



**MINUTES OF THE ABILENE
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD**
February 18, 2020

The Abilene MPO Transportation Policy Board met at 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, February 18, 2020, in the City Council Chambers, Abilene City Hall, 555 Walnut Street, Abilene, Texas.

Members Present:

Councilman Shane Price, City of Abilene (*Policy Board Chairman*)
Judge Dale Spurgin, Jones County
Mayor Anthony Williams, City of Abilene

Members Absent

Judge Downing Bolls, Taylor County (*Policy Board Vice-Chairman*)
Mr. Carl Johnson, P.E., TxDOT Abilene District Engineer

Staff of Member Agencies in Attendance:

Mary Cooksey, 211 Texas A Call for Help Director
Mr. Michael Haithcock, P.E. TxDOT Abilene District TP&D Director
Mr. Cliff Hallford, PMP, TxDOT, Advanced Planning Manager
Mr. Max Johnson, City of Abilene Assistant Public Works Director
Mr. Paul Norman, P.E., TxDOT, Abilene Area Engineer
Ms. Kelley Messer, City of Abilene First Assistant City Attorney
Mr. Charlie Thomas, P.E., City of Abilene Interim City Engineer
Mr. Michael Rice, P.E. City of Abilene Assistant City Manager
Ms. Lauren Stevens, CityLink, Asst. General Manager
Mr. Mike Warrix, AICP, City of Abilene Director of Planning and Development Services
Ms. Nellie Doneva, City of Abilene Videographer

MPO Staff in Attendance:

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

Others in Attendance:

Mr. James Condry, Citizen

1. Call to Order.

Chairman Price called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. He announced that public comment could be taken on any item appearing on the agenda during the discussion of that item and added that explicit public hearings would be called on Items 3 and 4.

2. Consideration and Action on the minutes of the December 17, 2019 meeting.

Chairman Price noted three corrections or changes to the draft minutes as follows:

- 1) In recognition of his professional accomplishments, PMP should be added following Mr. Cliff Hallford’s name for his Project Management Professional designation.
- 2) On Page 3, Item Number 5, in the City of Abilene section, the acronym “CDB” should be corrected to “CBD” for Central Business District.
- 3) In this same section the term “N 6th from N 1st to S 14th” should be changed to “N. 6th St.\Leggett

Dr. from N. 1st St. to Grape St.”

Mayor Williams made a **motion** to approve the December 17, 2019 minutes as corrected with a **second** by Judge Spurgin. *Motion carried (3-0).*

3. Receive a Report, Hold a Discussion and a Public Hearing, and Take Action on the DRAFT amendment to the FYs 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Ms. Smetana presented the item noting that a 10-day public comment period will run from February 15, 2020 until 5:00 pm on March 2nd. Additionally, she noted there will be two opportunities for public participation: at the February Policy Board meeting and at a public meeting to be held on February 20th from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm in the MPO Offices.

In addition to minor administrative, editorial, and record keeping matters such as page numbers, dates, and similar elements, Ms. Smetana pointed out that a map of highway projects has now been added at the request of the Technical Advisory Committee. Changes have been identified by using a red font and yellow highlighting. Highlighting is primarily used where the information provided is still pending official action such as the date of a vote by the Board. She specifically called attention to changes in highway and transit projects. She noted that a project at the intersection of Antilley Road and FM 89 has been removed from the FYs 2019-2022 TIP and placed in the FYs 2021-2024 TIP. In the list of transit projects, she called attention to the addition of a new project in FY 2021 using 5339 funding. Finally, Ms. Smetana reported that the proposed amendment was recommended for approval by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and staff is requesting approval of the Draft document.

Chairman Price opened a Public Hearing and invited anyone present to come forward to speak on this matter. After scanning the room, waiting for a response and seeing no one indicating an interest in speaking he closed the Public Hearing.

Mayor Williams made a **motion** to approve the Draft FYs 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) amendment as presented, with a **second** by Judge Spurgin. *Motion carried (3-0).*

4. Receive a Report, Hold a Discussion and a Public Hearing, and Take Action on the DRAFT FYs 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Ms. Smetana presented the item explaining that this is a new TIP that will begin in October replacing the current TIP. She reported that this item is due on June 22, 2020. There is a 10 day public comment period that will run from February 15, 2020 until 5:00 pm on March 2nd. There will be two opportunities for public participation: at the February Policy Board meeting, and at a public meeting to be held on February 20 from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm in the MPO Offices. Comments received at these meetings or during the comment period will be addressed in the final document.

Ms. Smetana noted that a number of highway projects from the FYs 2019-2022 TIP are continued and shown in the FYs 2021-2024 TIP. She pointed out that the two IH-20 projects have State-wide Development Authority funds and are not utilizing MPO Category 2 funding. She informed the Board that they have been included in the TIP because they are regionally significant projects. A map of Highway Projects has been included. For Transit projects, she noted that FY 2021 and FY 2022 have been used to estimate potential activities in FY 2023 and FY 2024. Once funding for these future years is clearer, these will be updated or amended as needed.

In addition to project information, the Draft document includes a number of places where information is highlighted in yellow indicating some future action is needed before this information can be finalized. Also, all of the performance measures that have been approved by the Policy Board have

been included in the document. Finally, Ms. Smetana stated the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) has recommended approval of the document.

Chairman Price observed that since the transit projects in FYs 2023/2024 have been created using a cut and paste method it appears that the apportionment years have also been copied. He asked if these need to be changed. Ms. Smetana confirmed changes may be needed but she will need to coordinate with [CitylinkCityLink](#) to establish the correct information.

Chairman Price opened a Public Hearing and invited anyone present to come forward to speak on this matter. After scanning the room, waiting for a response and seeing no one indicating an interest in speaking he closed the Public Hearing.

Judge Spurgin made a **motion** to approve the DRAFT FYs 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program authorizing corrections discussed regarding transit project apportionment years in FYs 2023/2024 with a **second** by Mayor Williams. *Motion carried (3-0).*

5. Receive a Report, Hold a Discussion, and Take Action on a resolution for the FY 2020 Safety Performance Measure (PM1).

Mr. McRoy presented the item noting that this is an annual requirement that comes from the FAST Act. He stated that the intent is for States and MPO's to use various performance measures when evaluating projects in their selection process in order to achieve improvements. State departments of transportation (DOT) first set state-wide performance targets for each measure. Following this, MPOs must then make a choice to set their own targets or agree to support the targets established by the State. He noted that in the PM1 category five specific targets are established involving total fatalities, total serious injuries and the rates of these per 100 million miles of vehicle travel. The targets established represent a five-year average with 3 years of real data from 2016, 2017 and 2018 and projected data for 2019 and 2020. He stated that most MPO's in Texas have chosen to adopt the State targets and that the State's strategic goal is to reduce the rate of growth in fatalities and serious injuries by 2% by 2022.

Mayor Williams made a **motion** to approve the resolution supporting the State PM1 Safety Performance Measure Targets with a **second** by Judge Spurgin. *Motion carried (3-0).*

6. Hold a Discussion on 2020 meeting dates.

Ms. Smetana presented this item noting the Policy Board typically meets on the 3rd Tuesday of every other month beginning in February. Following this schedule the proposed meeting dates would be February 18, April 21, June 16, August 18, October 20, and December 15. She pointed out that Mr. Johnson had indicated in conversations with her he anticipated conflicts with the proposed dates on June 16 and August 18. Ms. Smetana also said she had talked with the staff for Judge Bolls and they reported the normal schedule typically works for him unless there are Monday holidays which then push some of his obligations to Tuesdays.

Ms. Smetana shared some alternative dates in April and June suggested to her by Mr. Johnson. She then indicated she would like as a minimum to have a schedule set for April and June so she can book the Council Chamber.

After discussions among the Board members, Chairman Price instructed Ms. Smetana to set April 21 for the next meeting and June 24 for the meeting following that.

Discussion only – No vote taken.

7. Discussion and any Action on MPO staffing.

Ms. Smetana presented this item. She reported that in 2010 the Texas Transportation Institute reviewed the Abilene MPO and determined that 3 employees are needed based on the workload and funding. She noted that the third person has been vacant since April 2016. Instead of an MPO Technician, Ms. Smetana is proposing adding a part-time administrative assistant of up to 20 hours per week with flexible hours. She provided the Board with a list of potential duties for this position and noted that she had discussed this with City officials including Mr. McCaffery, Director of Public Works.

When asked by Chairman Price, Ms. Smetana noted the office currently has a backlog of filing and indicated she anticipates additional work load will be generated once the new Travel Demand Model is in operation. In addition to this, she noted a pending audit from the Federal Highway Administration was likely to entail quite a bit of new work. She also said the need to update performance measures and keep the Travel Demand Model up to date will add additional work load.

Ms. Messer advised that a vote is not required on this item. She indicated direction from the board is adequate.

Judge Spurgin, Mayor Williams, and Chairman Price all indicated support for the proposal during their discussion. Chairman Price stated, “The three of us are supportive.” Ms. Smetana indicated she would move forward on this matter. *Discussion only – No vote taken.*

8. Discussion and review of transportation projects.

(By TxDOT Staff, City Staff, CityLink Staff)

TxDOT - Mr. Paul Norman provided a report on the following projects:

S 1st St/East Hwy 80 - Paving has been completed. Some clerical items remain. US 83/84 from FM 707 to the US 83/84 split - Project includes a grade separation. Current activity includes construction on frontage roads and reconstruction of the intersection with Clark and Remington Roads. Completion is expected in 2021. US 83 Frontage Roads from US 277 to Waldrop – Project includes a mill and fill with seal coat and spot repairs. Project work will be done at night. Work will begin in March. SH 351 Sidewalk from Treadaway to IH-20 - Project will construct sidewalks, install pedestrian signals and make ADA improvements. Project is expected to begin construction in the spring perhaps by March. Highway 83/84 lighting from N. 10th Street to IH-20 – This project has experienced a delay for materials. Expected start is in summer 2020.

City of Abilene - Mr. Charlie Thomas briefed the Board on the following projects:

CBD Concrete Street Repairs – The notice to proceed is anticipated to be issued shortly. S. Willis St. from S. 32nd St. to S. 14th St. - Bids were received this morning. N. 6th St.\Leggett Dr. from N. 1st St. to Grape St. Bids were received last week. Butternut St. from S. 1st St. to Treadaway - Bids are expected March 3rd. T&P Lane from ES 11th St. to E. Hwy 80 - Bids are expected Tuesday February 25th. City Council award is anticipated the same month. Sayles Blvd. - Bids and letting are anticipated in May 2020. Griffith Rd. reconstruction from EN 10th to Marathon - Bids are anticipated in April. Work Zone Area S15 Resurfacing - Bids have been received. Work Zone S6 & S24 Micro-Surfacing Contract award is expected next month. John Knox St. – Project funded by DCOA. Expected to bid

on March 17th. Village Dr. Project funded by DCOA. Bids expected on March 17th. Curry, Cedar Run, Rolling Green & Turner - Projects funded by DCOA. – Bids are expected in April.

CityLink - Ms. Lauren Stevens briefed the Board on the following items:

GTFS Feed - CityLink has finished work that allows Google Maps to properly display bus stop locations and departure times. The next step will be to implement GPS tracking to provide real time bus arrival. TXDOT Fleet Replacement Grant - CityLink has submitted an application for funds to replace a number of cutaway busses for paratransit services. TXDOT Planning Grant - CityLink has applied for funds in association with planning for a multi-modal facility. 5339(c) Low/No Emission Grant – CityLink with Proterra (a manufacturer), has applied for a grant to purchase up to four large electric buses to replace diesel powered buses in the fleet.

Chairman Price asked when they might be able to have the bus arrival service in operation with Google Maps. Ms. Stevens said they are looking at September as a potential time.

Judge Spurgin asked about the multi-modal facility grant. He indicated that Double Mountain Coach is having compliance issues because rides into Abilene are being considered out of area trips. He indicated they are in need of an agreement to resolve this since most of their trips are to Abilene for medical or shopping trips. He wants to explore options to avoid compliance issues. Ms. Cooksey (211 Texas A Call for Help), addressed the board indicating that they had recently attempted to obtain authorization for the use of RCTP planning funds for a multi-modal facility. TxDOT denied this request. She then described a web site known as “wctxrides.com” being developed to provide information and service to rural providers. Eventually they hope to allow riders to be able to book or at least see all the costs of a rural trip using the site.

9. Discussion and review of reports:

- **Financial Status**

Ms. Smetana said a financial summary is included in the board packet. She noted that reports now include the new fiscal year information. She said PL 112 consolidated funds of \$207,669.45 are available. Expenditures in October through December totaled \$109,142.76 leaving a balance of \$98,526.69. She noted that this does not include carryover funds. These funds would be added once all of the APER reports across the State have been processed. The three billing summaries were included in the packet materials.

- **Operation Report**

Tasks, Training Sessions, Meetings

The Operation Report is included in the packet. The MPO staff has been primarily working on the FYs 2020-2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), the Travel Demand Model (TDM), a FYs 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) amendment, and a new FYs 2021-2024 TIP.

- **Director's Report**

Future Work Tasks

MPO Boundary Expansion

With the pending census Ms. Smetana indicated potential boundary expansions or adjustments are being looked at for the MPO Planning Area. She said we have been looking at growth in the region. She noted that the pending Travel Demand Model has been expanded to capture traffic flow outside our current boundary. She reported that the Technical Advisory Committee has formed a sub-committee to look into this. They will forward a recommendation in the future. If there is a desire to expand boundaries, this would be forwarded to the Governor who has

delegated his authority on this matter to the Texas Transportation Commission. In addition to this, she reported work is proceeding on a new lease for the MPO offices. Finally, the staff is working on coordination for a pending FHWA audit.

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

None.

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

Chairman Price made mention of Judge Spurgin's statements regarding Double Mountain Coach needs as discussed in Agenda Item #8.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Abilene Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Policy Board reserves the right to adjourn into executive session at any time during the course of this meeting to discuss any item on the agenda as authorized by Texas Government Code Sections: 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney), 551.072 (Deliberations about real property) 551.073 (Deliberations about gifts and donations), 551.074 (Personnel matters), and 551.076 (Deliberations about security devices). After discussion in executive session, any action or vote will be taken in public.

12. 551.072 (*Deliberations about real property*) Discussion and any action on the lease of the MPO's office space.

Chairman Price recessed the Policy Board into Executive Session at 2:21p.m. pursuant to the Open Meetings Act, with the following issues discussed during the closed session: §551.072 (Deliberations about real property) Discussion and any action on the lease of the MPO's office space. The meeting reconvened to open session at 2:55 p.m. *Chairman Price reported that no votes or actions were taken in Executive Session.*

Ms. Smetana reported the MPO's current lease expired in December and we are now operating on a month-to-month basis. The MPO staff has been looking into a number of potential lease spaces including a space at 209 S. Danville Dr. (Titan Towers) which she stated she wishes to pursue. Noting the lease still has a number of details to be worked out, Chairman Price asked for a motion to authorize the Executive Director to negotiate and finalize such a lease with approval of the Legal Department.

Judge Spurgin made a **motion** to authorize Executive Director action as specified above with a **second** by Mayor Williams. *Motion carried (3-0).*

13. Adjournment.

Mayor Williams made a **motion** to adjourn with a **second** by Judge Spurgin. *Motion carried (3-0). Meeting adjourned at 2:57 p.m.*