



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

Special Called Meeting

March 05, 2021

The Abilene MPO Transportation Policy Board met at 11:00 a.m. Friday, March 05, 2021, utilizing Zoom Video Conferencing.

Members Present:

Mr. Glenn Allbritton, P.E., TxDOT Abilene District Engineer
Judge Downing Bolls, Taylor County (*Policy Board Vice-Chairman*)
Councilman Shane Price, City of Abilene (*Policy Board Chairman*)
Judge Dale Spurgin, Jones County

Members Absent:

Mayor Anthony Williams, City of Abilene

Staff of Member Agencies in Attendance:

Mr. Scott Chandler, P.E., City of Abilene City Engineer
Ms. Nellie Doneva, City of Abilene Videographer
Ms. Kelley Messer, City of Abilene First Assistant City Attorney
Mr. Paul Norman, P.E., TxDOT, Abilene Area Engineer
Mr. Glen Pugh, District Representative, Senator Dawn Buckingham
Mr. Michael Rice, P.E., City of Abilene Assistant City Manager
Ms. Kaitlin Richardson, City of Abilene Deputy Secretary
Ms. Lauren Stevens, CityLink ParaTransit Supervisor

MPO Staff in Attendance:

Ms. E'Lisa Smetana, Abilene MPO Executive Director
Mr. Benjamin LaBorde, Abilene MPO Transportation Planner I
Ms. Jennifer Joynes, Abilene MPO Office Assistant III

Others in Attendance:

None

1. Call to Order.

Chairman Price called the meeting to order at 11:09 a.m. A quorum was present. He announced that public comment could be taken on any item appearing on the agenda. Since this is a Zoom meeting if anyone would like to make a comment they just need to use the raise your hand option and they will be taken off mute.

2. Consideration and Take Action on the minutes of the December 15, 2020 meeting.

Judge Bolls made a motion to approve the December 15, 2020 minutes as presented, with a second by Judge Spurgin. *Motion carried (3-0) Mr. Allbritton arrived during item number 3.*

3. Receive a Report, Hold a Discussion, and Take Action on resolutions supporting the following Performance Measures: Safety (PM 1), Pavement/Bridge Condition (PM 2), and System Performance (PM 3).

Ms. Smetana presented the item and explained that the Safety (PM 1) Performance Measure is due by February 18, 2021. The Infrastructure Condition - Pavement and Bridge (PM 2) and the System Reliability (PM 3) are both due at the end of March 2021.

She relayed the following information. The State has set the 2021 **Safety (PM 1)** targets in its Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). The targets in any given year are expressed as a 5-year average of past data and future projections. Targets are established for the following areas: Fatalities, Fatality Rate per 100 MVMT (Million Vehicle Miles Traveled), Serious Injuries, Serious Injury Rate per 100 MVMT, and Non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries. The **Infrastructure Condition - Pavement and Bridge (PM 2)** establishes performance requirements to assess the condition of pavements and bridges designated on the National Highway System (NHS). Reporting and target setting are required for both Interstate Highways (IH) and Non-Interstate (Non-IH) National Highway System (NHS) designated facilities. The **System Reliability (PM 3)** establishes performance measure requirements to assess the performance of the National Highway System (NHS) and to assess freight movement on the Interstate System.

Ms. Smetana then reviewed each resolution individually. While reviewing the resolution for Safety (PM 1) she pointed out how the targets set show a decrease in number and rate of fatalities and serious injuries. However, the total number of non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries is shown to increase. She said that the Policy Board could consider adding an additional statement to the resolution to set a target to reduce the non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries in conjunction with TxDOTs established targets. Ms. Smetana says that she is not recommending that the Policy Board add this statement since that would require the MPO to compile its own data for Safety and currently we do not have sufficient staff for that task. She does recommend having the Technical Advisory Committee create a subcommittee to review and evaluate this topic before the 2022 Performance Measures for Safety (PM 1). Ms. Smetana also reviewed the FY 2021 Strategic Highway Safety Plan Performance Targets to show where the data included in the resolutions was found. She then turned the item over to Mr. LaBorde who reviewed two maps of the City of Abilene showing the number of fatalities and serious injuries and non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries from 2017-2020. Ms. Smetana then reviewed the City of Abilene's current pavement and bridge conditions. After reviewing the data Judge Bolls asked if the pavement and bridge data presented included the bridges that are currently under construction. Ms. Smetana said that the data included is for the 294 bridges that exist as of 2020. She then reviewed the TACs recommendation and requested any action by the Policy Board on the three resolutions. Chairman Price asked for clarification on when they make a motion if they need to specify that the Policy Board is approving the MPO staff recommendation versus the TAC recommendation. Ms. Smetana said the Policy Board could make the motion as such if they wanted. Chairman Price then opened the item up for questions and hearing none, he called for a motion. Mr. Allbritton made a motion for approval of the resolutions as presented, with a second by Judge Spurgin. *Motion carried (4-0).*

4. Receive a Report, Hold a Discussion, and Take Action on the MPO Job Descriptions.

Ms. Smetana opened the item explaining that the City of Abilene's Human Resource Department was tasked with identifying which City job descriptions (JDs) were missing and working with the areas to facilitate the creation/updating of the JDs. The deadline for this was December 31st. The MPO submitted the job description by the due date with the caveat that the Policy Board would be looking at this in February for their recommendation. She said that the document was originally sent out to the Policy Board members on February 05, 2021 and was sent out again for review on March 05, 2021. Ms. Smetana then requested any action by the Policy Board on the document. Chairman Price opened the item up asking if there were any concerns or suggested changes. Hearing none, he verified the Policy Board needed an official motion. Ms. Smetana recommended the Policy Board make an official motion so the City of Abilene had documentation of approval. Judge Spurgin made a motion for approval of the MPO Job Description as presented, with a second by Judge Bolls. *Motion carried (4-0).*

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

TxDOT - Mr. Paul Norman briefed the Board on the following projects:

Current Construction: FM 707 widening roadway is pending until May due to weather. Allen Butler Construction - US 83/84 from FM 707 to the US 83/84 Split - Grade separation at FM 204 Mill and Overlay. FM 204 bridge is complete but is still lacking paving and other work. The project is behind schedule. Project completion is expected in late spring 2021. 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 behind schedule and expected to be complete in late spring of 2021. JH Strain and Sons – US 83 Frontage Road Construction – From Antilley Road to FM 707. A frontage road is being constructed between US 83/84 and Lake Kirby. The frontage road will connect the FM 707 Spur to Antilley Road. Project is currently on time with completion expected in November 2021. FM 1750 at the intersection of Loop 322 and Industrial. Installing flashing beacons. Construction begins next week with completion in late spring 2021.

Planned Projects: Foutsco Inc – SH 36 and FM 1750 Repaving South 11th Street (SH 36) will be repaved from Treadaway Blvd. (BU 83-D) to Judge Ely Blvd. Oldham Lane (FM 1750) will be repaved from South 11th St. to Industrial Blvd. Project has already let with a start date in April. FM 89 at Iberis Rd improvements to intersection currently scheduled for an August letting, FM 707 and Maple St adding turning lanes currently scheduled for an August letting, BU-D 83 and Hill St installing a flashing beacon at the intersection currently scheduled for an August letting, FM 89 widening Buffalo Gap Rd and adding beacons was scheduled for an August letting however there has been a delayed start scheduled and is now set for January 2022 to get through the holidays, FM 3438 maintenance overlay from I-20 to US 277 currently scheduled for an August letting, FM 600 maintenance overlay from FM 1082 to FM 3034 currently scheduled for an August letting. Mr. Allbritton then briefed the Board on US 83 and FM 3034 which is the project in Jones County. He wanted to verify all questions had been addressed regarding the project that were presented at the previous meeting. No other questions were raised on the project.

City of Abilene - Mr. Scott Chandler briefed the Board on the following projects:

Still working on Concrete Street Repairs, which are 56% complete. S. Willis St. from S. 32nd St. to S. 14th St. is 61% complete. Sayles Blvd. from S. Danville Dr. to Buffalo Gap Rd. is 97% complete. The TASA sidewalk project has begun. It goes from Corsicana to US-277, US-277 from Texas Ave to Danville, and Clack from US-277 to Catclaw Dr. The two Work Zone design projects will start in May. The projects at Pine St. from Ambler to Treadaway, N. 18th St from Pine St. to Cottonwood, N. 19th and 21st St. and Pine St. intersections, Southwest Dr. from Sharon St. to S. Clack St., Airport Blvd. from Hwy. 36 to Terminal, and Griffith Rd. from NE 10th to Marathon Rd. have all been let for bid. Construction will begin this spring with Griffith Rd. being the priority to begin. The Street Maintenance Advisory Board will reconvene this month to discuss further projects to put the \$2 million in savings from the Work Zone projects to use in other projects. They have also applied for two TA projects - one on Old Anson Rd and one on S. 14th St. TxDOT has been assisting with the design and construction of the N. 18th bridge over Catclaw Creek. The road is closed due to bridge failure. There were eight locations that roads failed as a part of the winter storm and they have released emergency funds to make repairs. The Water Department has completed work at the end of Rebecca Lane and the road is now back open. There will be additional phases to the project. Phase two of that project will result in a lane in each direction being closed rather than the entire street.

CityLink – Ms. Lauren Stevens briefed the Board on the following projects:

CityLink has been assisting with the Abilene Taylor County Public Health District COVID-19 vaccination clinics by providing free transportation within the city limits of Abilene. This demand response service is provided to anyone who preschedules a trip for their scheduled vaccine appointment. CityLink has implemented the mask requirement for public transit according to the President's Executive Order and ordered by the Transportation Security Administration as a matter of federal law. Electronic messages, multi-lingual posters and verbal announcements have been used to inform passengers of the requirement. CityLink is pursuing the purchase of trip scheduling software to replace the current software that has become less reliable, troublesome and less supported by the vendor. The new software will cost less than the current software, is much more reliable, and supported according to other agency references. TransLoc program has been implemented and is operational. Passengers can download the app and staff has been helping passengers navigate the program.

Ms. Smetana pointed out that included in the packets are pictures of the some of the current transportation projects so that the Board can see the progress being made.

6. Discussion and review of reports:**• Financial Status**

Ms. Smetana said a financial status for FY 2021 is included in the Board packet. Two Work Orders have been received with a total of \$263,210.09 authorized. Billings for October and November have been submitted for the total amount of \$29,427.29 expended and a remaining balance of \$233,782.80. She stated that the carryover funds are still not included in these totals.

- **Operation Report
Tasks, Training Sessions, Meetings**

Ms. Smetana stated that the full report was included in the packet. This runs from December 09, 2020 through February 08, 2021. Included in the report: updates to the MPO website have continued; budget - comparison, summary sheet and strategic plan; reports - APER, ALOP, amendment to the FYs 2021-2024 TIP done; multiple maps created; remaining files and boxes unpacked; increasing social media and website postings.

- **Director's Report**

- Future Work Tasks**

- **MPO Workshop** – At their January 26, 2021 TAC meeting, discussion was held on the potential to have a MPO workshop in 2021 to discuss projects, training, etc.
 - **MPO Boundary Expansion** – MPO Staff has been compiling population data. A map has been made for the outlying area showing locations of potential households. Data is being compiled utilizing the Travel Demand Model to show travel patterns. Meetings will occur after data is compiled. At their January 26, 2020 meeting, the TAC formed a subcommittee for this task.
 - **Annual Listing of Obligated Projects & Annual Performance and Expenditure Report** – The year-end reports were due on December 15, 2020 to TxDOT. Staff submitted the APER by the deadline. On February 5, 2021, TxDOT forwarded the report to FHWA and FTA. On March 4, 2021 TxDOT notified the MPO that FHWA had some questions they'd like answered before approving. The ALOP highway data has been compiled by TxDOT and this report was submitted on February 25, 2021 after receiving information from TxDOT on February 19, 2021.

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

None.

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

With the updated orders from the Governor, Chairman Price would like to have the virtual vs. in person meetings as an agenda item to review it sooner than the planned June meeting. He asked Mr. Allbritton if he has received any different direction from TxDOT concerning the Governor's order. Mr. Allbritton said he has not gotten any updates to policy since the Governor's order. Ms. Smetana said that there will be an agenda item about the MPO training workshop. Judge Bolls would like it to be looked into for the possibility of a hybrid meeting with some people in person and some virtual.

9. Adjournment.

With no further business, Chairman Price adjourned the meeting at 11:48 a.m.