

TWIN CITIES AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Technical Advisory Committee

Minutes

June 20, 2016

9:00 A.M.

Kinexus, Anchor Rooms A&B

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| TAC MEMBERS PRESENT: | Brian Berndt, Berrien County Road Commission Chris Cook, City of Benton Harbor Joanne Johnson, Disability Network Southwest Michigan John Olson, Merritt Engineering Inc (Village of Shoreham, Stevensville, Royalton Township) Jonathan Fisk, St. Joseph Charter Township Planning Commission Jonathon Smith, MDOT Coloma Office Tim Zebell, City of St. Joseph Ron Griffin, St. Joseph Charter Township Terrie Smith, Lincoln Charter Township |
| TAC MEMBERS ABSENT: | Vince Desjardins, Southwest Michigan Regional Airport Representative, Sodus Township Fred Featherly, MDOT Passenger Division (ex officio) Stewart McKenzie, Federal Transit Administration (ex officio) Andrea Dewey, Federal Highway Administration (ex officio) Representative, Cornerstone Alliance Bill Purvis, Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority Donna Wittl, MDOT Statewide Urban Travel Analysis (ex officio) Jason Latham, MDOT Southwest Region Calli Berg, Benton Charter Township John Lanum, MDOT Statewide Planning Jim Sturdevant, MDOT Statewide Planning Evan Smith, Berrien County Community Development Department Gloria Payne, Lake Charter Township Cathy Tilley, Cornerstone Alliance Juan Ganum, City of Bridgman |
| SWMPC STAFF PRESENT: | Kim Gallagher Brandon Kovnat Jerrid Burdue |
| OTHERS PRESENT: | Dick Stauffer, Lincoln Charter Township |

1. CALL TO ORDER

Brian Berndt called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. and led the group in introductions.

2. CHANGES TO THE POSTED AGENDA

None

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

4. MINUTES:

- A motion was made by Chris Cook with support by Tim Zebell to approve the minutes of the May 16, 2016 TAC meeting as presented. **Motion passed.**

5. STAFF REPORT

None

6. PUBLIC TRANSIT

- **SWMPC Transit Updates**

Selection Committee interviewed 2 of the 3 consultants that submitted bids. A decision was made by using a weighted matrix though Gallagher did not mention the firm chosen due this being a public meeting and paperwork still being processed. The selection committee was very happy with the firm and the modeling they will be providing. A key selling point is their use of AirSage, a technology that uses cell phone data to track commutes. There will also be an online public tool that will allow individuals to “test” different transit options while viewing the transit budget. The contract is going to MDOT for approval. More information to come at the next meeting.

- **TCATA Updates**

There was an issue with FTA switching systems dealing with funding according to Gallagher. Due to this, TCATA was unable to receive their money from FY15 and must take out a bank loan in order to fund service until funding is resolved with FTA. Cook asked if TCATA will be able to repay it, to which Gallagher said yes.

7. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Walk and Roll Report**

Has not met, waiting to hear if Napier Corridor grant will be granted. Should have heard by end of May, still waiting for conformation.

8. COMMUNITY LAND USE AND ZONING UPDATES

Special Use permit approved for skating rink at corner of Cleveland and Glenlord.

Discussion over the development on the corner of Hawthorn and Lakeshore Drive with the possibilities of changing a road into a one-way. This was led by Zebell and Olson.

9. Agency Project Status Reports

Burdue told the committee that Michigan has around \$40 million left in 2016 funds statewide. 3 of the 5 local agency projects have already been obligated; everything is looking good financially. Burdue discussed the project update sheets and asked for comment from members. Cook mentioned that he was unable to change the local amount on the sheet. Gallagher stated changed information should be listed in the comments.

Benton Harbor

Chris Cook: Change in cost of local funding for paving markings, now \$56,000 local. With rate of progress, things may get pushed into the Spring of 2017 for suitable weather. Gallagher stated that it is great to have small projects like this on the illustrative list for when other projects come in under cost. The traffic signal is moving forward at Pipestone and Wall Street with issues worked out with Cornerstone Alliance.

St. Joseph

Tim Zebell: Lakeview Avenue letting has occurred. Will be working with Peter's Construction out of Kalamazoo.

Berrien County Road Commission

Brian Berndt: Shawnee Road project to start July 11th.

MDOT

Jonathon Smith: Both projects are on-going. The joint re-sealing on M-63 needs to work around the rain. I-94 WB, problems are being addressed as they arise.

10. OLD BUSINESS

None

11. NEW BUSINESS

- **2017-2020 TIP**

Brandon Kovnat described the components of the TIP. Talked about changes in the TIP process since the 2014-2017 TIP, which include the project prioritization methodology, Complete Streets policy, and the 94 interchange project. Described the process of local agencies suggesting projects, project review and voting by the committees explained the role of the Financial section and the importance of demonstrating financial conformity. He discussed the performance measures. Currently US DOT is creating rules some of which are in the comment phase. It will be at least 18 months after the public comment phase before rules are finalized. TwinCATS is within attainment for Air Quality. We are in the maintenance phase which means we were once non in attainment and still qualify for CMAQ funding. Joanne Johnson asked about ozone action days in reference to air quality measurements. Kovnat said that air quality measures are based on the average, not the highs such as ozone action days.

Berndt asked about CMAQ project updates. Gallagher stated that she has been unable to get in contact with anyone from that office so there are no updates for 2017 yet.

Described that Environmental Justice (EJ) is the process of addressing negative impacts of transportation on low income and minority populations. Showed the map of EJ locations which are places with higher minority or poverty than the state average. He then brought up a potential issue with Environmental Justice. All of the exemptions to the complete streets policy occurred within an EJ areas. This is mostly an issue with Napier Avenue which is within a low income and high minority area and has need for pedestrian infrastructure. Not providing the necessary improvement could be construed as a violation of environmental justice.

The results from Public participation were discussed. These include articles, and survey results about Napier Avenue. Gallagher read an email she received Sunday concerning the Napier projects. This comment will be added to the TIP. Terrie Smith asked if this comment was something she could show/ if Lincoln Township had access to it. Gallagher said it will be included in the TIP for everyone to read.

Johnson asked if the Napier Corridor study will be good enough to address the Napier issue. Gallagher stated that it is up to Policy to vote on the TIP based on what they feel is the correct action for the Napier projects. After that, the SWMPC Board must approve it. It is unlikely that Federal Highway will kick it back due to public comment on Napier as they are most concerned with the financial component of the TIP and matching money.

Zebell asked if the TIP could be adjusted with the findings of the Napier Study. Gallagher said that the STP funding is locked in and that there is little chance of additional money coming in through that source. It is possible to receive TAP funding for additional work due to the findings. Safe Route to School is another potential funding source.

Zebell made a motion to approve the 2017-2020 TwinCATS TIP with Terrie Smith providing support. **Motion Passed.**

- **State and Federal Updates**

None

- **Combining TAC and Policy Meetings**

Kovnat mentioned that NATS voted last month to combine the TAC and Policy meetings for their June meeting. Gallagher stated that it is legal and makes sense for small MPOs. Stauffer said that he supported it as the Chairman of the Policy Committee. Griffin added that combining the meets could cut costs to those that are in attendance for both meetings. Berndt asked how many people serve on both committees; Gallagher said not as many as NATS, but a handful. Zebell expressed concern over the possibility that meetings could get longer if they are combined (for those not attending both currently). SWMPC staff do not think that combining would add much time, maybe 20-30 minutes. Johnson did not believe it would add much time. Cook said that in the past Policy did not want to hear all the technical things, but has found their attitude shifting to supporting it now. There were three possibilities discussed: try it out next meeting, wait to see how it works for NATS, or continue with the current setup.

Terrie Smith made a motion to combine TAC and Policy next meeting (July) with the time being approved by Policy. Olson provided support. **Motion Passed.**

12. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

None

13. ADJOURNMENT at 9:56 A.M.

Next meeting is July 18, 2016 at Kinexus/Michigan Works! Anchor Rooms A+B. Time to be decided at Policy meeting.

Compiled by: Jerrid Burdue, SWMPC Planning Intern, 2016.