



**MINUTES OF THE ABILENE
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD
June 24, 2020**

The Abilene MPO Transportation Policy Board met at 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, June 24, 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 Downing Bolls, Taylor County (*Policy Board Vice-Chairman*)
Mr. Carl Johnson, P.E., TxDOT Abilene District Engineer
Judge Dale Spurgin, Jones County

Members Absent:

Mayor Anthony Williams, City of Abilene

Staff of Member Agencies in Attendance:

Ms. Nellie Doneva, City of Abilene Videographer
Mr. Michael Haithcock, P.E., TxDOT, Abilene District TP & D Director
Mr. Max Johnson, City of Abilene Assistant Public Works Director
Mr. Greg McCaffery, P.E., City of Abilene Public Works Director
Ms. Kelley Messer, City of Abilene First Assistant City Attorney
Mr. Paul Norman, P.E., TxDOT, Abilene Area Engineer
Ms. Cheryl Sawyers, City of Abilene Planning Services Manager
Mr. Bobby Sharpe, General Manager, CityLink
Mr. Charlie Thomas, P.E., City of Abilene Interim City Engineer

MPO Staff in Attendance:

Ms. E'Lisa Smetana, Abilene MPO Executive Director

Others in Attendance:

None

1. Call to Order.

Chairman Price called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m. He announced that public comment could be taken on any item appearing on the agenda during the discussion of that item.

2. Consideration and Action on the minutes of the April 21, 2020 meeting.

Judge Spurgin made a motion to approve the April 21, 2020 minutes as presented, with a second by Mr. Johnson. *Motion carried (3-0). Judge Bolls arrived 1:34 pm.*

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

Ms. Smetana presented the item and announced that it is now due on July 13, 2020 due to COVID-19 delays. She stated that another notice of public participation was ran from June 10th to June 20th and one comment form was received. Ms. Smetana went over the changes to the document with the main change being the addition of the Transportation Alternatives Project in the year 2021. She said that the items in red were updates that the Technical Advisory Committee took action on and the items in blue were new items that came about from an email TxDOT sent on June 16th.

Mr. Johnson made a motion to approve the amendment to the FYs 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) as presented and discussed, with a second by Judge Spurgin. *Motion carried (4-0).*

**4. Discussion and review of transportation projects.
(By TxDOT Staff, City Staff, CityLink Staff)**

TxDOT - Mr. Paul Norman briefed the Board on the following projects: Butler Construction - US 83/84 from FM 707 to the US 83/84 Split - Grade separation at FM 204. Mill and Overlay. Bridge overpass foundations are under construction. Intersections are being reconstructed. Drainage structures are being extended. Project completion is expected 2021. JH Strain and Sons – US 83 Frontage Roads – From US 277 (S. 14th Street). Frontage roads and ramps only. For the construction of overlay. Consisting of plan, seal, spot repair. Work began 6/14/20 is expected to be complete by September. Bontke Brothers Construction – SH 351 from BU 83-D (Treadaway Blvd) to IH 20. Construction of pedestrian signals, sidewalks and curb ramps. Consisting of sidewalks and ADA improvements. Work is 6/1/20 and is expected to be complete in April 2021.

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

CBD Concrete Street Repairs – 14% complete as of the first of the month. Recently Pine Street was completed except for the southern two blocks. Ridgemont Dr. from Rebecca Lane to Clack St. – is complete. S. Willis St from S. 32nd St. to S. 14th St. – contract is awarded, construction has not begun. N. 6th/Leggett Dr. from N.1st St. to Grape St. – as of first of the month is complete, except for stripping which should be done in the next couple of weeks. Butternut St. from S. 1st St. to Treadaway – as of first of month was 21% complete. John Knox from Ridgemont to Curry and Village from S. Clack to Curry – as of first of month was complete except for stripping which should be complete in the next two weeks. Work Zones N10 and N3 – complete. Work Zone S15 – complete. Work Zones S6 and S24 – complete. Curry, Cedar Run, Rolling Green & Turner – contract has been awarded, construction has not begun. Traffic Signal @ Ridgemont and Rolling Green & Mall Entr. – contract has been awarded. Now awaiting delivery of mast and mast arms which could take up to two months before construction can begin. Sayles Blvd. from S. Danville Dr. to Buffalo Gap Rd. – contract awarded. They began work last week and are making good progress.

Maple Street from 707 to Colony Hill Road – is under design. 20% complete project would be ready for construction late this year or early 2021. Griffith Rd. from E.N. 10th to Marathon Rd. – design 75% complete. Currently relocating 10 inch water line and anticipate award late 2020 and construction 2021. Transportation Alternatives Set Aside Program (TASA) Sidewalk Project – 100% designed complete, under review by FHWA and

anticipate bid award in August.

Transportation Alternatives (TA) Sidewalk Project - ES 11th Grant – did not receive the grant but did receive notification from TxDOT that they will pick up that project and the City will help with the cost.

CityLink – Mr. Bobby Sharpe briefed the Board on the following items:

Operations - Due to the COVID-19 threat and the effect on the way of life within the City of Abilene, CityLink has made some changes and accommodations. CityLink continues to nightly disinfect our vehicles. Bus operators are hourly disinfecting high touch areas on the buses, as well as having Van operators disinfecting several times during the day. CityLink has placed a limit of 10 chairs in the passenger lobby to encourage social distancing. The bus seats closest to the bus operator remain cordoned off, boarding and alighting through the front door has resumed. CityLink has provided personal protective equipment for our operators and a partition has been installed on the busses which offer additional protection for our employees. CityLink has received face masks that are, upon request, distributed to passengers. **Funding** - CityLink has been notified by TxDOT that we will receive funding for cut-away replacement. He stated that the amount is \$471,000 which means about 6 buses will be replaced. **Support Vehicles Replacement** - CityLink is getting closer to replacing our support vehicles. They will need to present the purchase recommendation to the City Council for approval.

5. Discussion and review of reports:

• Financial Status

Ms. Smetana said a financial summary for FY 2020 updated through June 16th is included in the board packet. Billings for February, March, and April has been submitted for total amounts of \$458,045.73 authorized, \$192,931.72 expended, and remaining balance of \$265,114.01.

• Operation Report

- Tasks
- Training Sessions
- Meetings

Ms. Smetana stated that the full report was included in the packet. We have been extremely busy with the MTP, TIP, Travel Demand Model, and City budget just to name a few.

• Director's Report

- Future Work Tasks
 - **MPO Staffing** – both positions (Transportation Planner and part time Office Assistant) are on hold right now.
 - **MPO Lease** – got documents ready and insurance purchased so now just need to get them signed.
 - **MPO Boundary Expansion** – We have just been gathering data for this. We have not got the committee together yet.
 - **FYs 2019-2022 TIP Administrative Amendment** – Just an administrative amendment to the current TIP to move two projects

into the fiscal year 2022.

- **Travel Demand Model** – The consultants’ contract ends July 31 and they want to present it to the Policy Board and the Technical Advisory Committee so this might necessitate a called meeting in July. The current date for the TAC meeting is July 28th. Want to see if the Board was agreeable to that date. Board consensus was that was a good date.

The Board asked why the MPO staffing positions were on hold. Ms. Smetana explained that it was due to a hiring freeze related to COVID-19 and also the payout of vacation/sick funds for the Transportation Planner. The Board asked that we move forward on the MPO staffing as soon as possible since these funds are from the MPO’s budget not the City’s budget.

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

None.

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

Mr. Johnson asked that we meet virtually next time and have the thought process that it might need to happen for the next few meetings. Most of the other MPOs are meeting virtually. Chairman Price asked what software they are using. Mr. Johnson said he would find out. Discussion was held and consensus was to use virtual for the next meetings.

8. Adjournment.

With no further matters on the agenda, Chairman Price asked for a motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Judge Spurgin and seconded by Mr. Johnson. Meeting adjourned at 2:04 p.m.