

NILES/BUCHANAN/CASS AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Policy Committee

MINUTES

February 23, 2010

Niles City Council Chambers

3:00 P.M.

Policy Members Present:	Chuck Collins, Berrien County Road Commission Richard Cooper, Niles Township Irving Frost, Howard Township Darrell Harden, MDOT, Southwest Region Debbie Johnson, Cass County Commissioner Joseph Kring, Bertrand Township John LaMore, Berrien County Commissioner Ray Lenze, MDOT Planning John Pleveich, Niles Dial-A-Ride Cliff Poehlman, Cass County Road Commission Johnie Rodebush, Cass County Commissioner Don Ryman, Berrien County Commissioner Tracy Vines, Berrien County Planning Commission Sharon Ward, Milton Township
Policy Members Absent:	Georgia Boggs, Niles City Council John Egelhaaf, SWMPC (ex-officio) Dick Fintze, Four Flags Chamber Jim Kidwell, Niles Charter Township Stewart McKenzie, FTA (ex-officio) Jane Mitchell, Buchanan Township Jessica Mitchell, MACOG (ex-officio) John Monaghan, Village of Edwardsburg Meg Mullendore, City of Buchanan Sandra Naugle, City of Niles Finance Office Helen Parsons, Ontwa Township Paul South, MDOT Coloma TSC Sarah Van Buren, FHWA –Michigan Division (ex-officio) Sarah Woolcock, MDOT Coloma TSC
SWMPC Staff Present:	Nickolas Musson Anna Rahtz
Others Present:	Jan Personette

1. Call to Order

- Chairman Rodebush called the meeting to order at 3:00 P.M. and led all attendees in saying the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Minutes

- *Motion by Poehlman, supported by Vines, to approve the minutes of the January 26, 2010 Policy Committee meeting. Motion approved, with the change of Collins' comment from "speed data is more useful" to "speed data can be more useful".*

3. Staff Report

- None

4. Old Business

- **Pokagon By-Law Change**

- Musson announced that SWMPC and the Pokagon Band had agreed on a population number and membership contribution amount, and the motion will be made at the March meeting to add the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians as a voting member of NATS. Jason Auvil, Staff Planner for the Band, would like to be present when the motion is made before the Technical Advisory and Policy committees, and could not be present at this month's Policy Committee meeting.
- Rodebush asked how the membership contribution is calculated, and Musson responded that it's based on a population number. In this case, the Pokagon Band had numbers showing that there are 199 Pokagon tribal members who reside within the NATS boundaries.

- **"What's Important to You in Transportation Projects?" Survey Results**

- Rahtz went over the executive summary of the results report for the NATS "What's Important to You in Transportation Projects?" Survey. She showed charts illustrating the overall results.
- Collins asked how many surveys were returned in Spanish, and Rahtz responded that none were. Collins asked if that meant it was still considered necessary to translate NATS documents into Spanish. Lenze responded that it is, according to federal regulations for inclusion of people who speak English as their second language.
- Collins stated that he had brought up at a previous meeting the idea of translating the survey into Arabic as well, such as is done at the Secretary of State. Rahtz responded that a discussion had been held at the following meeting about that topic, and it had been decided that Spanish was the only language needed besides English because of the percentage of Spanish-speaking residents reflected in the Census data for the NATS area.
- Several committee members pointed out that it said TwinCATS instead of NATS in the survey results report.
- LaMore asked how the participation was from the libraries. Rahtz responded that one of the library survey boxes was stolen, and the other boxes each had three to four surveys filled out, at the most. LaMore commented that it was a good thing that he had been able to get surveys filled out by college students. He also asked how the survey return rate compared between TwinCATS and NATS. Rahtz responded that the TwinCATS area had 257 surveys returned, and the NATS area had 162.

- **TIP Project Selection Meeting**

- Musson reminded the committee that the project selection meeting for the 2011-2014 Transportation Improvement Program would be held on Wednesday, February 24, 2010 at 3:00pm in the Niles City Council Chambers.

- **TwinCATS Berrien County non-motorized meeting**

- Rahtz announced that, as previously discussed, TwinCATS established a non-motorized subcommittee to study the non-motorized connections that need to be made within Berrien County. She stated that the subcommittee would be holding a meeting on Wednesday, February 24, 2010 at 8:00am at the Abonmarche Office in downtown Benton Harbor, and they would like a representative from NATS since the study is countywide. The meeting is a follow-up to the SMART input meeting for Berrien County that was held at Andrews University. It will focus on strategies and next steps.

- **IRT Workshop**

- Musson stated that he had training packets from the Investment Reporting Tool training (held at Van Buren County ISD on February 18, 2010) in case anyone who was interested had missed the workshop.

- **NATS March Meeting**

- Rahtz reminded the committee that the March NATS meeting will be a joint meeting starting at 2:00pm because Brad Peterson from MDOT is presenting on Context Sensitive Solutions.

5. New Business

- **TIP Amendments**

- Cass County Road Commission
 - Musson stated that the new project applications had been made available online for the review of the committee members, and there were hard copies of the applications available at the meeting as well.
 - Added in FY 2010, project named Elkhart Road for hot mix asphalt structural resurface of existing hot mix asphalt pavement in poor condition. Project length is 0.82 miles from May Street to Village of Edwardsburg. Federal cost is \$72,000 (ST) and county cost is \$18,000.
 - Added in FY 2010, project named Bell Road for hot mix asphalt structural resurface of existing hot mix asphalt pavement in poor condition and replacement of drainage structure and guardrail. Project length is 0.66 miles from Berrien County line to US-12. Federal cost is \$75,200 (ST) and county cost is \$18,800.
 - Added in FY 2010, project named Lakeshore Drive for hot mix asphalt structural resurface of existing hot mix asphalt pavement in poor condition. Project length is 0.54 miles from Fisk to Barron Lake Road. Federal cost is \$75,200 (ST) and county cost is \$18,000.
 - *Motion by Poehlman, with support from Johnson, to approve the amendment of the FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program to add the above three Cass County Road Commission projects. Motion approved.*

6. Public Comment

- None

7. Privilege of the Floor

- Rahtz distributed invitation cards for a trails workshop series that SWMPC will be co-sponsoring in the spring through fall of 2010. The four workshops will be held in Lawrence in Van Buren County and will cover everything needed to begin and implement a trail project, including funding sources, dealing with public opposition, and liability.
- Poehlman stated that Howard Township would like to repair a historic bridge, and is going after funding for the project. *Motion by LaMore, with support from Johnson, that the NATS Policy Committee offer its support of the project. Motion approved.* Musson stated that he could write a letter of support from the NATS Policy Committee.

8. Adjournment

Motion by Vines to adjourn the meeting. Motion approved.

- The meeting was adjourned at 3:23 P.M. The next meeting is March 23, 2010 at 2:00 P.M.

Minutes compiled by: Anna Rahtz and Nickolas Musson, Transportation Planners, 2/25/10