

NILES/BUCHANAN/CASS AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
Policy Committee

MINUTES

May 24, 2016

2:30 P.M.

Niles City Council Chambers

Policy Members Present:	Pat Bellaire, Village of Edwardsburg Craig Bradfield, Howard Township Georgia Boggs, City of Niles Richard Cooper, Niles Charter Township Pete Fournier, Cass County Road Commission Jess Minks, Berrien County Road Commission Jan Personette, Four Flags Area Chamber of Commerce Don Ryman, City of Buchanan Jonathon Smith, MDOT Coloma Office Bob Sutton, Mason Township Robert Ziliak, Cass County Board of Commissioners Serita Mason, City of Niles Representative, City of Niles Dial-A-Ride
Policy Members Absent:	Dawn Bolock, Ontwa Township Melinda Cole-Crocker, Buchanan Township Andrea Dewey, Federal Highway Administration (ex-officio) John Klimek, Berrien County Board of Commissioners David Newell, Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians Representative, Buchanan Township Stewart McKenzie, FTA (ex-officio) Brad Sharlow, MDOT Planning (ex-officio) Representative, Southwest Michigan Economic Growth Alliance Kim O’Haver, Buchanan Dial A Ride Steve Hicks, Bertrand Township Jason Latham, MDOT Southwest Region
SWMPC Staff Present:	John Egelhaaf Brandon Kovnat Jerrid Burdue

1. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

Meeting was called to order by Cooper at 2:30 p.m. and Personette led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. This was followed by introductions.

2. Changes to the Agenda

Cooper asked that discussion over combining TAC and Policy meetings be added under new business. Mason made the motion and Personette supported. **Motion Approved.**

3. Public Comment

Jan Personette brought up that “Our Town Niles” will be featured on WNIT June 6th at 8:00pm.

4. Minutes

Motion to approve the April 26, 2016 Policy Meeting Minutes by Personette and supported by Mason.
Motion Approved.

5. Staff Report

John introduced Brandon Kovnat and Jerrid Burdue, both new SWMPC staff. Brandon is taking Gautam position and Jerrid is a summer intern.

Burdue introduced a new project update template. SWMPC will provide these templates to the respected agencies for them to fill out and submit prior to the meeting. The goal is to have these included in the meeting packet and PowerPoint so no updates are missed.

6. Public Transit Updates

- **Niles Dial A Ride**

Kelly described an issue with receiving the necessary funding for the Niles Dial A Ride. Niles requested \$266,000 but was offered only \$165,000 by MACOG. There is a disagreement among MACOG, Transpo, NICTD, and Niles Dial A Ride over splitting money. If no agreement is reached soon, a meeting between MACOG and SWMPC will be necessary. MACOG suggested that STP funding be used as an offset. At this time all our 2016 STP funds have been programmed. The issue is in part by Niles using grants for some Dial A Ride funding last fiscal year, which lowered the 5-year average funding requirements. With the use of grants, Niles only needed \$163,000 last year; the year before that, 2014, no additional grants were used and Niles received \$219,000 for transit funding from MACOG. Disregarding last year, the 4-year average was close to \$220,000. Between \$220,000 and \$230,000 is needed this year to keep current services. Boggs asked how much money was being split; John answered \$3,924,155 was given to MACOG to split between the three agencies. In a prior meeting, NICTD stated that Niles could increase fares, other possibilities mentioned by MACOG and Transpo included cutting service to townships and cutting Saturday services. While cutting funds to Niles Dial A Ride, Transpo discussed adding Sunday services at a prior meeting. Bradfield was interested in receiving ridership data for Howard Township from Niles Dial A Ride. Mason is concerned that cutting service would cost jobs.

- **Buchanan Dial A Ride**

Not present.

- **Other Updates**

Cooper mentioned the importance of adding public transit into Niles Charter Township's Master Plan.

7. Land Use Updates

Cooper said that the Niles Senior Center purchased property east of their current location and requesting it be rezoned to general business possibly for more parking availability.

8. Project Updates

MDOT

Jonathon Smith said MDOT will start work on reconstructing shoulders on US-12 between M-139 and M-60 after July 4th. There may also be concrete patches in places. Smith asked about a TIP amendment for a scoping project for the US-12 bridge over M-51. This is not a TIP amendment month; this will need to wait until June. The round-a-bout construction for US-12 and Old M-205 intersection will start in about a week.

9. Old Business

None.

10. New Business

▪ Unified Work Program

Brandon outlined the UWP and stated the role that SWMPC plays. Some of the items mentioned were congestion management, public participation, and updating the SWMPC's website. He talked about the 18.15 percent local match which is based on Census population data. Egelhaaf stated that federal funds have increased by 2% since the 2016 UWP. Fournier asked that a correction be made to include Cass County Road Commission on p. 40. Ryman questioned if Buchanan should be included under the Bi-State Commission; SWMPC staff will check this. Egelhaaf read the resolution to approve the UWP after corrections.

A roll call vote was conducted: Bellaire: Y, Bradfield: Y, Boggs: Y, Cooper: Y, Fournier: Y, Minks: Y, Personette: Y, Ryman: Y, Smith: Y, Sutton: Y, Ziliak: Y, Mason: Y, Bolock: NP, Cole-Crocker: NP, Klimek: NP, Newell: NP, Representative - Buchanan Township: NP, Representative – Southwest Michigan Economic Growth Alliance: NP, O'Haver: NP, Hicks: NP, Latham: NP.

Y: Yea

NP: Not Present

▪ State and Federal Updates

None.

▪ TAC and Policy Meetings

Richard Cooper and Pete Fournier lead discussion on joining the TAC and Policy meetings into one. Many individuals belong to both and the material covered is very similar. Minks asked if roll call votes should be implemented to make sure voting is conducted properly among the two groups. SWMPC will make sure changes are legal. The overall consensus is to try a joint meeting in June at 1:30pm. A motion was made by Sutton and supported by Personette to move the meeting to 1:30pm. **Motion Approved.**

11. Public Comment

None.

12. Privilege of the Floor

There will be work on the Grant Street viaduct starting June 6. Cooper mentioned that the Indiana Michigan River Valley Trail will need to be moved in some locations due to findings in an archeological study. Local groups and individuals have risen close to \$38,000 for the trail project.

13. Adjournment at 3:15 p.m.

- The next meeting will be June 28 at 1:30 PM.

Minutes compiled by: Jerrid Burdue, Transportation Planner Intern, 2016