

NILES/BUCHANAN/CASS AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
Policy Committee

MINUTES

Tuesday, February 22, 2011
Niles City Council Chambers
3:00 P.M.

Policy Members Present:	Jason Auvil, Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians Georgia Boggs, City of Niles Chuck Collins, Berrien County Road Commission Richard Cooper, Niles Charter Township Irving Frost, Howard Township Erin Kercheval, MDOT – Coloma TSC Joseph Kring, Bertrand Township Don Kronewitter, Milton Township Ray Lenze, MDOT Planning Dale Lowe, Cass County Commissioner Bill Marx, City of Buchanan Jane Mitchell, Buchanan Township Jan Personette, Four Flags Area Chamber of Commerce John Pleveich, Niles Dial-A-Ride Cliff Poehlman, Cass County Road Commission Johnie Rodebush, Cass County Commissioner Don Ryman, City of Buchanan Tracy Vines, Berrien County Planning Commission
Policy Members Absent:	Betty Arndt, City of Niles Pat Bellaire, Village of Edwardsburg John Egelhaaf, SWMPC (ex-officio) Darrell Harden, MDOT, Southwest Region John LaMore, Berrien County Commissioner Stewart McKenzie, FTA (ex-officio) Jessica Mitchell, MACOG (ex-officio) Rachael Tupica, Federal Highway Administration (ex-officio) Representative, Buchanan Dial-a-Ride Representative, Ontwa Township
SWMPC Staff Present:	Anna Rahtz Trevor Thomas
Others Present:	None

1. Call to Order & Introductions

- Chairman Rodebush called the meeting to order at 3:00 P.M. and led the group in saying the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Chairman Rodebush led the group in introductions. Rahtz noted that Don Ryman has been appointed to be the representative for the City of Buchanan, and Don Kronewitter has been appointed for Milton Township.

2. Minutes

- *Motion by Frost, seconded by Boggs, to approve the minutes of the December 21, 2010 Policy Committee meeting. Motion approved unanimously with no corrections.*

3. Staff Report

- **MDOT Niles Historic Bridge**
 - Rahtz stated that she had attended MDOT's open house about the replacement of the Main Street historic bridge in Niles. She explained that the purpose of the open house had been to solicit feedback from the public on the alternatives for alignment of the bridge, and had explained how much right of way acquisition would be necessary for each alignment alternative. She added that a design workshop will be held in the fall, and also that MDOT is asking for photos from members of the public of the historic bridge.
 - Kercheval noted that she will bring more information to the committee before the design workshop is held in the fall.
- **Cass County Mobility Forum Update**
 - Rahtz announced that around 40 people from the transit and social service agencies in Cass County had been in attendance at the Cass County Mobility Forum on February 9th at the Lewis Cass ISD. The attendees worked through scenarios of how riders can arrange rides to travel to needed destinations within and outside of Cass County. The results of the forum will be used in a Transit – Human Services Coordination Plan for Cass County.
- **Berrien County Transit Consolidation Feasibility Study Selection Committee Meeting – February 28th**
 - Rahtz stated that representatives from each of the five transit areas in Berrien County have been appointed to a selection committee to hire a consultant to conduct a Transit Consolidation Feasibility Study. They are in the process of looking through the proposals and identifying criteria for selection. The next meeting is February 28th at 8:00 AM at the Southwest Michigan Regional Airport.
 - Vines inquired whether the grant that Thomas had talked about the previous summer was the grant being used for this study. Rahtz clarified that SWMPC had not gone after that grant but likely will this year. She stated that the grant being used for this study is a Statewide Planning and Research grant from MDOT using Federal Transit Administration funds, with a local match from the Consortium for Community Development in Benton Harbor.
- **Transportation and Environment presentations – March 22nd**
 - Thomas announced that speakers will be brought in to a joint TwinCATS/NATS meeting on March 22nd to discuss the intersection between transportation projects and environmental issues. He noted that this is especially important to learn about given the high incidence of flooding on many of the region's roads. The workshop will cover possible strategies and funding sources for addressing transportation needs and environmental needs together.
- **Transportation Funding 201 workshop – Postponed**
 - Rahtz stated that SWMPC staff had been hoping to hold the sequel to the funding workshop on March 28th, but it will be postponed, most likely until April, because a speaker has not yet been secured.

4. Old Business

- **Officer Elections**
 - Frost reported that he and Collins had decided to nominate John LaMore for Chair and Dale Lowe for Vice-chair.
 - Chairman Rodebush asked for nominations from the floor, and heard none.
 - *Motion by Poehlman, seconded by Vines, to accept the nomination of John LaMore for Chair. Motion approved unanimously.*
 - *Motion by Frost, seconded by Personette, to accept the nomination of Dale Lowe for Vice-chair. Motion approved unanimously.*
 - Rodebush noted that it is important to encourage every member agency to regularly attend the meetings.

- Rahtz noted that there were copies of the committee by-laws available for anyone new to the committee.

5. New Business

• TIP Amendments

- Niles Dial-A-Ride Transit
 - Add in FY 2011, the project named Rural Operating Funds for transit operations in the Niles area. Federal cost (5311) is \$14,383 and local cost is \$3,596.
 - *Getman-Dissette noted that NDART has always received this funding but has been asked this year for the first time to put the project in the TIP.*
 - *Rahtz noted that the remaining NDART amendments are the projects for 2011 through 2014 that were listed as using federal toll credits for the 20 percent match. The projects are now using a state cash match instead. Also, the budget for some projects changed slightly, and remaining funds are being used to add new projects.*
 - Amend in FY 2011, the project named Bike Racks for the purchase of up to five bicycle racks and install kits for buses. Federal changing from \$7,800 (5307) to \$6,240 (5307), and state cost changing from \$0 to \$1,560 (CTF).
 - Amend in FY 2011, the project named Generator for the purchase and installation of a generator to power phones, radios, and fuel pump in the event of an outage. Federal cost is changing from \$5,000 (5307) to \$4,000 (5307), and state cost is changing from \$0 to \$1,000 (CTF).
 - Amend in FY 2011, the project named On Bus Camera System for the purchase and installation of digital camera system for buses. Federal cost is changing from \$57,600 (5307) to \$46,080 (5307), and state cost is changing from \$0 to \$11,520 (CTF).
 - Amend in FY 2011, the project named Preventative Maintenance. Federal cost is changing from \$217,200 (5307) to \$173,760 (5307), and state cost is changing from \$0 to \$43,440 (CTF).
 - Amend in FY 2011, the project named Ramp Lift for purchase and installation of ramp lift in maintenance bay. Federal cost is changing from \$24,000 (5307) to \$19,200 (5307), and state cost is changing from \$0 to \$4,800 (CTF).
 - Amend in FY 2011, the project named Replacement Tires for the purchase of replacement tires and the disposal of old tires. Federal cost is changing from \$4,320 (5307) to \$3,456 (5307), and state cost is changing from \$0 to \$864 (CTF).
 - Amend in FY 2012, the project named Garage Maintenance to hire third party contractor to repaint DART garages and high traffic areas within the office. Federal cost is changing from \$14,400 (5307) to \$12,000 (5307), and state cost is changing from \$0 to \$3,000 (CTF).
 - Amend in FY 2012, the project named Preventative Maintenance. Federal cost is changing from \$228,000 (5307) to \$160,000 (5307), and state cost is changing from \$0 to \$40,000 (CTF).
 - Add in FY 2012, the project named Scheduling Software for the purchase and installation of scheduling/dispatch software and any necessary computer hardware or software upgrades. Federal cost is \$36,000 (5307), and state cost is \$9,000.
 - Add in FY 2012, the project named Garage Equipment for purchase and installation of tools and maintenance equipment. Federal cost is \$10,000 (5307), and state cost is \$2,500 (CTF).
 - Amend in FY 2013, the project named Copy Machine for the purchase of a replacement color copy/fax/scanner machine. Federal cost is changing from \$14,000 (5307) to \$12,000 (5307), and state cost is changing from \$0 to \$3,000 (CTF).
 - Amend in FY 2013, the project named Preventative Maintenance. Federal cost is changing from \$228,000 (5307) to \$160,000 (5307), and state cost is changing from \$0 to \$40,000 (CTF).
 - Amend in FY 2013, the project named Replacement Tires for the purchase of replacement tires and the disposal of old tires. Federal cost is being changed from \$4,800 (5307) to

- \$3,600 (5307), and state cost is being changed from \$0 to \$900 (CTF).
- Add in FY 2013, the project named Software Upgrades for the purchase of scheduling/maintenance software upgrades. Federal cost is \$2,000 (5307), and state cost is \$500 (CTF).
- Amend in FY 2014, the project named Maintenance Software for the purchase of maintenance equipment software upgrades. Federal cost is changing from \$1,800 (5307) to \$3,200 (5307), and state cost is changing from \$0 to \$1,800 (CTF).
- Amend in FY 2014, the project named Parking Lot to fill cracks, reseal, and restripe parking lot and driveway. Federal cost is changing from \$6,000 (5307) to \$6,400 (5307), and state cost is changing from \$1,500 (CTF) to \$1,600 (CTF).
- Amend in FY 2014, the project named Preventative Maintenance. Federal cost is changing from \$234,000 (5307) to \$164,000 (5307), and state cost is changing from \$0 to \$41,000 (CTF).
- Amend in FY 2014, the project named Replacement Computers for the purchase and installation of up to 2 replacement office computers, associated software, and monitors. Federal cost is changing from \$7,200 (5307) to \$6,000 (5307), and state cost is changing from \$0 to \$1,500 (CTF).
- Amend in FY 2014, the project named Trolley Façade to refinish trolley wood façade. Federal cost is changing from \$7,200 (5307) to \$5,000 (5307), and state cost is changing from \$0 to \$1,250 (CTF).
- *Motion by Vines, seconded by Auvil, to approve the above amendments of NDART projects in the FY 2011-2014 Transportation Improvement Program. Motion approved unanimously.*
- CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program)
 - Add in FY 2011, the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission project named Rideshare to operate the standard Rideshare program in Cass County. Federal cost is \$12,000.
 - *Motion by Vines, seconded by Personette, to approve the above project addition to the FY 2011-2014 Transportation Improvement Program. Motion approved unanimously.*

6. Public Comment

- None.

7. Privilege of the Floor

- Boggs suggested that MDOT should look at a safety issue on US-12 near the intersection with Gumwood. It is signed as a passing zone but there is not enough visibility and room to pass safely before the intersection.
 - It was noted that there was a fatal accident the day before on US-12, but that it was at a different location.
 - Kercheval responded that there is a safety project planned for that stretch of road in fiscal year 2012 to add turn lanes. Boggs and others stated that the safety issue should be examined prior to 2012, and that it had been reported three months ago.
 - Collins explained that all signage follows the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, and is based on a multitude of factors including traffic counts, distance from the intersection, etc. He added that such decisions have to be made based on objective criteria because every citizen wants something different.
 - Ryman, Boggs, and others stated that a legitimate safety issue should trump the guidelines.
 - Kercheval added that there is a possibility that that particular intersection could be on the borderline of what the guidelines call for, and that she would ask the traffic safety engineer to look at it.
- Collins reminded the committee that at the previous meeting it had been brought up that the southern part of Berrien County has not applied for any Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) projects for the next four years other than the Niles Dial-A-Ride Transit Free Fare Days project. He suggested that the City of Buchanan look at a CMAQ project for the post

office. He noted that it is not possible for a car to pull up to the mailbox, and so many people have to drive around to find a parking spot and then leave their car idling while they walk to the mailbox, thus adding to emissions. He noted that a streetscape project is already planned for 2013, and maybe something could be added to the project as well.

- Kercheval noted that Paul South will be deployed to Afghanistan in the next few months, and so Pete Pfeiffer, the manager of the Kalamazoo TSC will be taking over Paul's duties for 18 months. She added that Sarah Woolcock will be acting as both delivery engineer and development engineer, and so Erin and the other engineer Kyle will be taking on some of her duties.

8. Adjournment

- *Meeting adjourned by Chairman Rodebush at 3:30 P.M.*
- The next meeting is **March 22, 2011 at 1:30 P.M. at Andrews University.**

Minutes compiled by: Anna Rahtz, Transportation Planner, 2/23/11