

NILES/BUCHANAN/CASS AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Policy Committee

MINUTES

June 24, 2014

2:30 P.M.

Niles City Council Chambers

<p>Policy Members Present:</p>	<p>Jason Auvil, Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians Dawn Bolock, Ontwa Township Richard Cooper, Niles Charter Township Darrell Harden, MDOT, Southwest Region Erin Jolivette, MDOT – Coloma TSC John Lanum, MDOT 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 Kris Welch, MDOT Planning Robert Ziliak, Cass County Commissioner</p>
<p>Policy Members Absent:</p>	<p>Pat Bellaire, Village of Edwardsburg Craig Bradfield, Howard Township Georgia Boggs, City of Niles Andrea Dewey, Federal Highway Administration (ex-officio) John Egelhaaf, SWMPC (ex-officio) Representative, Howard Township John Gruchot, Berrien County Community Development John Klimek, Berrien County Board of Commissioners Joseph Kring, Bertrand Township 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) Evan Smith, Niles Dial A Ride Joe Sobieralski, Southwest Michigan Economic Growth Alliance Bob Sutton, Mason Township Planning Commission Representative, MACOG (ex-officio)</p>
<p>SWMPC Staff Present:</p>	<p>Kim Gallagher Gautam Mani</p>
<p>Others Present:</p>	<p>Matt Kodis, Kinexus Paul Lott, MDOT Planning</p>

1. Call to Order & Introductions

Meeting was called to order by Cooper at 2:36 p.m, and he also led the group in introductions. Lott led the group in the pledge of allegiance.

2. Minutes

A motion by Ziliak with support by Personette to approve the Policy Committee Meeting minutes from May 27, 2014.

Motion passed.

3. Public Comment

Kodis noted that Kinexus had a tourism report that was available online, as well as a complete set of State of the Workforce reports. The most recently completed State of the Workforce report focused on quality of life. All reports are available on Kinexus' website, www.kinexus.org

4. Staff Report

▪ SWMPC Staff Changes

Mani said that SWMPC had chosen to fill Suzann Flowers' position internally. Kim Gallagher, SWMPC's Senior Planner, will be taking over most of Suzann's transportation duties. Kim has been involved in transportation work for SWMPC for over a decade, including with the MPO, and Mani said that the MPO would benefit greatly from having Gallagher's experience and knowledge at meetings on a more consistent basis.

Mani also said that Kris Martin, formerly SWMPC's program assistant, had been promoted to Associate Planner. Kris would be taking over management of Kim's US-12 and Rideshare programs, and SWMPC is excited that he will be working on community master plans.

▪ MTPA Update

None.

▪ Traffic Safety Committee Meeting Update

Mani said that someone from SWMPC attends the quarterly meetings of the Southwest and South Central region's traffic safety committees. These are organized by the Michigan Office of Highway Safety and Planning (OHSP). This month's presentation was particularly interesting as it dealt with motorcycle safety. It turns out that Berrien County has the 9th highest rate of unendorsed motorcyclists, meaning those that have not completed the state-mandated training. This rate is the highest outside of the Grand Rapids and Detroit regions. Kodis brought up the issue of transferring of endorsements across state lines. Mani said that another issue was the low number of training facilities and long waiting lists to take the classes, particularly the advanced rider trainings. Mani said that he would continue to bring updates from these traffic safety committee meetings to MPO.

▪ CTAA Conference Update

Gallagher said that she had attended the Community Transportation Association of America conference in St. Paul, Minnesota two weeks earlier. The conference brought together mobility managers and transit professionals from smaller, more rural transit agencies than does the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) meeting. Gallagher noted that a lot of the presentations focused on non-emergency medical transportation, and that would be a topic that increasingly comes up in transit discussions.

▪ Walk and Roll Survey Update

Mani said that the online survey is now closed, though we still welcome feedback on non-motorized transportation. Mani said that SWMPC staff would be working on a presentation regarding the survey results using SurveyMonkey's analytics, and would be presenting next month. We will be able to break down responses by jurisdiction.

▪ MACOG Update

None.

▪ **Berrien County Transit Consolidation Study Presentation**

Gallagher asked that because most of the meeting attendees were the same as at TAC, she could give her presentation after the meeting had concluded for those who were not at TAC. The committee agreed.

Gallagher's complete presentation is available at:

http://www.swmpc.org/downloads/nats_presentation_transit_plan_2014_1.pdf

5. Project Updates

Fiscal Year	Job Number	Agency	Project Name	Update Information	Date of last update	Bid Savings	Obligation Month	Bills Submitted
2012		Niles Dial A Ride	Preventative maintenance	The projects have been assigned grant numbers and the projects should move forward summer 2012. There will be some project changes for the March meeting, need last approved TIP letter; ongoing	July 2013			
		Niles Dial A Ride	Free fare days-CMAQ project	Extended to summer 2013; happening in the summer; ongoing	July 2013			
2013	112102	Buchanan	Front St. Red Bud Trail to east city of Buchanan limit	Under Construction	May 2014		May/June	
		Buchanan Dial A Ride	Transit operations	Still operating	November 2013			
	112107	Cass County	Elkhart Road	Complete	June 2014			
	118207	Berrien County	IN-MI River Valley Trail	Under Construction-struggling with high volume of rain and drainage directly behind Bell Road at Township Hall.	June 2014			
2014	112104	Berrien County	Third St., Portage Rd	Scheduling Work	June 2014			

	104152	MDOT	M-139 CON phase Bridge replacement	TIP Amendment submitted. Fall construction bridge removed in 2015	June 2014			
	118114	Niles DAR	Free fare days					
		Niles DAR	Maintenance software					
		Niles DAR	Preventative maintenance					
		Niles DAR	Replacement computers					
		Niles DAR	Replacement bus					
		Niles DAR	Operating assistance					
		Cass County RC	Bertrand Rd (Batchelor road to Gumwood) - Resurface	Scheduling contract	June 2014			
		Cass County RC	Redfield (Fir to Kline) -Resurface	Complete	June 2014			
		Cass County RC	Gumwood Road TAP project	GI package turned in this week	June 2014			

Jolivette noted one other update. M-139 from M-140 to Deans Hill Road (JN 124309) would be repaved during this construction season.

6. Land Use Updates

Mani said that Chikaming Township was working on its master plan update. SWMPC has received a copy for review.

7. Old Business

▪ Revised Bylaws for TAC

Cooper noted that TAC had approved a new version of its bylaws at the previous meetings. Mani noted that the new bylaws now include an inclement weather and cancellation policy, a cleaned up section on officer elections, and a clear statement on conflicts of interest. In addition, Kinexus was approved as a voting member.

Mani said that work on the Policy bylaws would start soon, and that anyone who wants to be on the bylaw review subcommittee should let him know if they wanted to volunteer.

8. New Business

- Legislative Updates

- **Federal-** In the absence of an FHWA representative, Lanum said that there were no updates on a new transportation bill. However, FHWA was taking comment on the proposed rulemakings regarding performance measures and MPO/regional transportation planning through the federal docket at regulations.gov.

Kodis added that the Census Bureau is considering eliminating questions regarding income, disability, and time leaving for work from the American Community Survey due to privacy concerns. These pieces of data are vital for many local agencies in being able to access federal funds, including for the MPO. The commute timing data was particularly important for planning transit schedules and possible construction schedules. Mani said that the MPO needs to conduct environmental justice analysis in its long range plan, which would be impossible without data on income. In addition, Gallagher pointed out that 5307 transit funding was distributed based on ability to serve low income populations. Kodis, Gallagher, and Mani strongly encouraged committee members to submit comments to the Census Bureau asking them to keep these questions.

The Census Bureau is currently taking public comment through its docket. https://www.census.gov/acs/www/about_the_survey/content_review_feedback/. Ziliak asked if a resolution of support from NATS might be appropriate in this case. Mani said that the Bureau was really looking for feedback through its own docket, but if committee members had any issues that they felt the NATS committees should take a position on, SWMPC staff would always be happy to draft a resolution of support for committee approval.

- **State-** Lanum shared that the legislature was on recess, and would probably not be considering a new transportation revenue package until after the elections. There had been some progress on warranties on road projects, but that was all there was to report.

9. Public Comment

None.

10. Privilege of the Floor

O'Haver said that Buchanan Dial-a-Ride would soon be having a celebration of its 375,000th trip, a milestone given that the agency has been in service for 38 years.

Personette said that Barbara Rodebush, the wife of longtime NATS committee member Johnie Rodebush, had recently passed away after a long illness. There was a condolence card that NATS members could sign for him, and Mani said that Rodebush would certainly appreciate it.

11. Adjournment at 3:05 p.m.

- The next meeting will be July 22, 2014 at 2:30 PM.

Minutes compiled by: Gautam Mani, Transportation Planner, 2014.