

NILES BUCHANAN CASS AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY (NATS)

Joint Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) & Policy Committee Minutes

January 26, 2021, via Zoom

NATS MEMBER ORG./POSITION	MEMBERS (2019)	TAC	POL	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Berrien Co. Board of Commissioners (1)	Michael Majerek		x	P											
Berrien Co. Board of Commissioners (2)	(vacant)		x												
Berrien Co. Community Dev. Dept.	Evan Smith	x		A											
Berrien Co. Planning Commission	Eric Lester, M.D.		x	P											
Berrien Co. Road Dept. (Policy)	(vacant)		x												
Berrien Co. Road Dept. (TAC)	Kevin Stack	X		A											
Bertrand Township	Butch Payton	x	x	P											
Buchanan Dial-A-Ride		x	x												
Buchanan Township	Lynn Ferris	x	x	A											
Cass Co. Board of Commissioners (1)	Robert Benjamin		x	P											
Cass Co. Board of Commissioners (2)	Roseann Marchetti		x	P											
Cass Co. Planning Commission	(vacant)	x													
Cass Co. Road Comm. (Policy)	Sandra Seanor		x	P											
Cass Co. Road Comm. (TAC)	Joe Bellina (TAC Chair)	x		P											
City of Buchanan	Don Ryman	x	x	P											
City of Niles (1)	Georgia Boggs		x	P											
City of Niles (2)	Serita Mason		x	A											
City of Niles (3)	Jessica Nelson		x	A											
City of Niles Community Dev. Director	(vacant)	x													
City of Niles Dial-A-Ride Transit	Kelly Getman-Dissette	x	x	P											
City of Niles Public Works Dir./Airport	Joe Ray	x		P											
Howard Township	Bill Kasprzak	x	x	A											
Kinexus	(vacant)	x													
Mason Township	Doug Feters	x	x	A											
MDOT - Bureau of Trans. Planning	Jim Sturdevant	x	x	P											
MDOT - Southwest Region	Brian Sanada	x	x	P											
MDOT - Southwest Region (Alternate)	Amy Lipset	Alt	Alt	A											
MDOT - Transportation Service Center	Jonathon Smith	x	x	P											
Milton Township	Susan Flowers	x	x	P											
Niles Charter Township	Richard Cooper (P. Ch.)	x	x	P											
Ontwa Township	Dawn Bolock	x	x	P											
Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians	(vacant)	x	x												
Village of Edwardsburg	Dennis Peak	x	x	A											
Federal Highway Administration	Andy Pickard	NV	NV	A											
Federal Transit Administration	Susan Weber	NV	NV	A											
EGLE - Air Quality	Breanna Bukowski	NV		A											
MDOT - Modeling	Jon Roberts	NV		A											
MDOT - Office of Passenger Trans.	Fred Featherly	NV		P											
Michiana Area Council of Governments	Caitlin Stevens	NV	NV	A											
Southwest Michigan Planning Comm.	Kim Gallagher	NV	NV	P											
Southwest Michigan Planning Comm.	Brandon Kovnat	NV	NV	P											

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

Others present: Anita Boughner, MDOT Statewide Planning

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

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

2. Changes to the Agenda

Bellina requested to add voting for Committee officers to the agenda. Per the NATS bylaws committee officer election are supposed to occur at the first meeting of every odd number year. Bellina also said that per bylaw the meeting schedule for 2021 was supposed to receive approval from the NATS committees.

Motion to add the Officer elections and Approval of meeting dates to the agenda after item 4, approval of meeting minutes. Made by Joe Ray and seconded by Butch Payton. Motion approved.

3. Public comment

None.

4. Approval of the Minutes from the April 21, 2020 NATS Meeting

On Page 1, item 6 the word county was not capitalized.

Motion to approve the minutes from the November 24, 2020 joint Technical Advisory Committee and Policy Committee meeting. Made by Joe Ray and seconded Roseann Marchetti. **Motion approved.**

5. Election of Officers

A nomination was made by Dawn Block and seconded by Roseanne Marchetti for Richard Cooper to serve as Policy Committee Chair

A nomination was made by Dawn Block and seconded by Roseanne Marchetti for Sandra Seanor to serve as the Policy Committee vice chair.

Bellina said that because there was only one nomination per position they could vote by unanimous consent.

Seeing no objections, Richard Cooper was reappointed as Policy Committee chair and Sandra Seanor was appointed as Policy Committee vice chair by unanimous consent.

A nomination was made by Joe Ray and seconded by Don Ryman for Joe Bellina to remain as the Technical Advisory Committee chair.

A nomination was made by Don Ryman and seconded by Richard Cooper for Joe Ray to remain as the Technical Advisory Committee vice chair.

Seeing no objection, Joe Bellina was reappointed technical Advisory Committee chair and Joe Ray was reappointed technical Advisory Committee vice chair by unanimous consent.

6. Approval of 2021 NATS meeting Dates

Motion to approve the NATS meeting dates for 2021, Made by Butch Payton and seconded by Roseann Marchetti. Motion approved.

7. SWMPC Staff Report

Gallagher gave an overview of the 2020 report of obligated projects in the NATS Area. all programmed projects in FY 2020 were obligated.

8. Agency and Project Updates

- 8.1. **Niles Dial A Ride: Getman-Dissette said Ridership** is still down from pre pandemic levels. They have barriers to protect drivers and passengers. She is communicating to the public that transit is a safe way]to travel. She added that they purchased a bus [which was programed in the TIP]

Cass County Public Transit: Gallagher said that Cass County Public Transit is being managed by Dennis Shuch. They interviewed two consultants to work on a countywide service plan.

Berrien Bus: Majerek said that Berrien Bus lost a lot of funding and has will end operations in about a year, possibly up to two years max.

8.2. Local Road Agencies

Cass County Road Commission: Bellina has submitted the final biddable package for Baron Lake Road.

Berrien county Road Department: The last update was that the Portage Road project is in Design. The Walton Street Bridge project was submitted for obligation.

City of Niles: Ray said Amtrak had finally given approval to begin work on the Lake Street Bridge. He held a construction meeting to discuss concrete types and plans to close the bridge on Friday to begin work. Ray reminded the committees that the project was held up by Amtrak for 18 months. He has been working with elected officials to get permits from Amtrak. Ray said he needed to pay Amtrak \$88,000 because they require a trackman and watchmen at all time while work occurs. Ray said this seemed ridiculous since they were only doing work on the bridge deck so it wouldn't interfere with train service.

8.3. MDOT

Smith said he did not have anything to add beyond what was included in the packet.

9. New Business

- 9.1. **Pavement and Bridge Performance Targets:** Kovnat presented on the pavement and bridge performance measures. He showed the pavement and bridge history and how targets were selected.

Motion for the Technical Advisory Committee to recommend that the policy committee adopt and support the state's pavement and bridge performance targets as presented. Made by Don Ryman and seconded by Jim Sturdevant. **Motion approved.**

Motion for the Policy committee to approve the recommendation from the Technical Advisory Committee. Motion made by Michael Majerek seconded by Roseann Marchetti. **Motion approved**

- 9.2. **Cass County Road Commission – Mason Street:** Kovnat explained that the Mason Street project was funded by rural Surface Transportation Program funds and approved by the Rural Task Force. The project is outside of the urban area boundaries but within the MPO planning boundaries.

Cass County Road Commission – Gumwood Roundabout: Bellina said that The roundabout would be only on the eastern intersection for Redfield and Gumwood. Due to a property owners refusal to sell or grant an easement the western intersection will remain the same. The hope is to eventually make this one single roundabout. Benjamin asked how the roundabout would interact with the gumwood trail.

Bellina replied that work on any non-motorized components would be planned separately for this project.

9.3. **Berrien County Road Department Guardrail Project:** There was nothing to add beyond what was included in the packet.

9.4. **MDOT Preventative Maintenance:** smith said the overall project was preventative maintenance within the seven county MDOT southwest region. He said the work on M-51 and M-60 BR and would be crack sealing. The work on M-140 will be a chip seal with a fog seal.

Motion for the Technical Advisory Committee to recommend that the policy committee approve the amendments to the 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program. Made by Joe Ray and seconded by Kelly Getman-Dissette. **Motion approved.**

Motion for the Policy Committee to approve the recommendation from the Technical Advisory Committee. Made by Dawn Bolock and seconded Sandra Seanor. **Motion approved.**

10. Privilege of the Floor or Public Comment

Ryman congratulated the Cass County Road Commission on receiving the Gumwood Roundabout Grant. He said it would make travel from Buchanan to the University Place mall easier.

Gallagher complimented both road commissions on both receiving statewide competitive safety grants this year.

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:25 pm. the next meeting is scheduled for February 23, 2021 at 1:30 to be conducted via zoom

Minutes compiled by Brandon Kovnat, SWMPC Associate Transportation planner