



MINUTES OF THE ABILENE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD

October 17, 2017

The Abilene MPO Transportation Policy Board met at 1:30 p.m., Tuesday, October 17, 2017, 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
Judge Dale Spurgin, Jones County
Mayor Anthony Williams, City of Abilene Mayor

Members Absent:

None

Staff of Member Agencies in Attendance:

Mr. Wayne Ekdahl, TxDOT Director of Construction
Mr. Taurus Freeman City of Abilene Interim Director of Planning and Development Services
Mr. Michael Haithcock, TxDOT Abilene District TP&D Director
Mr. Cliff Hallford, TxDOT Project Controller II
Ms. Kelley Messer, City of Abilene Assistant City Attorney
Mr. Michael Rice, City of Abilene Public Works Director
Mr. Larry Wright, City of Abilene City Engineer

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. {Members Present at start of meeting *Kreitler, Bolls, Johnson, Spurgin*}

2. Consideration and possible action on the minutes of the August 15, 2017 meeting.

Judge Bolls made a **motion** to approve the minutes as presented, with a **second** by Judge Spurgin.

Motion carries (4-0, Kreitler, Spurgin, Bolls, Johnson IN FAVOR)

3. Discussion and possible action on transit regional coordination planning.

Ms. Smetana informed the Board that City and Rural Rides (CARR) has dropped the lead agency role for transit regional coordination planning and the committee has asked the Abilene MPO to take over. She stated that additional funding in the amount of \$25,000 will be available. She noted that the MPO has been involved as a stakeholder but has not been the lead agency.

Judge Bolls, Judge Spurgin, and Mr. Johnson registered concern with increasing the MPO's scope of responsibility and workload. Ms. Smetana acknowledged the concern and clarified that there is currently no lead agency. Kreitler asked if other agencies could be contacted to take on this role.

Ms. Smetana indicated that from the discussion she believes she has received direction from the Board to seek out other agencies to take over this role and to bring this item back at the next meeting.

Discussion only - no action taken.

4. Discussion and possible action on the Travel Demand Model Request for Proposals.

Ms. Smetana discussed the elements, the software, the organizations and the role of demographic analysis in developing a travel demand model. She stated that good demographics and demographic expertise is needed for this tool to be effective. She then highlighted other MPO's that are using outside consultants for this. She explained current staff workload challenges, answered questions and asked for Board member thoughts. She noted that the current model expired in 1998. Finally, she noted that if RFP responses exceed available funds then alternatives would likely be needed.

Judge Spurgin made a **motion** to proceed with the RFQ/RFP process and report back to the Board with results with a **second** by Chairman Kreitler.

Motion carries (4-0, Kreitler, Spurgin, Bolls, Johnson IN FAVOR)

5. Discussion and possible action on the amendments to the MPO By-Laws.

Ms. Smetana explained changes made approximately a year ago to the Bylaws regarding the appointment of officers on the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). This item allows the Board to revisit those changes to and make any desired amendments. She noted that changes to the bylaws require a 2/3rds majority vote.

In response to a statement by Chairman Krietler, Ms. Smetana discussed an array of different agencies and regulations the MPO works with. Following a question from Mr. Johnson, she explained that a proposed change would 1) assign the Chair of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to the MPO Executive Director position and 2) remove the position of a Vice Chair of the TAC. Mr. Johnson then asked what was motivating the proposed change. Ms. Smetana identified problems in receiving documents and responded the proposed change would streamline the process. She noted that across the State the MPO Executive Director serves as the TAC chairman in 11 out of 25 MPO's.

Chairman Kreitler stated that the current system requires non-MPO individuals to learn MPO processes and requirements thus potentially resulting in difficulties. Mr. Johnson stated that he believed having the Policy Board continue to appoint the TAC Chair was more beneficial to the public and provided the Policy Board more options. Commissioner Spurgin shared that he had received feedback from more than one TAC member describing concerns with communication and getting information in a timely manner.

Mr. Johnson shared information he received noting that in some instances the TAC Chair only votes in the case of a tie. He shared that in San Angelo and Lubbock TAC members elect their own Chair and Vice Chair. He added that in San Angelo the MPO Executive Director is not a member of the TAC. He then stated he is opposed to a bylaw change.

Board members then discussed the setting of agendas for the TAC and Policy Board. Additional discussion was then had on the relationship between the Policy Board and the TAC and organizational structures.

Chairman Kreitler made a **motion** to approve the changes to the Bylaws as written in the packet materials supplied.

Motion fails for lack of a second.

Judge Spurgin made a **motion** to change the Bylaws as needed so that the Policy Board would appoint the Chairperson to the TAC but a Vice Chairperson or other officers, as may be deemed necessary by the TAC membership, would be elected by the members of the TAC for a period of one federal fiscal year with re-election allowed with a **second** by Chairman Kreitler.

AMENDING MOTIONS

Mr. Johnson made a **motion to amend the pending main motion** so that the Chairperson of the TAC would only vote in case of a tie with a **second** by Judge Spurgin.

Motion carries (3-1, Spurgin, Bolls, Johnson IN FAVOR – Kreitler OPPOSED)

Chairman Kreitler **called for the vote** on the pending main motion

Motion carries (4-0, Kreitler, Spurgin, Bolls, Johnson IN FAVOR)

Mr. Johnson made a **motion** to amend the Bylaws on page 7 Section 7.02 to correct and replace the title for the “TxDOT Director of Traffic Operations” with “TxDOT Director of Operations or designee” with a **second** by Judge Bolls.

NOTE: Mayor Williams arrives.

Motion carries (4-0-1 Spurgin, Kreitler, Bolls, Johnson IN FAVOR – Williams ABSTAIN)

Mr. Johnson made a **motion** to add the “TxDOT Advance Planning Engineer” as a member of the TAC Committee.

Motion fails for lack of a second.

6. Discussion and possible action on the appointment of a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson for the Technical Advisory Committee.

Ms. Smetana introduced the item explaining that the term for both the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson had expired as of the new Fiscal year. Chairman Kreitler made a **motion** to appoint the Executive Director of the MPO to the Chair of the TAC with a **second** by Mayor Williams.

Motion carries (4-1 Spurgin, Williams, Kreitler, Bolls IN FAVOR Johnson OPPOSED)

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

TxDOT – Mr. Wayne Eckdahl updated the Board on the following projects:

Bridge replacement IH 20 at SH 351 – 1st bridge construction is complete. Turnarounds complete. Project ahead of schedule. Project completion expected in Spring 2018. **US 83 near S 7th Street** - project expected to begin in mid-October. **US 83 & Southwest Drive intersection** – Turnarounds complete. Project ahead of schedule. Expected completion November 2017. **Martin Luther King Jr Bridge (BI 20) widening and rehab** – Working on Passing lanes. Expected completion Summer

2018.

City of Abilene - Mr. Larry Wright updated the Board on the following projects:
Amber Ave – 2 intersections remaining. SoDA PH 1 Behind schedule contractor issues. Elm Creek Pedestrian Bridge – On hold for utility relocation. AEP crews unavailable due to Hurricane Harvey. Seal Coat Project- S of Ambler W of Grape almost complete 2018 Bond Projects Now under design Will begin going to bid in December. A) N. Willis, B) Pioneer Dr. C) Old Anson Rd. D) Industrial Blvd E) SODA Ph. 2 F) CDB West (hot mix)

8. Discussion and review of reports:

• **Financial Status**

Ms. Smetana reported that billings have been submitted for August 2017. The MPO has authorization for expenditures of \$406,650.54. Expenditures are \$182,650.93 leaving a remaining balance of \$223,999.61. The new fiscal year began on October 1, 2017.

• **Operation Report**

Ms. Smetana reported that work is proceeding on the Travel Demand Model. Work has also been done on the City's Strategic Budget, a Master Grant Agreement and a sidewalk map update. Full report was included in the packet.

• **Director's Report**

- Board Training: Researching options for Board training.
- Annual Performance and Expenditure Report (APER) and the Annual Project Listing (APL): Working on the APER and APL with a due date in December.

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

None

10. Opportunity for Board Members or MPO Staff to recommend topics for future discussion or action.

Chairman Kreitler stated his desire to address a future crossing of I-20 at Judge Ely Blvd.

Mr. Johnson asked for a future planning roundtable with Policy Board and TAC.

Judge Spurgin asked for a future briefing on Hurricane Harvey transportation impacts.

11. Adjournment

The meeting was **adjourned** by Chairman Kreitler at 2:49 p.m.