

# REGION FOUR RURAL TASK FORCE

January 26, 2022 1:30 PM

Hartford Public Library, 12 Church St, Hartford, MI 49057

## Meeting Minutes

Attendance	Name	Representing	In-Person / Virtual
Voting Members	Kevin Stack	Berrien County Road Department	Virtual
	Dan Faulkner	Village of Three Oaks	In Person
	Joe Bellina	Cass County Road Commission	Virtual
	Barry Anttila	Van Buren County Road Commission	In Person
	Steve Rogusta	Village of Breedsville	In Person
	Lauri Schlipp	Van Buren Public Transit	VIRTUAL
Others Present	Jeff Wingard	Fleis Vandenbrink for the Village of Bloomingdale	Virtual
	Tony McGhee	Abonmarche	Virtual
	Josh Grab	MDOT, RTF Program Manger	In Person
	Dan Bishop	Van Buren County Road Commission	In Person
Staff	Kim Gallagher	Southwest Michigan Planning Commission	In Person
	Brandon Kovnat	Southwest Michigan Planning Commission	In Person

### 1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Joe Bellina Called the Meeting to order at 1:30 PM

Gallagher announced that there were several changes to the RTF voting board since the last region 4 RTF meeting:

- Dan Faulkner replaced Bob Getz as the City/Village representative for Berrien County
- Bob Durm replaced Evan Smith as the public transit representative for Cass County
- Steve Rogusta replaced Matt newton as the City/Village representative for Van Buren County
- Laurie Schlipp replaced Tony Dacoba as the public transit representative for Van Buren County

### 2. Changes or Additions to the Agenda

None

### 3. Approval of Minutes of the May 27, 2021 Meeting

**Motion** to approve the minutes from the May 27, 2021 Region 4 Rural Task Force meeting. Made by Dan Falkner and seconded by Steve Rogusta. **Motion approved.**

### 4. Region Four RTF Bylaws

Kovnat gave an overview of the bylaw change history. The currently approved bylaws are very old and do not reflect the MDOT statewide RTF guidance. A rewrite of the bylaws was undertaken in December 2020, to incorporate the latest state RTF guidance and to make the bylaws easier to comprehend. Comments on the draft bylaws were discussed at the May 27, 2021 Region 4 RTF meeting. the current draft that is included in the meeting packet all of the comments that were made.

**Motion** to approve the draft bylaws for the Region 4 Rural Task Force, as presented. Made by Barry Anttila, and seconded by Steve Rogusta. **Motion approved.**

5. FY 2022 funding updates and project changes

Gallagher presented the carryover balance for the Region 4 RTF. The carryover represents unspent Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds from previous years. It can be used for cost increases above a project's estimated/programmed cost; the carryover cannot be included when programming new projects. Current Region 4 rules are that projects are capped at 10% above the programmed amount. If all projects came in 10% over, it would take 2.5 years to spend down the current carryover balance. Grab added that in 2021 almost all projects across the state came in under budget. There was discussion that costs were rising in 2022 due to inflation, especially with the rising cost of materials. There was an agreement to leave the 10% cap in place and revisit the cap in FY 2023.

Gallagher discussed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). The act significantly increases the STBG funding. MDOT has already announced what the increase will be for the RTF in FY 2022 but has not yet announced the new funding estimates for 2023-2026. Proposals to utilize the additional FY 2022 funding were presented for each county (*see packet for details*). Each county RTF had already voted to approve the project changes at a County RTF meeting.

**Motion** to approve the project changes to FY 2022 project as presented. Made by Dan Faulkner and seconded by Barry Anttila. **Motion approved.**

6. Notice by Cass County of intention to sell FY 2022 federal aid funds

The Cass County Road Commission announced that they have an agreement to sell 100% of their federal aid funds to Macomb County. The Cass County Road Commission will get 0.75 for each dollar of federal aid funds sold, with this funding being considered non-federal. This allows them to avoid certain requirements such as going through the MDOT review process & bidding projects to a contractor. They are still required to work on the same projects as approved by the RTF. Joe Bellina said that since the Cass County Road Commission owns its own asphalt plant it can construct projects cheaper than if it had to use a private construction contractor.

7. 2024-2026 Project approvals

Projects for 2024-2026 were all approved at the county RTF meetings before the Region 4 RTF meeting. There were no additional updates beyond what was in the packet.

**Motion** to approve adding the 2024, 2025, and 2026 projects to the Region 4 Rural Task Force Transportation Improvement Program. Made by Steve Rogusta and seconded by Dan Faulkner. **Motion approved.**

8. Changes to the All-Season Network

Currently, Pine Lake Road is an all-season road from M-60 to Conrad Rd. All-season roads should connect to another all-season road or an MDOT trunkline. Therefore, it makes sense for Pine Lake to be designated all season between M-60 and M-62.

**Motion** to designate Pine Lake Street from Conrad to M-62 as all-season. Made by Dan Faulkner and seconded by Barry Anttila. **Motion approved.**

9. Public Comment or Privilege of the Floor

Grab gave a general update on the RTF program.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:25 pm.

*Minutes compiled by Brandon Kovnat, SWMPC associate planner.*