

# NILES BUCHANAN CASS AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY (NATS)

## Joint Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) & Policy Committee Minutes

**February 22, 2022, Niles District Library & via Zoom**

NATS MEMBER ORG./POSITION	MEMBERS (2022)	TAC	POL	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Berrien Co. Board of Commissioners (1)	Michael Majerek		x	V	V										
Berrien Co. Board of Commissioners (2)	(vacant)		x	A											
Berrien Co. Community Dev. Dept.	Evan Smith	x		A	A										
Berrien Co. Planning Commission	Eric Lester, M.D.		x	V	V										
Berrien Co. Road Dept. (Policy)	(vacant)		x	A	A										
Berrien Co. Road Dept. (TAC)	Kevin Stack	X		A	A										
Bertrand Township	Butch Payton	x	x	V	V										
Buchanan Township	Lynn Ferris	x	x	A	A										
Cass Co. Board of Commissioners (1)	Robert Benjamin		x	A	A										
Cass Co. Board of Commissioners (2)	Roseann Marchetti		x	P	IP										
Cass Co. Planning Commission	(vacant)	x													
Cass Co. Road Comm. (Policy)	Sandra Seanor		x	A	V										
Cass Co. Road Comm. (TAC)	Joe Bellina (TAC Chair)	x		A	V										
City of Buchanan	Don Ryman		x	A	A										
City of Buchanan	Heather Grace	x		A	A										
City of Niles (1)	Georgia Boggs		x	A	A										
City of Niles (2)	Serita Mason		x	V	V										
City of Niles (3)	Jessica Nelson		x	A	A										
City of Niles Community Dev. Director	(vacant)	x													
City of Niles Dial-A-Ride Transit	Kelly Getman-Dissette	x	x	V	V										
City of Niles Public Works Dir./Airport	Joe Ray	x		V	V										
Howard Township	Bill Kasprzak	x	x	P	IP										
Kinexus	(vacant)	x													
Mason Township	Doug Fetters	x	x	A	A										
MDOT - Bureau of Trans. Planning	Jim Sturdevant	x	x	V	V										
MDOT - Southwest Region	Brian Sanada	x	x	P	IP										
MDOT - Southwest Region (Alternate)	Amy Lipset	Alt	Alt	A	A										
MDOT - Transportation Service Center	Jonathon Smith	x	x	V	V										
Milton Township	Susan Flowers	x	x	A	A										
Niles Charter Township	Richard Cooper (P. Ch.)	x	x	P	IP										
Ontwa Township	Dawn Bolock	x	x	P	A										
Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians	(vacant)	x	x												
Village of Edwardsburg	Dennis Peak	x	x	A	A										
Federal Highway Administration	Andy Pickard	NV	NV	A	A										
Federal Transit Administration	Susan Weber	NV	NV	A	A										
EGLE - Air Quality	Breanna Bukowski	NV		A	A										
MDOT - Modeling	Jon Roberts	NV		A	A										
MDOT - Office of Passenger Trans.	Fred Featherly	NV		A	V										
Michiana Area Council of Governments	Caitlin Stevens	NV	NV	A	A										
Southwest Michigan Planning Comm.	Kim Gallagher	x	x	P	IP										
Southwest Michigan Planning Comm.	Brandon Kovnat	NV	NV	P	IP										

P. Ch.: Policy Chair; Alt: Alternate; NV: Non-voting; P: Present in Person; V- Present virtually; A: Absent.

Others Present: Pepper Miller, Niles Dial A Ride

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call**

Technical Advisory chair, Joe Bellina, called the meeting to Order at 1:30 pm. Kim Gallagher led roll call.

2. **Changes to the Agenda**

None.

3. **Public comment**

None.

4. **Approval of the Minutes from the previous NATS Meeting**

**Motion** to reapprove the minutes from the January 25, 2022, combined Technical Advisory Committee and Policy Committee meeting. Made by Roseann Marchetti seconded by Bill Kasprzak. **Motion approved.**

5. **SWMPC Staff Report**

Gallagher presented additional information about the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). she encouraged committee members to visit the FHWA website for the bill: [www.fhwa.dot.gov/bipartisan-infrastructure-law/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bipartisan-infrastructure-law/)

SWMPC held its annual Unified Work Program (UWP) meeting with MDOT and Federal partners. The meeting is where staff and partners review the accomplishments from the previous year and discuss the federal and state requirements for the upcoming fiscal year. The UWP will be approved in May.

6. **Public Transit Updates**

Gallagher announced that Kelly Getman-Dissette has accepted a new job and will be leaving Niles Dial A Ride. Gallagher thanked Kelly for her 12 years of service with public transit. Pepper Miller, the operations supervisor will assume Kelly's responsibilities.

7. **Local Road Agency Updates.**

- 7.1. **Cass County Road Commission:** Bellina said Mason Street and Reum Road projects were in design. The Grade Inspection meeting for the Gumwood Roundabout was held and they are working on final designs.
- 7.2. **Berrien County Road Department:** The Walton Bridge project was begun in the fall and will resume work in spring 2022.
- 7.3. **City of Niles:** Contracts for the 13th Street & Lake street project were approved and construction will begin in April.

8. **MDOT Updates**

Smith did not have any additional updates beyond what was in the packet.

9. **New Business**

- 9.1. **MDOT 2022 Project Amendments:** Bellina asked about the local match for the Edwardsburg TAP project. He was under the impression that MDOT was going to be 100% responsible for the project including the non-federal match. Sanada said that regardless of any agreements for the signal, MDOT does not typically pay for non-motorized paths.

There was discussion about who was responsible for the project. The path will be within the Village of Edwardsburg. But the local applicant is the Cass County Road Commission on behalf of Ontwa Township. Furthermore the main discussions about a traffic signal (not TAP funded) were with the Edwardsburg School District.

Sanada explained that there will be a traffic signal in Edwardsburg on Us-12 at Section Street. This signal will be paid for through MDOT (with a combination of federal and state funds). MDOT worked with the school district on an agreement to close traffic on Claire Street & US-12 to route all traffic to Section Street.

Sanada said that MDOT would design the non-motorized path from Section Street to Claire Street and administer the bid for construction. They will not contribute matching funds for the TAP grant. The non-federal funds have to come from a local agency.

Seanor said that she was willing to approve the project but questions still remained about who would be responsible for the local match.

There were no questions about the other MDOT FY 2022 project amendments included in the packet.

**Motion** for the Technical Advisory Committee to recommend that the Policy Committee approve the MDOT FY 2022 project Amendments to the NATS 202-2023 Transportation Improvement Program as included in the meeting packet. Made by Brian Sanada, and seconded by Bill Kasprzak. **Motion Approved.**

**Motion** by the Policy Committee to approve the recommendation from the Technical advisory Committee. Made by Rosanne Marchetti and seconded by Bill Kasprzak. **Motion Approved.**

9.2. **Approval of 2023-2026 MDOT Projects:** Smith added that the projects on US-31 included carpool lot resurfacing and ramp repairs, which explains why the cost seems much higher than a simple overlay. Bellina asked about US-12 east of Brady road. Smith replied that MDOT would do a skip paving as a temporary repair and look at adding a more permanent treatment later. Typically MDOT adds a lot of road projects to the TIP each year as more specific needs and budget are known. There were no questions or additions about the other MDOT 2020-2023 projects

9.3. **Approval of 2023-2026 Transit Projects:** Gallagher said that the transit projects included the capital purchases needed for Niles Dial A Ride to maintain their state of good repair. Kovnat added that the transit list included the only CMAQ funded project for 2024-2026 within the NATS area.

**Motion** for the Technical Advisory Committee to recommend that the Policy Committee approve the MDOT and Niles Dial a Ride proposed projects for inclusion in the NATS 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program as included in the meeting packet. Made by Brian Sanada and seconded by Bill Kasprzak. **Motion approved.**

**Motion** by the Policy Committee to approve the recommendation from the Technical advisory Committee. Made by Rosanne Marchetti and seconded by Bill Kasprzak. **Motion Approved.**

#### 10. Privilege of the Floor or Public Comment

None.

#### 11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:12 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for March 22, 2022 at 1:30 at the Niles District Library and online via Zoom.

*Minutes compiled by Brandon Kovnat, SWMPC Associate Transportation planner*