

None.

4. Approve Minutes from the January 23, 2018 Meeting

Motion to approve the January 23, 2018 Joint Technical Advisory and policy Committee meeting minutes by Dawn Bolock, second by Roseann Marchetti. **Motion approved.**

5. Staff Report

2045 Long Range Plan Guiding Principles: Kim Gallagher gave an overview of the draft version of the guiding principles. She explained that instead of goals and objectives the LRP would be divided into guiding principles and performance measures. Some of the Performance measure were dictated by FHWA or FTA while some will be set by NATS based on staff recommendations. Safety was given as an example of a guiding principle section. Examples of the strategies and performance measures were shown.

Georgia Boggs asked about safety and if the Long range Plan would include safety improvements on 11th street. She also expressed concern about safety at Gumwood and US-12.

Brandon Kovnat replied that the Long Range Plan would lay out general strategies to meet safety performance targets. He said that one such strategy would be to have MDOT consider safety issues when they were doing projects. Brandon then said that 11th street, which is M-51, is a MDOT road that will have a scoping project coming up and that the NATS committee would stay engaged to ensure safety improvements were explored. Brian Sanada said that there would be public meetings and he would announce them at the NATS meetings. Brandon followed up that US-12 was getting a path near Edwardsburg and Gumwood was getting a path near Redfield Rd. Extensions of both paths could be potential projects in the future.

2045 Long Range Plan Transit Overview: Kim Gallagher presented a working draft of the transit section. She presented ridership, revenue, and cost per passenger trends, for the Niles Dial-A-Ride and the Buchanan Dial-A-Ride.

Georgia Boggs asked about transit to connect people in Niles to Jobs in Cass County. Kim Gallagher said that rural trips like these would be very expensive because of low ridership and return trips with empty vehicles. There was a company called Liberty Transportation which was branded as the rural “uber” but it had gone out of business. Evan Smith said that Berrien Bus relied on contracts to fill these type of trips such as with the mental health court that pays an hourly rate. Bu he said it was still hard with a limited budget.

6. Community Land Use and Zoning Member Updates

None

7. Public Transit

Berrien Countywide Service Plan: Evan Smith said that the technical committee was waiting for a memo from the consultant.

Niles Dial A Ride: Kelly Getman-Dissette said that Niles Dial-A-Ride’s facility had flooded. They are operating out of the law enforcement building. It could take months to reopen, but they are insured.

Buchanan Dial-A-Ride: Kim said that she would be presenting an amendment for the 2019 budget later in the meeting

8. Project Status Updates:

City of Niles: 17th Street is expected to be let on March 2. They will be requesting an increased project cost.

City of Buchanan: no update for the River Road Signal Projects.

Cass County Road Commission: No Update for Mason Street.

MDOT: US-12 resurface would have its construction moved to July.

US-31 would have the design work begin in June.

9. Old Business

Transportation Improvement Program Amendment Policy: Brandon Kovnat said that there were requests to update the TIP amendment policy so that projects that didn’t require federally reviewed amendments could be made administratively without an MPO committee vote. There was a consensus that the NATS amendment policy should match the state & federal amendment policy. Brandon said that he would send a revised policy to committee members and a vote would be help next meeting.

10. **New Business:**

TIP Amendment for Buchanan Dial A Ride: Kim O’Haver presented the FY 2019 budget for Buchanan Dial-A-Ride (See attached amendment request letter). She said that there were no capital requests. Further, she said that local sources including fares and the city of Buchanan provide 40% of the operating budget.

Motion for the Technical Advisory Committee to recommend that the Policy Committee approve the FY 2019 budget requests from Buchanan Dial-A-Ride made by Kelly Getman-Dissette, Second by Jim Sturdevant. **Motion Approved.**

Motion for the Policy Committee to approve the FY 2019 budget requests from Buchanan Dial-A-Ride made by Roseann Marchetti, Second by Robert Ziliak. **Motion Approved.**

TIP Amendments for MDOT: MDOT presents a list of 15 job phases to add to the TIP (see attached amendment request letter). A number of these amendments were different phases of the same project or different phases of projects that were already in the TIP.

Motion for the Technical Advisory Committee to recommend that the Policy Committee approve all 15 of MDOT’s job phases as presented made by Jim Sturdevant, second by Kelly Getman-Dissette. **Motion Approved.**

Motion for the Policy committee to approve all 15 of MDOT’s job phases as presented made by Kelly Getman-Dissette, second by Roseann Marchetti. **Motion Approved.**

TIP amendment for city of Niles: The amendment request for the city of Niles was presented to the Committees (see attached amendment request letter). The city requested to increase the budget for 17th Street to pay for unforeseen ADA ramps and traffic loops. They propose to change their local contribution from 35,330 to \$91,000 which an additional \$55,670. The federal amount will remain the same. Brandon Kovnat explained that the requirements for an amendment were based on a 25% change in total cost, not just federal funds. The 17th street project had increased by 28% thus, an amendment was required.

Motion for the Technical Advisory Committee to recommend that the Policy Committee approve the City of Niles request to increase the local contribution for 17th street as presented, made by Jim Sturdevant, second by Kelly Getman-Dissette. **Motion Approved.**

Motion for the Policy committee to approve the City of Niles request to increase the local contribution for 17th street as presented, made by Robert Ziliak, second by Jan Personette. **Motion Approved.**

New Funds: Brandon Kovnat explained that the federal funding NATS would receive in FY 2018 is higher than the estimated amount in the TIP. There is \$44,123 federal STBG funds that are unprogramed.

Brandon Kovnat explained that this amount was too little to recommend a completely new project. Also due to time constraints, a new project would be difficult to be designed in time. Staff recommends using the funds in one of the currently programed projects in FY 2018. Brandon explained that there were three road projects. In addition, the funds could be flexed for use by Niles Dial-A-Ride. Staff will come up with scenarios, options, and an application. A vote on how to apply the funds would occur at the next meeting.

Long Range Plan Extension: Kim Gallagher said that NATs was going to request an extension on the Long Range Plan (LRP). Jon Roberts said that his was because they were waiting for MACOG to identify capacity projects to run in the Travel demand Model. NATS would need to reaffirm the current 2040 LRP before May. If they did this then they would not be required to amend the 2040 LRP to add in performance targets.

11. State and Federal Updates

Jim Sturdevant said that MDOT and SWMPC had held the Unified Work Program kick off meeting.

12. Privilege of the Floor:

Serita Mason wished to thank everyone that helped Niles with the flooding.

13. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 3:30 PM. Next Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday March 27, 2018.

Minutes Compiled by Brandon Kovnat, SWMPC, Associate Planner