



MINUTES OF THE ABILENE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD

February 20, 2018

The Abilene MPO Transportation Policy Board met at 1:30 p.m., Tuesday, February 20, 2018, in the City Council Chambers, Abilene City Hall, 555 Walnut Street, Abilene, Texas.

Members Present:

Councilman Bruce Kreitler, City of Abilene and Policy Board Chairman
Judge Downing Bolls, Taylor County and Policy Board Vice-Chairman
Mr. Carl Johnson, P.E., TxDOT Abilene District Engineer
Mayor Anthony Williams, City of Abilene

Members Absent:

Judge Dale Spurgin, Jones County

Staff of Member Agencies in Attendance:

Mr. Casey McGee, TxDOT Abilene Area Engineer
Mr. Michael Haithcock, TxDOT Abilene District TP&D Director
Mr. Cliff Hallford, TxDOT Project Controller II
Ms. Kelley Messer, City of Abilene First Assistant City Attorney
Mr. Michael Rice, City of Abilene Public Works Director
Mr. Larry Wright, City of Abilene City Engineer
Lee Theobald TxDOT TP&P, Planner
Gregory Lancaster, TxDOT TP&P

MPO Staff in Attendance:

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

1. Call to Order.

Chairman Kreitler called the meeting of the Abilene MPO Policy Board to order at 1:30 p.m. noting the presence of a quorum. Chairman Kreitler requested that any member of the public who desired to comment on any item appearing on the agenda identify themselves and the item or items they wished to address. He noted that a public hearing would be called on any such item identified. *Hearing none he proceeded with the meeting.*

2. Consideration and possible action on the minutes of the December 19, 2017 meeting.

Judge Bolls made a **motion** to approve the minutes as presented, with a **second** by Mayor Williams. *Motion carried (4-0).*

3. Presentation and discussion with TxDOT Transportation Planning and Programming (TPP) on Travel Demand Models.

Mr. Greg Lancaster provided the Board with a brief discussion on the uses, process, components and timelines associated with the development and use of a Travel Demand Model. Mr. Lancaster then described essential data elements needed to develop a useful model, data sources, and data collection methods. Mr. Johnson asked about the status of the pending Abilene Model. Mr. Lancaster noted that since the 2015 network has been established demographics are now needed for the Abilene project to

proceed. *Discussion only - no action taken.*

4. Discussion and possible action on a Travel Demand Model Request for proposals.

Mr. Smetana briefed the Board on recent actions related to a Request for Proposals (RFP) authorized by the Policy Board on October 17, 2017. She noted that the RFP for demographic consultation issued on January 19, 2018 closed on February 6, 2018 with three proposals being received from potential providers. She then informed the Board that on January 30th 2018 the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) authorized the use of a subcommittee to evaluate the proposals. That subcommittee met on February 16, 2018 to discuss and evaluate the three proposals. She noted that three committee members and Mr. McRoy had assisted in the evaluations.

Ms. Smetana described the tasks to be completed by the consultants and the criteria that were used to evaluate proposals. She identified the responders as Alliance Transportation Group, Walter P Moore with Cambridge Systematics, and Warner Transportation Consulting Inc.

Ms. Smetana informed the Board she has not yet contacted all of the references provided by the proposers so the Board could delay making a decision if desired to allow this. She indicated she had contacted some of the MPO's in the State listed as having worked with the responders. She stated that both Walter P. Moore and Alliance Transportation had numerous projects with MPO's and both were very familiar with TxDOT processes. Warner has worked with transit agencies in Texas. The difference between the top two proposals was a .5% difference in the scoring criteria in the Committee's evaluation. Ms. Smetana then noted that sufficient funds are available in the UPWP to select any of the three proposals. She specified that \$77,850 is currently listed specifically for this task and that \$132,850 is listed in Task 4. If a proposal is selected that exceeds the \$77,850 an amendment would need to be made to the UPWP.

Chairman Kreitler asked about the timeline for the project. Mr. Theobald cautioned that they are in a very tight schedule. A number of other MPO's are already in the que for updating their Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). He stated they could begin working on the project once demographics have been established. It is possible the work could be completed for the MTP. Ms. Smetana added that City Council action to approve the contract is needed. If approved, startup is anticipated at the end of March. A draft data set is anticipated in August with completion anticipated in October. Responding to a question from Mr. Johnson, Mr. Lancaster said demographics typically take 6-8 months to complete. Ms. Smetana noted that the new MTP is due on January 20, 2020.

Judge Bolls asked about the basis of the difference in the scores for providers. He also asked if evaluation members had access to the proposed costs. Ms. Smetana provided a summary sheet to the members of the scoring, noted the weights assigned to each of the evaluation elements, and replied that the committee had been given the cost proposals.

Noting the close score between Alliance and Walter P. Moore but the significant variance in proposed cost, Mayor Williams made a **motion** to select and move forward with the Walter P. Moore/Cambridge Systematics proposal with a **second** from Chairman Kreitler. *Motion carried (4-0).*

5. Public hearing, discussion, and possible action on a draft FY 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Mr. McRoy explained that 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program or TIP is a federally required four-year plan including both capital and non-capital projects within the Abilene Metropolitan Planning Organization's Planning Area. He noted that the TIP needs final approval by June 18, 2018. He explained that the highway projects in the first two years had simply been copied

from the last two years of the 2017-2020 TIP. Highway projects shown in years 2021 and 2022 were taken from the approved ten-year plan.

Mr. McRoy noted that a twenty-day comment period is required under the current Public Participation Plan and that a second public meeting would be held on March 6th at the Abilene MPO offices. He noted that comments received would be captured in the final documents and that project changes could potentially be made if needed.

Mr. McRoy made a special note that a Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA) project was required to be listed individually rather than being grouped. He also explained that transit planning tends to precede funding. This means the 2021 and 2022 number had to be projected based on 2020.

Ms. Smetana added that the Board would likely see the TIP again in the future in order to incorporate more federally required performance measures. She noted that if the proposed TIP is approved by May 27, 2018 we can simply note that these performance measures will be incorporated in the future.

Chairman Kreitler **opened the public hearing**, inviting anyone who wished to speak on the matter to address the Board. Seeing none, he **closed the public hearing**.

Mayor Williams made a **motion** to approve the Draft FY 2019-2022 TIP as proposed with a **second** by Mr. Johnson. *Motion carried (4-0)*.

6. Discussion and possible action on the Safety Performance Measures Target.

Mr. McRoy explained that federal legislation requires MPOs to adopt a variety of performance measures over the next few years. The first of these, Safety, has been adopted by TxDOT. MPO's have six months to either adopt the State measures and targets or develop their own. The deadline for compliance is February 27, 2018. Mr. McRoy noted that it is our understanding that 23 of the other 24 MPO's in the State are expected to adopt the State measures.

The specific areas being measured include: 1) Total Fatalities 2) Rate of Fatalities per 1,000,000 miles traveled 3) Serious Injuries 4) Rate of Serious Injuries per 1,000,000 miles traveled and 5) Total Non-motorized Vehicle Fatalities. Mr. McRoy pointed out that the target or goal adopted is not a reduction in total numbers. The State target is a reduction of 2% in the rate or slope of these measures. He explained that since Texas is a state with a growing population, a reduction in the total number would likely be unreasonable. He further explained that achievement of the targets are measured at a State level and not at each MPO. Measurements are expected to be on all roads not just on-system facilities. Finally, there are no financial impacts if the targets are not achieved. He noted that the Technical Advisory Committee had recommended approval of the State measures.

Chairman Kreitler made a **motion** to approve the resolution adopting the State measures and targets as presented with a **second** by Mr. Johnson. *Motion carried (4-0)*.

7. Discussion and possible action on an amendment to the Public Participation Plan.

Ms. Smetana explained that the FAST Act requires some modifications to the current Public Participation Plan (PPP). She said the required changes primarily relate to documentation of participation by certain entities which are currently not listed in our plan. She noted that a 45-day period for public review and comment is required. She stated this item would be brought back for final approval following the public comment period.

A redline/strikeout version of the original plan showing the proposed changes and a clean version have been included in the packet. Ms. Smetana then noted each proposed change individually.

In addition to the required changes, the MPO Staff is also recommending changes to align the local plan more closely with specific language in the federal text, to update email and website addresses, and to promote the use of digital formats which are compatible with technologies the visually impaired might use to navigate the internet. She noted that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) had recommended approval of the Draft Plan.

Chairman Kreitler made a **motion** to approve the Draft Plan as presented with a **second** by Mayor Williams. *Motion carried (4-0).*

8. Discussion and possible action on the FY 2017 Annual Performance and Expenditure Report (APER) and FY 2017 Annual Project Listing (APL).

Ms. Smetana stated that these two reports, as required, were turned in to TxDOT on December 15, 2017. She explained that they are reviewed by TxDOT and then by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for approval. She noted that FHWA had approved them on February 6, 2018. The APER lists Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) tasks and reports on how those tasks were accomplished. The APL reports on projects completed from the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for that year.

She pointed out that on the APER, there is a requirement that if expenditures fall below 75% or above 125% of planned amounts the reasons for this must be explained. She noted that on Task 2 expenditures were below 75% because more action on performance measures had been anticipated. On Task 4 delays in acquiring a consultant for the travel demand model (TDM) reduced expenditures.

On the APL she announced that the total obligated federal funds for 2017 came out to \$12,696,435. The Technical Committee reviewed the documents in November prior to submittal to TxDOT.

Approval by the Federal Highway Administration is required before these documents can be released to the public. This explains the timing and is why approval by the Policy Board is desired but not required.

Chairman Kreitler made a **motion** to approve as presented with a **second** by Mayor Williams. *Motion Carried (4-0).*

{Mayor Williams leaves explaining an illness in his family is necessitating his departure}

9. Discussion and review of transportation projects.

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

Ambler/SH 351 – Project is complete. A few cleanup items remain - Project was complete in about ½ the time expected. MLK Bridge – work on bridge rail and deck surface is complete. Some painting is ongoing underneath. I-20 Bridge @ Overland Trail - Outside rail work is being done. Winters Freeway – Working on rail repair around S 7th St. Loop 322 Ramp Relocation - Work is expected to begin on the west side only about March or early April.

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

Old Anson Road – Pioneer St. - Willis St. Pre-construction meetings have been completed. All 3 are expected to begin construction by late March. Projects in progress include Industrial Blvd., CBD Hotmix West and SoDA Ph. II. Elm Creek Pedestrian Bridge – Project essentially complete but two areas of concern regarding ADA compliance are being addressed.

CityLink - Report included in packet.

10. Discussion and review of reports:

• **Financial Status**

Ms. Smetana reported that Billing #1 & #2 for October and November have been reviewed but have not been submitted to TxDOT. Funding authorization in September was \$54,137.89 and in November was \$184,317. Expenditures in October were \$14,168.85 and in November were \$15,946.34. Ms. Smetana noted that expected carry over funds have not been released yet. Overall remaining balance was \$208,339.

• **Operation Report**

Ms. Smetana reported that the Staff's primary efforts over the last two months have focused on the Travel Demand Model. A full operation report is included in the packet.

Director's Report

None at this time.

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

None at this time.

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

Ms. Smetana noted that a number of items appearing on today's agenda would be returning for final Board action in the future.

13. Adjournment

Judge Bolls made a **motion** to adjourn with a **second** by Chairman Kreitler – *Motion carried (4-0)*. Meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.