

NILES/BUCHANAN/CASS AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Policy Committee

MINUTES

December 16, 2014

2:00 P.M.

Niles City Council Chambers

Policy Members Present:	Jason Auvil, Berrien County Planning Commission Richard Cooper, Niles Charter Township Kris Welch MDOT Statewide Planning Paul Lott, MDOT Statewide Planning Jess Minks, Berrien County Road Commission Kim O’Haver, Buchanan Dial A Ride Jan Personette, Four Flags Area Chamber of Commerce Cliff Poehlman, Cass County Road Commission Don Ryman, City of Buchanan Evan Smith, City of Niles Robert Ziliak, Cass County Commissioner Dennis Schuh Berrien County Public Transportation Darrell Harden, MDOT, Southwest Region
Policy Members Absent:	Dawn Bolock, Ontwa Township Pat Bellaire, Village of Edwardsburg Georgia Boggs, City of Niles Craig Bradfield, Howard Township Andrea Dewey, Federal Highway Administration (ex-officio) John Egelhaaf, SWMPC (ex-officio) Representative, Howard Township John Gruchot, Berrien County Community Development Erin Jolivette, MDOT – Coloma TSC John Klimek, Berrien County Board of Commissioners Joseph Kring, Bertrand Township John Lanum, MDOT Planning Jason Latham, MDOT-SW Region Bill Marx, City of Buchanan Serita Ann Mason, City of Niles Jane Mitchell, Buchanan Township Stewart McKenzie, FTA (ex-officio) Brad Sharlow, MDOT Planning (ex-officio) Joe Sobieralski, Southwest Michigan Economic Growth Alliance Bob Sutton, Mason Township Planning Commission Kris Welch, MDOT Statewide Planning Representative, MACOG (ex-officio)
SWMPC Staff Present:	Kris Martin Kim Gallagher

1. Call to Order & Introductions

Meeting was called to order by Cooper at 2:02 p.m and Ryman led the group in the pledge of allegiance.

2. Minutes

A motion by Personette with support by Minks to approve the Policy Committee Meeting minutes from November 25. **Motion passed.**

3. Public Comment

None.

4. Staff Report

- **Cass County CMAQ Meeting- December 19th this meeting takes place at 10am.**
Gallagher reminded the group that the Cass County CMAQ meeting would take place immediately after the Rural Task Force (RTF) meeting on December 19th beginning at 10 AM at the Cass County Road Commission, 340 N O'Keefe St in Cassopolis. All Cass County jurisdictions are encouraged to attend.
- **Obligation Authority**
Gallagher also noted that there was currently only \$3.1 million in local obligation authority in the state of Michigan, so it is very likely in the days ahead that projects would stop being obligated. This is because so far, the state has only received a small portion of its requested obligation authority. There had been a continuing resolution for seven more days of obligation authority, but the state was still waiting on an additional continuing resolution to provide obligation authority through the end of December.

5. Public Transit Updates

Gallagher said that Evan Smith from Niles Dial a Ride spoke at City of Niles Meeting last Monday in which he addressed the transit consolidation study. Dan Fette from the Berrien County Economic Development Department addressed the Berrien County Board of Commissioners last week and talked about the consolidation study, so consolidation continues to be in discussions and attempts to educate people about the study continue. O'Haver said that everything is on task and operational.

6. Land Use Updates

The Berrien County Master plan will be open for comments in next year. For more information, visit <http://www.berriencounty.org/>

7. Project Updates

Fiscal Year	Job Number	Agency	Project Name	Update Information	Date of last update	Bid Savings	Obligation Month	Bills Submitted
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2013	118207	Berrien County	IN-MI River Valley Trail	Have sent a new offer to Alcoa for their property; still a question of who has environmental liability. Richard Cooper met with Marcy Colclough they are working with the attorneys on an agreement that we can work with it to acquire property more for the trail. We will be looking to apply for grants soon.	December 2014			
2014	104152	MDOT	M-139 CON phase Bridge replacement	Came in under engineers' estimate; construction in October	August 2014			
		Niles DAR	Maintenance software					
		Niles DAR	Preventative maintenance					
		Niles DAR	Replacement computers					
		Niles DAR	Replacement bus					
		Niles DAR	Operating assistance					
		Cass County RC	Gumwood Road TAP project	Obligated- bidding will take place in two months	November 2014			
2015		Berrien County RC	Range Line Road, Lake St and Main St Resurfacing	Program application will be submitted in December				
		Berrien County RC	Madron Lake, North Main, and Red Bud Trail	Program application will be submitted in December				

		City of Niles	Broadway Avenue Resurfacing	GI Package submitted--only issue was a couple of utility poles. Aiming for December letting	October 2014			
		Cass County	Adamsville Road Reconstruct	Design work underway	November 2014			
		Buchanan Dial-a-Ride	Replacement Bus	Contract probably not coming until next September	October 2014			
		Niles Dial-A-Ride	Replacement Tires					

Other Updates
None.

8. Old Business

- **Transportation Alternatives- Subcommittee Recommendations**

Gallagher noted that the TAP subcommittee recommended that the Gumwood Road Non-Motorized Path Phase II use the NATS MPO allocation of TAP funds. The project will be the 2nd phase of an overall project to connect the communities and commercial services in Indiana with planned residential communities in Michigan. The fully developed project will connect communities in Milton Township to the planned local Milton Township government and recreation facilities. This is the second phase of the overall project, Phase one was approved last year and will be constructed this year.

- **US 12 Garage Sale Safety Follow Up**

Martin thanked the group for the suggestions at the last MPO meeting. SWMPC will look to partner with MDOT regional offices along the US 12 route to place safety signs in the communities that have lots of sales registered. SWMPC will also reach out to the people that register for the sale to help promote safe driving and ask for drivers to slow down and use caution. We also will promote safe driving on the US 12 Facebook page. A suggestion was brought up to ask drivers to use their hazard lights when pulling over on the side of the road.

9. New Business

- **TIP Amendments**

Gallagher said that there was only one TIP Amendment this month.

Cass County Road Commission, Gumwood Multi-Use Path, Phase II, project summary is to use the full grant funds of \$44,266.00 (81.85%) with a match of \$9,815.86 (18.15%) coming from the Cass County Road Commission. The total project cost is \$54,081.86 for phase 2 of this project.

Phase two of the project in Milton Township was recommended by the TAC subcommittee for approval.

A motion by Auvil with support by Poehlman to approve the December TIP Amendments. **Motion passed.**

- **Legislative Updates**

- **Federal-** None.

- **State-** Lott shared that the Michigan House and Senate have two different transportation bills. The

Senate bill would replace the current gasoline tax with a wholesale tax, delivering \$1.2 billion in revenue by FY 2017. There is a deadline of Thursday for a vote before the lame duck session ends. The House bill would take some funds away from schools to fund roads, which is a concern of many.

Senate 5477 would create a 15 percent wholesale tax and replace the flat rate tax. Senate Bills 658, 659, would be an internet sales tax for online shopping funding might go towards roads. The bills passed the Senate and were sent to the house.

O'Haver said that the House Version takes would help reduce transit funding by 20-30%. If the House version passes a lot of small and rural transit authorities would be starved of funds. O'Haver urged committee members to contact their legislators to maintain transit funding.

9. Public Comment

None.

10. Privilege of the Floor

Martin and Gallagher wished the group a happy holidays.

Poehlman announced he was retiring from the Road Commission as of the end of the year, so this would be his final NATS meeting. He has served on NATS for 24 years. The group thanked him for his service.

Cooper noted that he would not be able to attend the January NATS meeting.

11. Adjournment at 2:30 p.m.

- The next meeting will be January 27 at 2:30 PM.

Minutes compiled by: Kris Martin, Associate Planner, 2014.