

# REGION FOUR RURAL TASK FORCE

April 9, 2024 10 AM

Southwest Michigan Planning Commission Office

Meeting Minutes

Attendance	Name	Representing
Voting Members <i>In-person</i>	Kevin Stack	Berrien County Road Department
	Dan Faulkner	Village of Three Oaks
	Dennis Schuh	Berrien Bus
	Barry Anttila	Van Buren County Road Commission
	Steve Rogusta	Village of Breedsville
Staff <i>In-person</i>	Kim Gallagher	Southwest Michigan Planning Commission
	Brandon Kovnat	Southwest Michigan Planning Commission
Others Present <i>In Person</i>	Aaron Neitling	Whightman and Associates
	Nicol Brown	City of Hartford
	Linnea Rader	Van Buren County Road Commission
	David Clift	Van Buren County Road Commission
	Adrian Stroupe	MDOT , Southwest Region
	Katie Vanderhulst	Abonmarche
	Christopher Tapper	Village of Decatur
Virtually Attendees via Zoom	Joe Bellina	Cass County Road Commission
	Ben Anderson	Village of Cassopolis

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Kevin Stack called the meeting to order at 10 AM and led introductions.

2. Overview of the Meeting Purpose

Stack explained that the purpose of the meeting was to vote on two proposed amendments.

3. Changes or Additions to the Agenda

None.

4. Approval of the Minutes of the November 29, 2023, Region 4 RTF Meeting

**Motion** to approve the minutes from the Region Four RTF meeting held on November 29, 2023. Introduced by Dan Faulkner and seconded by Steve Rogusta. **Motion approved.**

5. Amendments to RTF Projects

*Details on proposed amendments were included in the meeting packet.*

**Berrien County RTF:** Stack explained that the Berrien County Road Department's FY 2024 Red Arrow Highway project encompasses both road resurfacing and a non-motorized path. The Road Department secured a TAP grant for the non-motorized path, resulting in the non-motorized costs being separated from the RTF project and allocated to a separate TAP-funded job. The federal RTF funding and State D funding for the project will remain unchanged. Furthermore, the final combined estimate for the road work and path remains nearly identical to the original programming.

**Motion** to approve the amendments to Berrien County RTF projects as presented. Introduced by Dan Faulkner and seconded by Barry Antilla. **Motion approved.**

**Van Buren RTF:** Kovnat presented a proposal to move the Van Buren County Road Commission's CR388 project from FY 2026 to FY 2025 to help balance the FY 2025 budget.

Vanderhulst requested additional funding for Decatur's N. Phelps Street project in FY 2026, citing increased costs. Kovnat suggested that if Decatur's project receives more funding, additional consideration should be given to other village projects in 2025 and 2026 due to anticipated cost increases across all projects. Kovnat noted that Lawrence and Gobles' 2024 projects already received a 15% increase in federal funds above their initial amounts.

The committee agreed to postpone voting on changes to Van Buren projects until fall, allowing time for Bloomingdale and Breedsville to update their project estimates and for further discussion at the next Van Buren RTF meeting.

6. Discussion about the 2027-2029 Call for Projects

Gallagher presented a timeline for the 2027-2029 call for projects with the Call being released in June-Jul 2024, and selection occurring at Fall 2024-Early Winter 2025 meetings. Projects programed for 2026 will be not kept, but agencies will need to submit new applications with updated cost estimates.

7. Public Comment or Privilege of the Floor

Brian Stark gave several updates on the RTF program. He encouraged all agencies to sign up for the MDOT email newsletter to receive the latest RTF news.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 AM.

*Minutes compiled by Brandon Kovnat, SWMPC Transportation Planner*