

NILES/BUCHANAN/CASS AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
Policy Committee

MINUTES

Tuesday, January 24, 2012

3:00 P.M.

Niles City Council Chambers

Policy Members Present:	Jason Auvil, Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians Chuck Collins, Berrien County Road Commission Irving Frost, Howard Township Darrell Harden, MDOT, Southwest Region Don Kronewitter, Milton Township Joseph Kring, Bertrand Township John LaMore, Berrien County Commissioner Ray Lenze, MDOT Planning Dale Lowe, Cass County Commissioner Zach Perkins, Berrien County Commissioner Cliff Poehlman, Cass County Road Commission Johnie Rodebush, Cass County Commissioner Don Ryman, City of Buchanan Evan Smith, Niles Dial A Ride
Policy Members Absent:	Betty Arndt, City of Niles Pat Bellaire, Village of Edwardsburg Georgia Boggs, City of Niles Richard Cooper, Niles Charter Township John Egelhaaf, SWMPC (ex-officio) Erin Kercheval, MDOT – Coloma TSC Stewart McKenzie, FTA (ex-officio) Jane Mitchell, Buchanan Township Jan Personette, Four Flags Area Chamber of Commerce Brad Sharlow, MDOT Planning (ex-officio) Rachael Tupica, Federal Highway Administration (ex-officio) Tracy Vines, Berrien County Planning Commission Representative, MACOG (ex-officio) Representative, Buchanan Dial-a-Ride Representative, Ontwa Township
SWMPC Staff Present:	Suzann Flowers Trevor Thomas
Others Present:	Sue Kronewitter, Milton Township resident

1. Call to Order & Introductions

- LaMore called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m. Frost led the group in saying the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Minutes

A motion was made by Poehlman with support from Frost to approve the December 20, 2011 Policy Committee Meeting minutes. **Motion passed.**

3. Staff Report

- **Transportation Asset Management Trainings**

Thomas discussed two training opportunities with the Committee members. The first was on the road rating trainings taking place. He highlighted the specific dates that may be of particular interest to Committee members. Road Rating training dates have been announced for the upcoming calendar year. This training is necessary if you want to assist in rating roads in your community. Communities can have their roads rated once every three years. Thomas explained that he attended the training and found the information very helpful in understanding how road ratings are done. The training dates are as follows: February 28, 2012-West Branch, February 29, 2012-Saginaw, March 1, 2012-Grand Rapids, March 27, 2012- Kalamazoo, March 28, 2012-Dearborn, and March 29, 2012-Lansing. Thomas suggested that those interested in signing up for the training should do the webinar session first then the classroom session.

- **Climate Change and Energy Planning for MPOs**

Flowers took part in a Climate Change webinar that focused on learning from the experiences of three communities and how climate change has affected the way that their planning focus has changed. The case studies reviewed New Orleans, Oregon State DOT, and U.S. DOT. They also focused on how the roles of MPO's are changing and that their focus on planning is becoming more regionally focused. In addition, MPOs are poised to be able to respond to the needs of communities with their work with GIS, understanding the regional implications of transportation decisions and networks, and their relationship with multiple agencies. It was interesting that communities are responding to the needs for climate change analysis differently. Oregon has a state DOT led initiative that has set the standards. In the U.S. DOT example, they reviewed the land use practices in Cape Cod, MA and how that could impact the people and land use decisions.

- **Buchanan Lions Club Meeting-March 8, 2012**

Flowers thanked Joseph Kring and his wife for helping to facilitate a presentation to the Buchanan Lions Club. Flowers explained that this will provide staff the opportunity to engage other people in the transportation process.

4. Old Business

- **CMAQ update**

Thomas stated that CMAQ applications have to be to their respective agencies by February 1, 2012 to be submitted to MDOT. Communities from Berrien County would submit their projects to Brian Berndt and Cass County Communities will need to submit to Joe Bellina. Thomas also mentioned that there will be a call for CMAQ projects for 2015 and beyond coming up in November 2012 and that staff will keep Committee members of the request once it is received.

- **NATS TIP Policy**

Flowers explained the purpose of the policy and why a policy was being drafted. She referred to minutes from the December 2011 meeting to get all attendees up to speed. She also stated that changes were requested from the TAC committee.

-Collins had made several changes and gave those changes to Flowers on his copy of the policy.

-Flowers also stated that at the TwinCATS meeting Lenze had made some suggested changes.

Staff will bring the policy back to the Committees next month once the changes have been made.

- **Annual Report**

Flowers stated that the Annual Report was completed and that the SWMPC Board will be taking action on the Annual Report on January 31, 2012. She asked for any comments or modifications from the Committee members.

-Collins noted items that staff should review on pages 6-Collins was unclear why he and Brian Berndt were listed as Policy members. Flowers stated that was the information that Berndt had given to her over the phone. Page 23 remove the word approximately in reference to bike resolution. Page 26 Collins thought that the word shows should be removed.

A motion was made by Rodebush with support by Lowe to approve the fiscal year 2011 NATS Annual report. **Motion passed.**

- **Meeting dates (keep same or split)**

Flowers stated that the reason for the follow-up discussion on this issue was to give Committee members 1 month to review the pros and cons to splitting up NATS committee meetings. Flowers stated that the reason for the discussion was to ensure that proper notification is given to the public when TIP amendments are present on the agenda. Staff need at least 10 days prior to the regularly scheduled meeting to get out the legal notice, which requires a 7-day public comment period.

-Vines asked staff what is legally required to do. Flowers stated that we are required to give a 7-day comment period before a vote can be taken about a TIP change.

-LaMore stated that if need be that a special meeting can be called to handle proposed changes, Flowers reminded the members that the TIP policy would prevent this from happening. The policy is written so that all changes will be made at the regularly scheduled meetings.

-Thomas stated that if the committee members did not mind hand written changes on the TIP handouts then there would be no need to make a change. Vines stated that she preferred a polished piece before approval.

-Collins stated that Bellina and Berndt need to make decisions on projects in the TIP and staff need to act on these requests in a timely manner.

-LaMore stated that projects that do not make it to staff on time will have to be postponed to the next regularly scheduled meeting.

-Flowers added that Lenze had given her a copy of a document that reviews the difference between amendments and administrative modifications. Flowers will post this online and mail copies to those who receive mailed packets.

A motion was made by Rodebush with support by Frost to keep the meeting schedule as it currently stands, TAC and Policy meeting on the fourth Tuesday of each month unless otherwise noted. **Motion passed.**

5. New Business

- **Harbor Master support letter**

Flowers brought a draft version of the letter for the harbor authority. Collins made a suggestion to include language about preventative maintenance for the harbor in the letter. Flowers will make the change and bring it back next month for review.

Motion by Frost with support by Vines to have Chairman LaMore sign the support letter for the St. Joseph River Harbor Authority. **Motion passed.**

- **Long Range Plan Revenue Estimates**

Thomas explained that MDOT had released Long Range Plan revenue estimates for the purposes of planning. He further stated that new numbers will be given to staff in 2013. The base year numbers, which are representative of the planned 2011 dollars, do not change in years 2012 and 2013 and then increase by 2%.

-A question was raised about what a TMA versus small mpo meant. Lenze stated that the NATS area is part of the South Bend, IN transportation management area, which are mpo's with a population size of 200,000. The money noted on the handout shows the portion of the TMA funds used for the NATS region. A small mpo, such as TwinCATS have populations over 50,000 but fewer than 200,000.

- **Welcome new member Dennis Patterson-Howard Township**

Frost informed the Committee that Dennis Patterson will be the 2nd Howard Township representative on the Policy Committee but that he is currently on vacation and will attend next month.

6. Public Comment

Sue Kronewitter asked Flowers about her attendance being noted in the annual report. Flowers stated that she used sign in sheets and minutes from FY 2011 to list the total number of members that attended and the total number of visitors.

7. Privilege of the Floor

-Vines mentioned that the Governor's state of the state addressed how important roads were in his message.

-Collins added that bills have been introduced to increase the amount of money given to roads in the state. This increase would come from an increase in the amount of registration fees.

-Harden discussed the Complete Streets coalition is meeting this month to discuss the statewide policy for MDOT.

-Flowers discussed the completion of the 9 county non-motorized map and plan and that cities and villages would be receiving their share of the maps over the next several weeks. Townships were not included in the allocation because there were so many in the 9 county regions. Flowers encouraged people to go to their local bike shops, city, village, and parks departments if they wanted to obtain a map. Flowers also mentioned a workshop that was being held on low impact development and planning for water quality. Flyers for the events were at the meeting.

-Poehlman stated that getting a \$500 million dollar increase in road funding sounds like a lot but when 20% goes to cities and villages, then 40% goes to the state and all of the counties in MI then it may not add up to much for each county.

8. Adjournment: 3:45 p.m.

The next meeting is **February 28, 2012 at 2:30 P.M.**

Minutes compiled by: Suzann Flowers and Trevor Thomas, Transportation Planners, 1/2012