



MINUTES OF THE ABILENE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD

December 19, 2017

The Abilene MPO Transportation Policy Board met at 1:30 p.m., Tuesday, December 19, 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

Members Absent:

None

Staff of Member Agencies in Attendance:

Mr. Casey McGee, TxDOT Abilene Area Engineer
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 First Assistant City Attorney
Mr. Michael Rice, City of Abilene Public Works Director
Ms. Lauren Stevens, Asst. General Manager, CityLink
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.

2. Consideration and possible action on the minutes of the October 17, 2017 meeting.

Mayor Williams made a **motion** to approve the minutes as presented, with a **second** by Judge Spurgin. *Motion carries (5-0).*

3. Public Comment.

Public comment may be taken on any agenda item during the discussion of that item.

After a question by Mr. Mike Vandervoort, Chairman Kreitler responded that this is a new process. When a member of the public wishes to speak on matters listed in the Agenda they should announce this fact at this point in the meeting, identifying which agenda item or items they wish to speak on. Public hearings can then be opened at an appropriate time when the Board is considering the identified item. *No action taken.*

4. Discussion and information on the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program Project US 83/84.

Mr. McRoy briefed the Board on a recent award of funds to the City of Abilene through the TxDOT Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA) program for construction of a sidewalk along Texas Ave, US 277 and Clack St. A 50/50 cost split was proposed meaning the City will receive up to \$504,129 to support construction of this project. The MPO Staff had provided extensive assistance to the City preparing the proposal and the Policy Board had approved a resolution of support for the project. *Discussion only - No action taken.*

5. Public hearing, discussion, and possible action on an amendment to the FY 2015-2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).

Ms. Smetana explained that the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) identifies transportation improvement projects that the Abilene Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) area will need over the next 25-years. She noted the MPO is expecting to receive approximately \$64,220,000 over the next ten years. The MPO needs to amend the long range plan now in order to get those dollars programmed toward some of our recently designated projects.

Ms. Smetana noted that at their November 28, 2017 meeting the TAC recommended approval of the FYs 2015-2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) as presented with the following changes/corrections:

- On Page 2 of 9 the dates for the public comment and review shall be amended as needed to identify the public meetings to be held.
- On Page 4 of 9 under “Status”, the long-range status time period shall be corrected to reflect 2025-2040 and short-range status shall be corrected to reflect 2015-2024.
- On Table 7.8 the Antilley Road (CR 314) rehabilitation and shoulder project from the city limit to FM 707 shall be removed.
- On Table 7.12 references to bicycle lane(s) shall be replace with “bicycle facilities.”

Mr. Johnson made a **motion** to approve the FYs 2015-2040 MTP as recommended, with a **second** by Mayor Williams. *Motion carries (5-0).*

6. Discussion and possible action on an amendment to the Abilene MPO’s Ten-Year Plan.

Ms. Smetana explained that the Board initially approved a Ten-Year Plan in June of 2016. The Plan was then amended in December of 2016. She provided a detailed project-by-project explanation of changes. She noted that similar to the MTP, the MPO needs to amend the Ten-Year Plan in order to get federal dollars programmed toward some of our recently designated projects.

At their November 28, 2017 meeting the TAC recommended approval of the Abilene MPO Ten-Year Plan as presented with the following changes/corrections.

- Remove the Antilley Road (CR 314) rehabilitation and shoulder project from the City limit to FM 707.
- Remove references to bicycle lane(s) and replace with “bicycle facilities.”

Chairman Kreidler asked if this would need to be amended every year. Ms. Smetana answered that there is no specific requirement for this Plan to be amended on a yearly basis but it is reasonable to amend it as needed when other plans are being changed. Judge Spurgin inquired about changes to the FM 3034 project. Ms. Smetana recognized and congratulated efforts made by local TxDOT staff to secure additional State funding for this project which will relieve MPO dollars previously committed to it.

Mr. Johnson made a **motion** to approve the Ten-Year Plan as recommended with a **second** by Mayor Williams. *Motion carries (5-0).*

Chairman Kreitler noted no individuals indicated a desire to speak on this item.

7. Public hearing, discussion, and possible action on an amendment to the FY 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Ms. Smetana explained the FY 2017-2020 TIP is a shorter range planning document covering 4 years which must be approved by the Policy Board and the Governor. Similar to the previously discussed Plans this plan, she noted, must also be updated in order to program anticipated federal funding. She stated that no highway projects had previously been listed but now four highway projects are being added and two grouped projects are being listed. She noted a minor change is needed to the TASA project from what was included in the packet materials. Specifically the packet materials used a generic CSJ # whereas the specific number should now be listed. Additionally, some minor modifications are needed in the project location description in order to match what is currently in the States DCIS system.

In discussing the Transit portion of the Plan she noted that changes reflect information provided by the City's Finance department.

Public Hearing

Chairman Kreitler **opened the Public Hearing** and invited members of the audience to make any comments they might desire. Mr. Vandervoort addressed the Board expressing concerns about changes to project funding from one year to the next should funding be cut. Ms. Smetana responded noting that the TIP can be amended four times a year. She noted that funding must be available for projects in the TIP whereas projects listed in later years of the Ten Year Plan past the first four years may not have dedicated funding. With no one else requesting to speak, Chairman Kreitler **closed the Public Hearing**.

Judge Spurgin made a **motion** to approve the FY 2017-2020 TIP as presented with the changes identified by Ms. Smetana with a **second** by Chairman Kreitler. *Motion carries (5-0).*

8. Discussion and possible action on the lease of the MPO's office space.

Item moved to end of Agenda by Chairman Kreitler.

9. Discussion and possible action on a Travel Demand Model Request for Proposals.

Mr. McRoy briefed the Board on two new contracting requirements (HB 89 & SB 252) adopted by the 85th Texas Legislature. The new requirements prohibit using contractors that participate in boycotts against the State of Israel or that are identified on a list of companies supporting terrorist organizations. This means standard contract language used by the MPO will need to be amended and reviewed by the legal team before the RFP can be issued. This has resulted in an unexpected delay to the project. *Discussion only - No action taken.*

10. Discussion and review of transportation projects.

TxDOT – Mr. Casey McGee updated the Board on the following projects:

Ambler/SH 351 - All lanes are open under the bridge - Project is 10 months ahead of schedule.

Winters Freeway - Lane closures delayed until after the Holiday. **MLK Bridge** - expected to be complete in Jan 2018.

City of Abilene - Mr. Larry Wright briefed the Board on the following projects:

Old Anson Road - Bid opened today. Pioneer St. - Pre bid briefing is today. Projects in progress include Willis St., N 1st St., Industrial Blvd., CBD West and SoDA Ph. II. Traffic Signal Upgrade 63 signals are being upgraded throughout the City. Elm Creek Pedestrian Bridge – Bridge was set over the creek yesterday. Projects in the early phase include TASA Sidewalk, TSTC Access, Wylie ISD Maple/Colony Hills, and 2015 Bond Project - 7 projects expected in 2018.

CityLink Ms. Lauren Stevens briefed the Board on the following projects: Bus Purchase 2 new 35' buses purchased. Software - Remix for route analysis purchased. Route Update – new route is being proposed to Zoo/Shotwell Stadium. Shuttle Service a shuttle service will be used in 2018 to serve Cisco Jr College, Blue Cross/Blue Shield, NCTCOG, Abilene State School and TSTC.

11. Discussion and review of reports:

- **Financial Status**

Ms. Smetana reported that Billing #12 for September in the amount of \$22,084.74 has been submitted. This leaves a remaining balance of \$201,914.87 which will be carried over into the next fiscal year. She reported that FTA 5303 funds in the amount of \$54,137.89 and PL-112 funds in the amount of \$184,317.00 have been released for FY 2018. Without the carryover amounts, she noted the MPO will start the FY18 year with a balance of \$238,454.89.

- **Operation Report**

Ms. Smetana reported that the Staff has been focused on and dedicating significant amounts of time on the FY 2017 Annual Performance and Expenditure Report and the FY 2017 Annual Listing of Obligated Projects.

- **Director's Report**

- Joint Board Training for TAC and PB members is being planned for Jan 11, 2018.
- The Annual Performance and Expenditure Report (APER) and the Annual Project Listing (APL) were completed and turned in on Dec 15, 2017.
- Memorandum of Understanding. A new CityLink/TxDOT/MPO MOU must be completed by May 27, 2018.
- A Highway Safety Resolution setting five Highway Safety Improvement Program HSIP targets will be required by 02/27/18 for FAST Act compliance.
- The MPO has been working to acquire another entity to serve as the Transit Regional Coordination lead agency.

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

Mr. Mike Vandervoort addressed the Board on a number of concerns including: The intersection of Industrial and Buffalo Gap Road, the turning/transition lane at the intersection of Clack and Buffalo Gap, the pedestrian crossing of Buffalo Gap Road at Robertson, a desire for color distinctions to be used whenever sidewalks cross a driveway, a desire for the MPO to encourage existing businesses to provide pedestrian pathways to the business when new sidewalks are installed, a desire for the MPO to include disabled persons in the design process of new facilities.

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

None at this time.

2:50 p.m. The Policy Board adjourned to executive session as authorized by Texas Government Code Sections 551.072 (Deliberations about real property).

3:15 p.m. *The Policy Board reconvened following the executive session.*

Chairman Kreitler announced that no votes or action were taken in executive session.

8. Discussion and possible action on the lease of the MPO's office space.

Ms. Smetana informed the Board the current lease for the staff office space will expire in December. This item is intended to seek Board action regarding a new long term lease or moving forward on a month-to-month basis.

Chairman Kreitler called for comments from Board members – *None at this time.*

Chairman Kreitler made a **motion** to authorize the Executive Director to execute a one year lease at the current office location adding an exit clause into the lease should the landlord not fulfill obligations of the lease Judge with a **second** by Judge Spurgin *Motion carried (5-0).*

14. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Kreitler at 3:18 p.m.