

Minutes
Twin Cities Area Transportation Study
Joint TAC/Policy Committee Meeting
 August 17, 2009
 9:30 A.M.
 Southwest Michigan Regional Airport

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Brian Berndt, Berrien County Road Commission Bill Brown, NIRPC (ex officio) Bob Burkholz, Berrien County Road Commission Chris Cook, City of Benton Harbor Tim Fenderbosch, St. Joseph Charter Township Robert Judd, City of St. Joseph Jason Latham, MDOT, Southwest Region Ray Lenze, MDOT, Statewide Planning Larry Merritt, St. Joseph Charter Township Katie Montoya, Berrien County Community Development Bill Purvis, Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority Thad Rieder, Cornerstone Alliance Lee Scherwitz, SW Michigan Regional Airport Donald Schlipp, Village of Stevensville Roger Seely, St. Joseph Charter Township Paul South, MDOT- Coloma TSC Dick Stauffer, Lincoln Charter Township Sarah Woolcock, MDOT - Coloma TSC Tim Zebell, City of St. Joseph
MEMBERS ABSENT:	Aaron Anthony, City of Bridgman Mickey Bennett, Sodus Township Bill Boyd, Royalton Township Fred Featherly, MDOT - Multi-Modal Services (ex officio) Ron Ferguson, Benton Charter Township John Gast, Lake Charter Township Richard Marsh, City of Benton Harbor Stewart McKenzie, Federal Transit Administration (ex officio) Debra Panozzo, Berrien County Commission Gloria Payne, Lake Charter Township Robert Rusch, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (ex officio) Mark Seaman, Village of Shoreham Brad Sharlow, MDOT Planning (ex officio) Terrie Smith, Lincoln Charter Township Jim Soteriou, Royalton Township Sarah Van Buren, Federal Highway Admin (ex officio) Kevin Wordelman, Berrien County Commission
SWMPC STAFF PRESENT:	Nickolas Musson Anna Rahtz
OTHERS PRESENT:	Chris Dingman, Federal Highway Admin Ralph Heibutzki, Herald Palladium

1. CALL TO ORDER:

- Policy Committee Chairman Judd called the meeting to order at 9:36 A.M.

2. MINUTES:

- *A motion was made by Berndt, seconded by Stauffer, to approve the minutes of the July 20, 2009 TAC meeting. Motion approved.*
- *A motion was made by South, seconded by Woolcock, to approve the minutes of the July 20, 2009 Policy Committee meeting. Motion approved.*

3. STAFF REPORT:

- **Public Participation and TIP Amendment Process**

Musson and Rahtz announced that they are reviewing the Public Participation Plan and currently refining their procedures to properly address public participation and environmental justice outreach. They made a community mailing list for TwinCATS and NATS meeting materials. They will be revising the TIP application in the next few months to make sure it's effective for the next TIP, but in the meantime the old TIP application still needs to be turned in for every TIP amendment, within 10 days of the meeting date, so that there is enough time for public notice of the amendments.

4. PROJECT UPDATES:

Lenze announced that any FY 2009 project receiving federal funding must be obligated by September 15th.

- **Empire Avenue** – Under construction
- **Linco Road** – Obligated August 17, 2009
- **Linco Bridge** – Under construction
- **Glenlord / John Beers Road** – Completed
- **Pipestone Road / Nickerson Avenue / Sodus** – August 20, 2009 letting
- **Seelye McCord SR2S** – Under construction, end in August
- **Park Street** – Construction begins September 8, 2009; will be completed by end of October 2009.
 - Zebell reported that Park Street came in \$150,000 under bid, and since the Kingsley project is next in line for ARRA (American Recover and Reinvestment Act) funding, the City of St. Joseph would like to use the remaining funds for that project. Musson stated that he would convene a meeting of the Project Selection Committee to decide which project should use the remaining \$150,000 because it would need to be obligated by March 30, 2009.
- **I-94** – Let and obligated
- Purvis stated that the Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority is waiting for its ARRA funding to be awarded.

5. OLD BUSINESS:

- **High Speed Rail Letter**

Musson handed out copies of a letter that was received from the State of Michigan in response to the letter sent in regards to the high speed rail line in Michigan. The response said that Phase 5 of the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative includes the realignment of the Pere Marquette line through Kalamazoo. The letter also states that the Michigan Department of Transportation will continue to work with communities along the Pere Marquette route. Musson stated that he had put in a phone call to Tim Hoeffner, administrator in the Office of High Speed Rail and Innovative Project Advancement, to ask for more details about how the planned realignment of the Pere Marquette route will affect the Twin Cities region. Chairman Judd asked that Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC) staff make contact with the Westrain Collaborative, which has been promoting the realignment of the Pere Marquette line through Kalamazoo.

- **Election of New TAC Chair**

Musson announced that he had consulted the by-laws about the chair election process. Rather than having the Vice Chair step up to be chair, nominations are made for chair and then a vote is taken. *Zebell nominated Scherwitz as chair, supported by Woolcock. The motion was approved.*

- **CMAQ Projects**

Musson announced that he would be submitting the group of CMAQ applications for Berrien County the week of August 24, 2009. Any remaining CMAQ applications turned in to him late would be submitted separately. All FY 2009 CMAQ projects must be obligated by September 15, 2009.

6. NEW BUSINESS:

- **Complete Streets legislation**

Rahtz announced that a letter was received from the Michigan Association of Planning asking for support of a statewide resolution for Complete Streets. She handed out copies of the resolution and explained that MAP is encouraging MPOs and local agencies to pass the resolution as well. *Stauffer moved, supported by Schlipp, that the TwinCATS TAC and Policy committees pass the Complete Streets resolution. Several committee*

members questioned whether it was necessary to pass the resolution since non-motorized transportation is already a priority for the TwinCATS region. *Stauffer withdrew the resolution.* South stated that such a resolution would be more effective at the local level than at the regional or statewide level. Scherwitz announced that SWMPC had completed a non-motorized plan in 2003, and asked that the staff bring the plan to the next meeting. Chairman Judd asked staff to write up a structure for a TAC and Policy subcommittee on non-motorized transportation; the subcommittee will be formed at the September TwinCATS meetings.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT:

- None

8. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

- Christopher Dingman, Planner & Research Coordinator at the Federal Highway Administration - Michigan Division, gave a presentation on the basics of freight planning. (Handouts from the presentation are available.)
- Committee members discussed the importance of freight for regional economic development, saying that if US-31 were finished and connected to I-94, it could create a distribution hub and spur job creation. It was also pointed out that if freight movement was increased at Canadian border crossings, it would increase freight traffic on I-94 and US-31. Chairman Judd asked staff to keep freight in mind for discussion at future meetings.
- Rahtz announced that she had spoken with the Director of the Heritage Museum and Cultural Center in St. Joseph and learned that the Museum is collecting data regarding commercial shipping on the waterfront as part of its two-year "Working Waterfronts" exhibit. Museum Director Ken Potts is planning to share the data with TwinCATS and is interested in being a part of the freight planning process.

9. ADJOURNMENT: 10:47 a.m.

- Next meeting is September 21, 2009 at 9:30 a.m. (TAC) and 10:30 p.m. (Policy).

Compiled by: Nickolas Musson and Anna Rahtz, Transportation Planners, 8/19/09