



French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization
Minutes from the Governing Board meeting on September 28, 2017

Attendance

Meeting Date:

9/28/2017

Representing	VotingTAC		Via Phone
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Asheville, City of	Gwen	Wisler	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biltmore Forest, Town of	Fran	Cogburn	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Black Mountain, Town of	Ryan	Stone	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Buncombe County	Brownie	Newman	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Flat Rock, Village of	John	Dockendorf	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Haywood County	Michael	Sorrells	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Henderson County	William	Lapsley	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Laurel Park, Town of	George	Banta	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Madison County	Matthew	Wechtel	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rural Transit Providers	Larry	Harris	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban Transit Providers	Adam	Charnack	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Waynesville, Town of	LeRov	Roberson	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Weaverville, Town of	Douglas	Dearth	<input type="checkbox"/>

Alternates/Agencies and Other Non Voting At TAC			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Asheville, City of	Jade	Dundas	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FBRMPO/LOSRC	Zia	Rifkin	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FBRMPO/LOSRC	Tristan	Winkler	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FBRMPO/LOSRC	Lyuba	Zuyeva	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FBRMPO/LOSRC	Vicki	Eastland	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FHWA	Mike	Dawson	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LOSRC	Kyle	Guie	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LOSRC	Ritchie	Rozzelle	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NCDOT, Division 13	Brendan	Merithew	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NCDOT, Division 14	Steve	Williams	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NCDOT, Division 14	Brian	Burch	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vaughn and Melton	Joel	Setzer	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Weaverville, Town of	Patrick	Fitzsimmons	<input type="checkbox"/>

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS, APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Dearth called the meeting to order, read the Ethics Statement and inquired if there were any conflicts of interest to note for today's meeting. He requested that introductions be made. The agenda was presented for approval with no modifications requested. Fran Cogburn noted a potential conflict of interest with projects in Candler.

Gwen Wisler moved to approve the agenda as presented. Adam Charnack seconded and the motion carried as all were in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Dearth called for any public comment. No one made any public comment.

CONSENT AGENDA

- August 2017 Minutes (with changes requested by Adam Charnack- update the record to show his vote as against the TIP adoption and against the SPOT 5 list adoption)
- Accept a Project from the Land of Sky RPO for Submission for SPOT 5

Larry Harris moved to approve the Consent Agenda. LeRoy Roberson seconded and the motion carried without further discussion.

REGULAR UPDATES

- Brendan Merithew provided Division 13 updates and Steve Williams provided Division 14 updates.
- No Planning Branch updates.
- No FHWA updates.
- FBRMPO Committee & Workgroup Updates
 - Prioritization – September meeting canceled due to weather (power outage due to strong winds).
 - Transit Operators Workgroup - Next meeting is scheduled for October. The workgroup will move to a yearly or twice-a-year schedule. MPO staff are adding quarterly Urban Transit Subrecipients meetings going forward as per the transit agencies' request.
 - Citizens' Advisory Committee - Last meeting held on August 7th. Next meeting to be held in late fall.

Lyuba Zuyeva made several staff announcements. NEPA Merger Team meetings coming up for the Liberty Road Interchange and the I-26 Widening on October 11 in Raleigh. NCDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian planning grant applications currently open. Applicants must provide a local match. At the federal level, the TIGER call for projects is currently open. In October, the LOSRC Annual Banquet will be held on the 25th. The next MPO Board meeting is scheduled for October 26.

MPO staff will be attending the AMPO Conference October 17-20 in Savannah, GA. North Carolina Bike/Walk Summit starts on November 3.

- Lyuba Zuyeva provided legislative updates including that an Executive Order was issued on August 15 regarding streamlining and expediting Infrastructure Permitting. Also at the federal level, the FY 18 budget is operating under a continuing resolution through December 8.
- Steve Williams shared that Divisions have received guidance regarding how high impact/low cost projects would need to be scored. NCDOT staff plan to meet with planning organizations in the near future to discuss the scoring methodology.

NEW BUSINESS

Moving Special Study Call for Projects to a Fall Timeline

Lyuba Zuyeva shared that MPO staff propose to move the planning/feasibility study call for projects out of the STBG-DA call for projects timeline (spring) into a fall call for projects to better align with local government budget development timelines and the MPO Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) development. Currently, \$90,000 is estimated as available in the FY 2019 UPWP call for special studies, based on the \$200,000 per year in STBG-DA funds flexed to MPO Funds, after accounting for already-funded planning studies. She reviewed the proposed timeline that includes the call for projects to open October 16, 2017 with MPO Board approval of special study selection and draft FY 2019 UPWP in January 2018 and local match commitment letters due in July 2018. Due to the low level of funding available for FY 2019, it is possible that the MPO could fund planning studies for subsequent years if there is a lot of interest.

Larry Harris moved to approve the fall timeline for FY 2019 and a more general shift to the fall call for project for planning and feasibility special studies. Ryan Stone seconded and the motion carried without further discussion

Priority Corridors Special Study Set-Aside Item

Lyuba Zuyeva shared that there appears to be a gap in planning for the region's most challenging corridors where a variety of land use and transportation issues are present; and a variety of policy recommendations and operational, capacity and other transportation infrastructure improvements are needed. Lyuba Zuyeva presented a proposal to set -aside funding for corridor studies to target key corridors in the region. She shared that some of the CMP priority corridors are already being addressed but there are many more that do not have funded improvements. Many of those corridors are a regional and not just local problem because commuters are using these for through-travel including cross-county travel. Congestion has increased over time. Motorists are not being served well and there is not a simple solution (such as widening) that can be applied-most of those corridors are already four-lane or five-lane cross-sections. Lyuba Zuyeva noted that widening a corridor does not solve the problem in the long term as widening can cause additional development along corridors- it is a short-term fix with additional problems created down the road. Conversations with local stakeholders about the nuanced issues for those corridors could take place in the format of corridor studies. She communicated that Leicester Highway Access Management project is an example of a challenging corridor; there is a project funded, however, that project did not have a corresponding corridor study and some public concern might come to the forefront as the project develops. MPO staff would prefer to address public and stakeholder involvement issues with potential corridor improvements up front.

Lyuba Zuyeva shared the outcomes of a corridor study, which would include identifying a vision, generating public buy-in, and recommending a variety of land use policy changes and transportation improvements to address the issues. She provided some examples from other MPOs in the state and from the Atlanta, GA region.

Lyuba Zuyeva reviewed the possible scenarios including two scenarios which would increase local dues, a "Pay to Play"/Opt in Scenario where only those jurisdictions interested would pay in an extra local match and the fourth scenario of "business as usual" where local jurisdictions could apply for corridor studies as part of the regular MPO call for planning studies. The presentation slides were posted at <http://fbrmpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/CorridorStudyScenarios.pdf>.

Lyuba Zuyeva discussed the federal funding element and indicated that the MPO currently has an unobligated PL funds balance which could potentially be used for the corridor study set-aside (currently at around \$360,000); STBG-DA Flex amount for planning studies could also be increased if needed. William Lapsley suggested that the Board is not ready to take an action today, as the scenarios have not been

provided to Board members prior to the meeting. Further discussion occurred indicating that the Board members would like to be able to take the scenarios back to their governing boards to review the potential funding scenarios. Brownie Newman communicated that Buncombe County is definitely interested in some of these key corridors and the accompanying issues. Also looking at growth/land use piece as there is not a lot of opportunity to add additional capacity to some of the priority corridors. He also shared that the pay-to-play scenario may work for the County.

Tristan Winkler shared that the impetus for this business item was a shortage of good transportation projects coming forward in recent SPOT calls for projects—there are many transportation issues in our region but the solutions to address those are not always obvious and apparent. Transportation dollars need to be used efficiently because many of the roads under discussion do not just support local travel, but are important to the regional commute patterns. Discussion occurred regarding outcomes and the process that led to actionable decisions.

Chairman Dearth reviewed the discussion, as it appears that Board members would like to see additional information. Gwen Wisler requested that the presentation including the possible scenarios be provided to Board members so it may be shared with their governing bodies and managers. Mike Sorrells shared that this is a regional situation, but governing bodies would need to review as there is the potential for an increase in dues. Matt Wechtel shared that Buncombe County's problems become Madison County's problems, too since many of Madison County's commuters drive to Buncombe every day. Solving Buncombe's problems would improve situations throughout the region.

Discussion occurred regarding the difference between the first two scenarios and it was shared that Scenario 2 would allow municipalities to conduct their own studies.

The business item was tabled for now.

MPO Board Nominations for Chair and Meeting Times

Chairman Dearth shared that he will be stepping down as the MPO Chair as he is not seeking re-election and his term with the Town of Weaverville will end in early December. He called for nominations from the floor.

Gwen Wisler nominated William Lapsley. No other nominations were put forth.

The Board unanimously elected William Lapsley as the new Chairman upon a vote.

William Lapsley will assume the Chairmanship beginning with the October Board meeting.

Lyuba Zuyeva shared that MPO staff would like to propose moving the MPO Board meeting time from 12:30 pm to 1:00 pm starting in calendar year 2018 to allow more time for the RPO TAC meeting, and to better align the MPO meeting schedule with the Asheville Redefines Transit (ART) bus schedule at the request from members of the public.

Gwen Wisler moved to approve the meeting time change to 1:00pm to begin with the January 2018 meeting. William Lapsley seconded and the motion carried without further discussion.

Lyuba Zuyeva presented Doug Dearth with a certificate recognizing his service on the MPO Board. Chairman Dearth graciously accepted his recognition and shared his understanding of the incredible dedication, knowledge and abilities of local elected staff. He also welcomed Councilman Patrick Fitzsimmons from the Town of Weaverville to the MPO board.

City of Asheville Bond Referendum Projects

Jade Dundas with the City of Asheville shared that when voters in the City approved the Bond referendum last November, with a total package of \$74 million in bond referendum projects to include improvements under three categories: Housing Affordability- \$25 million; Parks and Recreation- \$17 million; and, Transportation- \$32 million.

Jade Dundas shared a brief timeline of the bond referendum including that the City has as strong focus on information sharing for outside public/stakeholder involvement as well as for the City internal departments. Transportation projects would include bike/ped projects as well as resurfacing. Multiple areas of focus around the City have been identified, such as the South Slope, for example. The City is looking at additional development districts, as well. The City is also aware of the timeline for projects and has chosen to utilize the existing tools on the City's website to generate stakeholder support and provide information: dashboards.ashevillenc.gov/capital_projects The City is also putting up signs that point to where bond projects will be. Jade Dundas shared that this is a work in progress, which is updated as public involvement dictates. The site also includes project maps for non-bond funded Capital Improvement projects. Jade Dundas noted that the City wants to be as transparent as possible with this process.

Lyuba Zuyeva asked if construction on those projects will be done in-house or contracted out. Jade Dundas shared that the city does not construct any projects in-house currently, and the city is concerned about rising construction costs. Ritchie Rozzelle shared a suggestion that the City's Communication Department could tweet out a notice about the updates to draw people to the website and be really transparent. Jade Dundas thought this was a fantastic idea.

No action required- information only.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Dearth called for any public comment. None were heard.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Dearth adjourned the meeting with no further business before the body.