



## MINUTES OF THE ABILENE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD

August 21, 2018

The Abilene MPO Transportation Policy Board met at 1:30 p.m., Tuesday, August 21, 2018, in the City Council Chambers, Abilene City Hall, 555 Walnut Street, Abilene, Texas.

### **Members Present:**

Judge Downing Bolls, Taylor County (Policy Board Vice-Chairman)  
Mr. Carl Johnson, P.E., TxDOT Abilene District Engineer  
Councilman Shane Price, City of Abilene (Policy Board Chairman)  
Judge Dale Spurgin, Jones County  
Mayor Anthony Williams, City of Abilene

### **Staff of Member Agencies in Attendance:**

Mr. Ken Flynn, City of Abilene, Interim Director of Planning and Development Services  
Mr. Michael Haithcock, TxDOT Abilene District TP&D Director  
Mr. Cliff Hallford, TxDOT, Advanced Planning Manager  
Mr. Robert Hanna, City Manager, City of Abilene  
Mr. Greg McCaffrey, City of Abilene Public Works Director  
Mr. Casey McGee, TxDOT Abilene Area Engineer  
Ms. Kelley Messer, City of Abilene First Assistant City Attorney  
Mr. Michael Rice, City of Abilene Asst. City Manager  
Ms. Lauren Stevens, Asst General Manager CityLink  
Mr. Larry Wright, City of Abilene City Engineer  
Ms. Jill D'Entremont, City of Abilene Interactive Media Specialist, Webmaster

### **Others Present:**

Mr. Bruce Kreitler  
Mr. James Condry

### **MPO Staff in Attendance:**

Ms. E'Lisa Smetana, Abilene MPO Executive Director  
Mr. Ed McRoy, Abilene MPO Transportation Planner II

#### **1. Call to Order.**

Vice-Chairman Bolls (acting as the Chair), asked for a motion to call the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. Mr. Johnson made such **motion** with a **second** by Judge Spurgin. *Motion carried (5-0).*

Following the vote he noted that public comment could be taken on any item appearing on the agenda during the discussion of that item.

#### **2. Presentations, Recognitions, Proclamations, and Announcements:**

Judge Bolls welcomed Councilman Shane Price to the Policy Board as a new member.

Judge Bolls took the opportunity to posthumously honor and recognize Mr. Michael Vandervoort for his numerous efforts as a volunteer and for his advocacy for people with disabilities. A moment of silence was observed.

Judge Bolls presented a certificate of appreciation to Mr. Bruce Kreitler honoring his recent service to the MPO Policy Board as a board member and chairperson.

**3. Consideration and possible action on the minutes of the June 19, 2018 meeting.**

Judge Bolls noted that he had examined the proposed minutes and found them to be a true and accurate reflection of what transpired at the meeting. Judge Spurgin made a **motion** to approve the minutes as presented, with a **second** by Mr. Johnson. *Motion carried (5-0).*

**4. Election of a Chairman and possible Vice-Chairman of the Policy Board.**

Judge Bolls opened the floor to nominations. Mayor Williams **nominated** Councilman Shane Price for the Chair position. Councilman Price **seconded** this. *With no further nominations, Councilman Price was elected (5-0.)*

Ms. Smetana informed the Board that the option for a Vice-Chair election had been placed on the agenda just in case Judge Bolls had been elected chair. Since that did not happen there is no need to select a Vice-Chair.

*Councilman Price assumes the Chair.*

**5. Discussion and any action on reorganization of the MPO within the City's Structure.**

Chairman Price invited Mr. Robert Hanna (City Manager, City of Abilene), to address the Board on this item. Mr. Hanna stated that the MPO staff had historically been assigned to work within and receive its administrative support through the City's Planning and Development Services Department. He stated he wishes to move this to the City's Public Works Department effective October 1<sup>st</sup> with the City's new budget. He stated that Public Works deals heavily with the City's transportation network so he believes this will be a better fit. He then asked if the Board had any questions.

Judge Spurgin stated he viewed the MPO as an independent entity which contracts with the City as its fiscal agent. He asked for clarification on the structure of the relationship between the MPO and the City of Abilene and what was envisioned with this change. Mr. Hanna responded by stating:

“Nothing is changing. The structure, the relationship, how we are set up from a governmental standpoint, from the inter-local agreements we have in place, nothing changes. The only thing {that} changes is that from an accounting and budget standpoint for the City of Abilene rather than seeing some of these expenses in the Planning Department, they will be in the Public Works Department. From a payroll approval standpoint, from our {sic} just documentation standpoint they will be in the Public Works Department vs. the Planning Department. The day-to-day operations of the MPO, the City's involvement and partnership with the MPO, from that standpoint, none of that changes. The City's authority over the MPO doesn't change at all. The MPO is a standalone independent body from the City. This doesn't affect that in any way.”

Judge Spurgin asked for clarification about the need for approvals by the City regarding expenditures. Mr. Hanna responded that the need for approval by the City depends on what is being done. Expenditures involving City funds of over \$50,000 require approval by the City Council. He also noted that actions involving advanced funding with TxDOT go to the City Council. He finally noted that all procurements would need to follow State standards. When asked, Ms. Messer shared that they have now determined that City Council approval is not required on expenditures which involve only MPO funds.

Judge Bolls stated he was curious at first about the change. He noted some initial concern because the MPO is a planning organization. He indicated satisfaction that no changes are propose to the Board which would change the balance of power or representation.

Chairman Price asked if there were any additional questions. With no further questions and no action required, the chairman moved to the next agenda topic.

*(No vote taken or action required).*

**6. Discussion and review of transportation projects.**

**TxDOT** – **Mr. Casey McGee** updated the Board on the following projects:

**Ambler** – Mill work in process. Seal coating is expected to begin next week. Expected completion is in September. **Loop 322 Ramp Relocation** – This project is almost complete. Signal upgrades are still in progress. The project should be completed by the middle of September 2018. **Winters Freeway** – Milling is complete. Hotmix on main lanes will begin soon. Bridge rail upgrades are finishing up. Expected completion is the fall of 2018. **US 83/84 & Remington/Clark Overpass** – The contract has been let and the project is expected to begin soon. **S 1<sup>st</sup> St.** - This is a mill and fill project with some signal upgrades, guardrail and other safety enhancements. This project is expected to begin in September of 2018. Chairman Price asked if audible signals are to be used – Mr. McGee later responded that no audible signals are included in this project.

**City of Abilene** - **Mr. Larry Wright** briefed the Board on the following projects:

**Willis St, Pioneer St and Old Anson Rd** – Projects are complete. **TSTC/Airport/Industrial Park Road** - Construction is complete. Action is pending at the City Council to name the new road and to set it as a one-way street. **SODA Phase II, SODA Ph. II & CBD West** - Contractors for these three projects have been relocating resources to support other construction efforts in our area. A new elementary school in Wylie ISD which is set to open soon is an example of one such situation. This has resulted in some project delays.

**CityLink** - **Ms. Lauren Stevens** reported that the City Council recently approved the purchase of three para-transit vans. The new vans will have the capacity to hold six wheelchairs. These vans are expected to be delivered in March of 2019. She informed the Board Citylink will be conducting a route study in September to calibrate times and routes for the newly approved fixed bus routes.

**7. Discussion and review of reports:**

• **Financial Status**

Ms. Smetana reported that the current total authorization is \$440,369.76 with expenditures being \$158,720.24 for a remaining balance of \$281,649.52. Billings for May and June were included in the packet.

• **Operation Report**

Ms. Smetana reported that a full Operations Report is included in the packet. She noted that staff has been working on the Travel Demand Model during this time and she expects more will be required on this in the next few months.

• **Director's Report**

Work continues on the Travel Demand Model. The MPO has completed work on the 2015 and 2020 networks and will now be working on the 2045 network. Work on demographics will begin soon. TxDOT will be assisting the MPO on demographics and a scope of services is now under initial review for this. She reported the MPO will need to complete some work on newly adopted

performance measures by December. Updates on the TIP, MTP and ten-year plan are expected in the coming months and background work for the FYs 2020 – 2045 MTP will begin this month. She reported that a subcommittee is working on a project selection process update.

**8. Opportunity for members of the Public to make comments on MPO issues.**

None at this time.

**9. Opportunity for Board Members, Technical Advisory Committee Members, or MPO Staff to recommend topics for future discussion or action.**

Ms. Smetana informed the Board they can expect to see items on future agendas concerning performance measures, the project selection process, and the travel demand model.

**10. Discussion and Possible Action related to the Annual Performance Evaluation of the Executive Director.**

Chairman Price recessed the Policy Board into Executive Session at 2:10 p.m. pursuant to the Open Meetings Act, with the following issues discussed during the closed session.

551.074 (Personnel Matters) Performance Evaluation of the Executive Director.

The meeting reconvened to Open Session at 3:12 p.m. Chairman Price reported no votes or actions were taken in Executive Session.

*(No vote taken or action required).*

**11. Adjournment**

Judge Bolts made a motion to adjourn with a second from Mayor Williams. *Motion carried (5-0)*  
*Meeting adjourned at 3:13 p.m.*