

**MINUTES**  
**NILES/BUCHANAN/CASS AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY**  
**Policy Committee**  
Tuesday, October 24, 2006

Policy Members Present:	Tim Batton, GNCCDC Chuck Collins, Berrien County Road Commission Dick Fintze, Four Flags Chamber, BCPC Ray Lenze, MDOT – Planning Dale Lowe, Cass County Commissioner Mary Beth McAdams, MACOG (ex-officio) Cliff Poehlman, Cass County Road Commission (Chair) Art Reed, Berrien County Planning Commission Kristi Ross, Niles Dial-A-Ride Don Ryman, Berrien County Commissioner Paul South, MDOT Coloma TSC Sarah Woolcock, MDOT Coloma TSC
Policy Members Absent:	Georgia Boggs, Niles City Council John Brielmaier, Ontwa Township Supervisor Brian Dinneen, Buchanan Township Ron Goodwin, Niles Township Darrell Harden, MDOT Regional Planner John LaMore, Berrien County Commissioner Sarah Koepke, Federal Highway Administration Alice Kring, Bertrand Township Elaine Luo, MDOT Multi-Modal (ex-officio) William Myers, Niles Township Sandra Naugle, City of Niles (Dial-A-Ride) Johnie Rodebush, Cass County Commissioner Mary Jane Skinner, Berrien County Citizen Representative Tim Whitfield, Milton Township Supervisor
Others Present:	Rachael Tupica, SWMPC Kelly Getman-Disette, SWMPC

1. Call to Order & Introductions

Policy Chairman Clifford Poehlman called the meeting to order at 2:37 PM.

2. Minutes:

- Motion by Dick Fintze, seconded by Paul South: TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE September 26, 2006 MEETING. Motion passed.

3. Staff Report:

- Kelly Getman-Disette started at the SWMPC as the new Transportation Planner in October. Kelly received her bachelor's degree in Sociology and Spanish at Hope College and her masters in Sociology from Western Michigan University. While working on her master's degree, she worked for social research centers at both WMU and Hope College. Part of that work included community surveys and master planning, which led to her interest in Planning as a career. She was able to pursue that interest through her position as a Community Development Educator with MSU Extension in Van Buren County. As a Community

Development Educator, she was responsible for land use planning and zoning education, trail development, housing grants, and the county farmland preservation program. She came to the SWMPC after her position at MSUE was cut. We are glad to have her on board.

Welcome Kelly!

- The new SWMPC website is live, though it's not 100% complete. Meeting agendas, minutes, and a lot of other data are now available on the website. If you have an idea of something to go on the website that is not currently there, please let the SWMPC know. If you go to the old website, it will direct you to the new site. Please update your bookmarks to reflect the new address of <http://www.swmpc.org>.
- Email addresses of staff at the SWMPC are changing from @swmicomm.org to [@swmpc.org](mailto:@swmpc.org) to reflect the name change to the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission. Please make these changes in your address book.
- Rachael and Kelly will soon begin working on updating employment data as part of our Long Range Plan update. This will be done, largely, in-house by Rachael and Kelly. The Committee will start reviewing data in January or February. A subcommittee may need to be formed to review the data. Subcommittee members may be individuals that are not currently on the TAC Committee but maybe someone that you feel are more fitting to review employment locations and number of employees. More information will follow in early 2007. Household and population data collection/review will begin around April for the Committee to review later in 2007.

#### 4. New Business:

- There are many training opportunities in the next few months. Handouts were given for 5 upcoming trainings:
  1. Context Sensitive Solutions, November 9<sup>th</sup> in Battle Creek, offered free by MDOT
  2. Designing Healthy Livable Communities Conference, November 13<sup>th</sup> in East Lansing
  3. Pavement Management Class, November 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> in Lansing
  4. Roundabout Design Workshop, December 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> in Indianapolis, IN
  5. Alternative Practices for Highway Stormwater Management: Design, Construction, and Maintenance – FREE 2 part telecast
- A proposal to change the date (and possibly time) of the monthly meeting to the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of the month is requested by the SWMPC to help address the issue of time conflicts with the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission quarterly meetings. If the NATS Committees met the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of the month, it would give SWMPC staff time to make edits to or complete documents that need the approval of the SWMPC, which is the designated MPO. Dates and times discussed are the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 9:30 for TAC and 10:30 for Policy as there is a conflict in the afternoon for Berrien County Commissioners meetings. Rachael will send an email to try and coordinate a date that can be agreed upon at the November meetings. This change would not start until January 2007.
- At the TAC meeting, Juan Ganum announced that the City of Niles is writing a grant application for Enhancement funds to do streetscape on Front Street from Sycamore to just north of the YMCA. Sarah Woolcock said that as part of their FY08 Front Street project they are also working in funds for streetscape. Motion by Sarah Woolcock, seconded by Dick Fintze: TO RECOMMEND TO THE TAC COMMITTEE TO WRITE A LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR THE SUBMISSION OF THE ENHANCEMENT GRANT FOR FRONT STREET STREETScape FOR THE POLICY COMMITTEE TO REVIEW. Motion passed.
- City of Niles Dial-A-Ride presented a change to their funds for FY06. A motion by Ray Lenze, seconded by Sarah Woolcock: TO REMOVE THE THREE CAPITAL PROJECTS

(“PURCHASE THREE (3) 10+2 REPLACEMENT BUSES”, “PURCHASE REPLACEMENT COPIER”, AND “FUELING STATION PARKING”) AND REPLACE WITH THREE NEW PROJECTS THAT INCLUDE FIXED ROUTE REPLACEMENT, MAINTENANCE REHAB, AND 2 REPLACEMENT CUTWAYS. Motion passed.

- Concerns of the safety of Third Street at Bell Road, due to high truck traffic, were sent to the SWMPC to be addressed at the NATS Committee meeting. The Berrien County Road Commission announced that a lady was killed at this intersection that prompted a study of this intersection, but it currently does not seem to meet the warrants of putting in stop signs. Dick Fintze asked if they considered putting in right turn lanes. Art Reed added that traffic there backs up to US-12. Paul South asked if they considered a roundabout at that intersection. Chuck Collins said that if the intersection meets warrants, the stop signs will be added.
- At last month's meeting, a MDOT TIP amendment was on the agenda, but not ready to be brought in front of the Committee. This will be completed for the next meeting.

5. Public Comment:

- None

6. Privilege of the Floor

- None

The meeting adjourned at 3:14 PM

Minutes compiled by:

Rachael Tupica, Associate Planner 10/25/06