



MINUTES OF THE ABILENE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD

March 18, 2014

The Abilene MPO Transportation Policy Board met at 1:30 p.m., Tuesday, March 18, 2014, in the Abilene City Hall, City Council Chambers, 555 Walnut Street, Abilene, Texas.

Members Present:

Mayor Norm Archibald, City of Abilene Mayor and Policy Board Chairman
Judge Downing Bolls, Taylor County
Mr. Stan Swiatek, P.E., TxDOT Abilene District Engineer
Councilman Joe Spano, City of Abilene
Judge Dale Spurgin, Jones County

Members Not Present:

Others Present:

Ms. Leah Beltran, Disability in Action
Mr. Chad Carter, P.E., City of Abilene City Engineer
Mr. Joe Clark, TxDOT West MPO Coordinator
Mr. James Condry, City of Abilene Traffic & Transportation Administrator
Mr. Brian Crawford, TxDOT Director of Operations
Mr. David Crymes, Taylor County Local Emergency Planning Committee
Ms. Kelly Daniel, TxDOT Public Transportation Coordinator, PTN Division, Odessa
Mr. Blair Haynie, TxDOT Abilene District TP&D Director
Mr. Ben Herr, City of Abilene CityLink Transit General Manager
Ms. Karen Holland, City of Abilene Finance Department
Mr. Alan Hufstutler, P.E., TxDOT Abilene District Area Engineer
Ms. Jeanni Luckey, TxDOT
Mr. John Mangalanzo, Business Reporter, Abilene Reporter-News
Ms. Tracie Mendez, TxDOT
Ms. Chris Moscarelli, City of Abilene Finance Department
Ms. Mindy Patterson, City of Abilene Finance Department
Mr. James Rogge, City of Abilene Traffic & Transportation
Mr. Thomas Sanders, Interested Citizen
Ms. Megan Santee, City of Abilene Director of Public Works
Mr. Stanley Smith, City of Abilene Legal Department
Mr. Mike Vandervoort, National Federation for the Blind/ Disability in Action
Ms. Darah Waldrip, TxDOT Public Information Officer
Ms. Jill Collett, TxDOT Traffic Safety Specialist

MPO Staff in Attendance:

Ms. E'Lisa Smetana, Abilene MPO Executive Director
Mr. Thomas Cook, Abilene MPO Transportation Planner
Mr. Dean Carter, Abilene MPO Transportation GIS Technician

1. Call to Order.

Mayor Archibald called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m. He noted that the meeting was formally posted and a quorum was duly present.

2. Consideration of Approval of the Minutes of the November 19, 2013 Meeting.

Mayor Archibald asked if there were any corrections, additions or deletions to the minutes of the November 19, 2013 meeting. If not he asked for approval of the minutes as presented. The motion to approve was made by Judge Bolls and seconded by Councilman Spano.

Motion carried.

3. Discussion on the Traffic Safety Coalition - (Presentation by Jill Collett, TxDOT).

Ms. Smetana introduced Ms. Jill Collett, TxDOT's Traffic Safety Specialist for the Abilene District. Ms. Collett explained that the traffic coalition is a multi-county group of commissioners, judges, law enforcement and individual citizens interested in safety. The next meeting is April 15, 2014 at 9:00 am at the TxDOT office. Everyone is encouraged to attend. Ms. Collett presented information on community outreach events, various grants received in the Abilene District, and the number of crashes in Taylor and Jones Counties. Council Spano requested information on accidents involving speeding along with how many involve tractor trailers and how many involve automobiles? Judge Spurgin requested information on alcohol and impaired driving in Taylor and Jones Counties. Ms. Collett stated that she would get that information for them.

Informational only; no action was required or taken on this item.

4. Discussion and Any Action on the City of Abilene's Indirect Cost Allocation Plan for the MPO.

Ms. Smetana explained that the cost allocation plan is provided by a company named Maximus Inc. and the methodology they use is provided in your package. The indirect cost has increased this year by \$10,306, from \$21,615 to \$31,921. The MPO should receive \$151,837 PL dollars and \$49,524 Section 5303 dollars for a total of \$201,361. The indirect cost is almost 16% of the total budget. Mindy Patterson explained that in the last four years the MPO has been charged \$93,964 and should have been charged \$147,906 for a difference of \$53,942. Chairman Archibald asked the question "does 3,000 dollars sound extreme for three employees for HR?" Ms. Patterson answered it's not just HR, it is also payroll and benefits. Chairman Archibald asked "why would the city manager cost go from \$1,700 to \$700 then it goes back to \$1,684? Ms. Patterson answered she will have to get back to the board on that. Judge Bolls asked if these costs are not built in. Ms. Patterson answered no, they are not built in. Judge Spurgin asked if these are just those department estimates. Ms. Patterson answered some are actual direct charges – some departments, such as legal, keep actual service times. Chairman Archibald asked for Ms. Patterson to respond back to the board with the information that was asked for and stated that we as a board need to duly note the budget constraints that could affect the MPO in the future.

5. Discussion and Consideration of Approval of the FINAL Public Participation Plan Update.

Ms. Smetana began by explaining that we have redesigned the Public Participation Plan. We had it out for public review for the mandatory 45 calendar days and it has been presented to the TAC at their March 4th meeting. The Policy Board approved the draft at the November 19th meeting and there was a public meeting on January 14th. We received one comment which is on the last page of the document in your package. The public comment suggested an Executive Summary along with a text-only version, and partnering with various agencies to disseminate information. The TAC recommended that we incorporate an executive summary into the document, but if we did incorporate it at this time we would have to go out another 45 days for public comment. It was decided to add the Executive Summary to the document the next time we update the PPP.

Councilman Spano made the motion to approve this FINAL Public Participation Plan so it could move forward. Judge Spurgin seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

6. Discussion and Consideration of Approval of the DRAFT FY 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Mr. Cook gave details on the DRAFT 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program. There is one funded highway project, South 11th Street from South Treadaway west to Elmwood Street. This is a construction only project. The TxDOT award was \$946,220, and the local match was \$236,555 for a total of \$1,182,775.

Mr. Cook explained the transit section for each of the fiscal years 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018. The financial part for transit is broken down into General Operations, Administration, Capital, ADA-Paratransit, and Preventive Maintenance. For each fiscal year, the Federal money is \$2,149,661, State match is \$337,000, and local match is \$1,125,260. The total of federal, state, and local match is \$14,447,684.

Ms. Smetana stated that there will be a Public Meeting on March 24th from 5:30 until 6:30. Also according to the TxDOT timeline the Final TIP will be due to TxDOT on May 1st so we will have to have a meeting in April to get the Final document approved.

Judge Spurgin made the motion to approve the DRAFT FY 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program and Judge Bolts seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Mr. Cook discussed a letter that was written by Mr. Mike Vandervoort asking why Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 funds were deleted from the TIP, how are the funds now being used and how does the public continue to be involved in this process? Ms. Kelly Daniels with TxDOT Public Transportation Division answered that the 5316 money has rolled over to 5310, and the 5317 money has rolled to 5307. Ms. Smetana asked Ms. Daniels to verify that information and supply it back to Mr. Vandervoort.

7. Discussion on the Federal Highway (FHWA) Draft National Primary Freight Network.

Ms. Smetana discussed concerns with the draft freight network. MAP 21 authorized 27,000 miles of existing interstate and 41,000 miles of comprehensive connected roadway as the primary freight network. There were four main concerns with the Draft Primary Freight Network including that the cap of 27,000 miles established by MAP-21 doesn't allow accurate representation of the system, the Ports-to-Plains route is not shown, I-10 is not listed as a primary route, and none of the land nor sea ports are mentioned at all and they account for high numbers in the freight movement.

Informational only; no action was required or taken on these items.

**8. Discussion and Review of Transportation Projects:
(By TxDOT Staff, City Staff, CityLink Staff)**

Mr. Hufstutler, the Abilene District Area Engineer, discussed the status of TxDOT projects:

Loop 322 overlay (IH 20 to Maple) JH Strain - complete.

Loop 322 one-way frontage road conversion (Lytle Creek to Maple) Contract Paving - still on schedule: working on culvert and frontage road widening, new entrance and exit ramps and retaining walls for turn-a-rounds at Oldham and Industrial.

IH 20 one way frontage roads JH Strain - on schedule: work still on-going with the outsides of the frontage roads.

Bridge replacement on East 80 (BI 20-R). Reece Construction - still on schedule. Phase I substantially complete and will include a traffic change probably later this week.

US 83 between Canyon Rock Road and south of Iberis Road - one-way frontage roads by Abilene Regional Hospital JH Strain - slightly ahead of schedule: will be working on ramps in coming weeks.

Mr. Chad Carter, the City Engineer, discussed the status of the City of Abilene's projects:
Engineering Division Miscellaneous Repair Work

Water Department Street and Miscellaneous Repair Work

Miscellaneous Residential Streets

Miscellaneous Seal Coat Projects

The BI-20 R (South 1st Street from Locust Street to Butternut Street, enhancement with landscaped medians project) – will begin after the first of the year.

Public Works in the Design Phase: The South 11th Street sidewalk from Treadaway Boulevard to Elmwood Drive – design has not started yet but hoping to have the design completed by this coming summer.

Mr. Herr, the CityLink General Manager, discussed the status of CityLink's projects:
Waiting for the 5310 program results – CityLink requested \$200,000 for an upgrade to the Paratransit Software

Funding for FY14 was announced by the FTA – CityLink is waiting to get our final grant number for that program

End of March TxDOT will be announcing the funding for new vehicles (5339 money) - amount is already known to be less than what is needed to replace CityLink's 6 old busses, need to look at alternate funding sources

Working with engineering firm to finish install of gasoline pump in yard

Informational only; no action was required or taken on these items.

9. Discussion and Review of Reports:

• **Financial Status**

Ms. Smetana provided information on the MPO's financial status. To close out Fiscal Year 2013 the expenditures are \$251,194.57 and the remaining balance is \$232,159.15. For Fiscal Year 2014 as of March 11, we have spent \$72,778.59 and have a remaining balance of \$142,287.41.

• **Operation Report**

Some of the major activities the MPO staff completed from November 19th, 2013 through

March 11th, 2014 are listed below. The full list is included in the packet.

- Assisted CityLink with Triennial Review on Nov. 12 and 13
- All staff participated in the City University on Nov. 21
- Updated the MPO website with project information and pictures, meeting notices, and other pertinent information
- Assisted CityLink with FTA Section 5304 application on February 10 and 11
- Finished Saturation Count verification – Feb. 21
- Assisted CityLink individual route map handouts.
- Assisted CityLink with re-routing of Route # 5

- **Director's Report**

FHWA and the Functional Classification Process

More information on this will be given to us at the TEMPO meeting in March. Information will be provided to the Policy Board at a later meeting date.

Performance Based Planning

Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) placed increased emphasis on performance management within the Federal-aid highway program and transit programs, and requires use of performance-based approaches in statewide, metropolitan, and non-metropolitan transportation planning. Performance Based Planning and Programming (PBPP) refers to the application of performance management principles within the planning and programming processes of transportation agencies to achieve desired performance outcomes for the multimodal transportation system. Five years after enactment of MAP-21 (October 2017), the Secretary will report to Congress on the overall effectiveness of performance-based planning and the effectiveness of the process in each MPO. We will be establishing a performance-based approach to use in our documents. More information will be provided at a future meeting.

FY 2013 Performance and Expenditure Report and FY 2013 Annual Project Listing

On February 12, 2014, we received questions/comments back on the reports from FHWA. As of March 11, 2014 all issues have been resolved.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) FY 2015-2040

The MTP is due January 2015. The MPO will be conducting numerous public meetings and soliciting public participation throughout 2014.

Travel Demand Model (TDM)

We will be using the TDM for the long-range plan update. The MPO is working with TXDOT on the demographics.

Bike to School and Work Awareness Events

Awareness campaigns will be coming up in May for both the Bike to School (May 7) and Bike to Work (May 16) events. We will be asking for community partners to help with this.

Informational only; no action was required or taken on this item.

10. Opportunity for Members of the Public to Make Comments on MPO Issues.

Mr. Thomas Sanders of Flintrock Drive discussed the problem of the dying hedges in front of his property and the problems with trash coming into his yard. Councilman Spano said he has talked to public works about removing the hedges.

Mr. Mike Vandervoort with National Federation for the Blind and Disability in Action stated he would like to see more public participation in how the 5310 money is spent. He also commented that the city and the MPO have problems on how to make the information sent out more user friendly to people with disabilities. He spoke favorably about the Highway 351 access management project. He commented that there are no accessible taxi cabs or transit on an on-demand basis at the airport so you cannot fly into Abilene unless you have already made some kind of plans to get from the airport to your destination and back again.

No other comments were received.

11. Opportunity for Board Members or MPO Staff to Recommend Topics for Future Discussion or Action.

Ms. Smetana stated that Judge Spurgin had asked to bring back the question of a quorum in a public meeting. We have a legal memo from Mr. Smith, so in April we will bring this back to the board. We will also need to add the TIP FINAL document for approval.

No other suggestions or comments were received.

No action was required or taken.

12. Adjournment.

With no further business, Mayor Archibald adjourned the MPO Policy Board Meeting at 3:29 p.m.