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WASHTENAW AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

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MINUTES OF MEETING

POLICY COMMITTEE

DATE: August 15, 2012

TIME: 9:30 a.m.

PLACE: WATS Meeting Space, 705 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Members Present: Village of Dexter – Jim Carson, Chair
Dexter Township– Pat Kelly, Vice-Chair
WCBOC – Yousef Rabhi
Scio Township – Nancy Hedberg
Pittsfield Township – Mandy Grewal
Superior Township – Bill McFarlane
City of Ann Arbor DDA – Leah Gunn (for John Moutat)
SWWCOG – Ron Mann
AATA – Michael Ford (for Jesse Bernstein)
City of Chelsea – Ann Feeney (for Jason Lindauer)
Ypsilanti Township – Brenda Stumbo
WCRC – Doug Fuller
City of Milan – Martha Churchill (for Mike Armitage)
MDOT Planning – Pam Boyd
Northfield Township – Deb Mozurkewich
City of Saline – Gretchen Driskell
City of Ypsilanti – Michael Bodary (for Peter Murdock)
EMU – Leigh Greden

Members Absent: City of Ann Arbor – Tony Derezinski
Ann Arbor Township – Mike Moran
University of Michigan - Hank Baier

POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- CITY OF ANN ARBOR • ANN ARBOR DDA • ANN ARBOR TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY • ANN ARBOR TOWNSHIP •
- CITY OF CHelsea • VILLAGE OF DEXTER • DEXTER TOWNSHIP • EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY •
- MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION • CITY OF MILAN • NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP • PITTSFIELD TOWNSHIP • CITY OF SALINE •
- SCIO TOWNSHIP • SOUTHWEST WASHTENAW COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS • SUPERIOR TOWNSHIP • UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN •
- WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS • WASHTENAW COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION • CITY OF YPSILANTI •
- YPSILANTI TOWNSHIP • EX OFFICIO: FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION • SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS •

AN INTERMUNICIPALITY COMMITTEE ORGANIZED UNDER ACT 200 OF PUBLIC ACTS OF MICHIGAN (1957)
REPRESENTING WASHTENAW COUNTY

Others Present: WATS – Terri Blackmore, Nick Sapkiewicz, Ryan Buck, Eric Bombery
MDOT– Mark Sweeney, Kari Martin, Paul Lott
WCRC – Roy Townsend, Sheryl Siddall
City of Saline – Linda Terhaar
SEMCOG – Carmine Palombo
FHWA – Don Cameron
Ann Arbor DDA – Amber Miller
University of Michigan – Steve Dolen
Washtenaw Biking and Walking Coalition – Larry Deck
Public – Ruth Ann Jamnick
City of Ann Arbor – Eli Cooper
AATA – Chris White
City of Chelsea – Christine Linfield
WWAVE – Michaelene Pawlik

1. Call to Order

Chair Carson called the meeting to order at 9:37 a.m. He asked those present to introduce themselves.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Ms. Driskell made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Rabhi supported and the Committee approved the agenda.

3. Public Participation

Chair Carson asked if any members of the public wished to address the Committee. No member of the public wished to address the Committee.

4. Approval of the July 18, 2012 Policy Committee Minutes

Mr. Greden made a motion to approve the July 18, 2012 Policy Committee Minutes. Mr. Mann supported the motion.

Ms. Kelly asked that her report change from describing an “omni-directional siren” to “outdoor warning siren”. Ms. Hedberg asked that her report state the Zeeb Road path is on hold.

The Committee approved the minutes as amended.

5. Communications and Announcements

Ms. Blackmore reported that at its August 1 meeting the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners amended and approved the 4-Party Agreement and the Articles of Incorporation for the Countywide Transit Board.

Ms. Blackmore reported WATS is cohosting a meeting on August 22 from 5-7 pm at the Ann Arbor District Library to provide comments on the MDOT State Transportation Plan. There will be presentations at 5:15 and 6:15.

Ms. Blackmore reported AATA and the u196 Board members have rescheduled the District meetings to allow more time to address the comments received at the last district meetings and to test the physical feasibility of providing the service as proposed. The new dates, times and locations are included on the upcoming meetings document at each place.

6. Approval of Bills over \$500

Ms. Blackmore reported there were two bills over \$500.

1. \$752.10 – Eric Bombery, travel, training
2. \$1,397.00 – Brian Rakovitis – Intern for Toyota and WATS

Mr. Fuller made a motion to approve the bills over \$500. Mr. Mann supported and the motion passed.

7. Old Business

A. MPO Exploration Committee May 9, 2012 Minutes – Information

Mr. Rabhi stated the MPO Exploration Committee met on May 9 and July 26 to discuss MPO and MOU issues.

B. Final Planning MOU – Information

Ms. Grewal reported that she met with SEMCOG and WATS representatives in July to discuss proposed changes to the Planning Responsibilities MOU. She stated that major questions remain regarding funding and planning responsibilities.

8. MPO Exploration Committee Presentation - Discussion

Mr. Carson opened the presentation with a review of existing MPO's throughout the state of Michigan. Mr. Cooper followed by explaining some of the planning differences between WATS and SEMCOG. Mr. White described the different ways in which WATS and SEMCOG engage the public. Ms. Stumbo stated that the duplicative process is a strain on local communities. Ms. Kelly presented information on process and possible next steps for the Committee to take.

Following the presentation, Mr. Carson expressed unease that after phoning in concerns to MDOT and requesting a meeting with Director Steudle. The only response was a letter from Director Steudle that urged WATS to work with SEMCOG, but did not urge SEMCOG to cooperate with WATS.

9. Issues for MPO Separation

- A. WATS under SEMCOG
- B. SEMCOG letter dated July 10, 2012
- C. TIP turnaround time
- D. WATS TIP
- E. MDOT July 17, 2012 letter and draft response
- F. Flint MOA with SEMCOG
- G. MAP-21 Summary

Mr. Palombo stated that the question before the Committee was extremely important and pledged that a positive relationship will remain between WATS, local communities and SEMCOG regardless of any action. Mr. Palombo expressed dismay over the portrayal of SEMCOG's public involvement process in the presentation.

Mr. Bodary stated that the City of Ypsilanti appreciates the work WATS does but added SEMCOG assists the city with a number of requirements. Mr. Bodary stated that he does not support a separation.

Ms. Grewal asked if WATS would receive less money as a separate MPO. Mr. Palombo stated that under the SAFETEA-LU process, WATS would have received less CMAQ than it did. Mr. White clarified that SEMCOG automatically splits CMAQ funding 50/50 with transit and non-transit funding and then gives the highest priority project in each category to each county, which has caused WATS to strategize in an attempt to get as much money as possible.

Mr. Carson stated he wanted to hear what the Governor's thoughts are on the matter.

Mr. Rabhi agreed stating that the process can commence and the Committee can move forward based on what happens throughout the process.

Ms. Churchill stated that it takes many counties to operate a transit system and that local agencies should become more involved with SEMCOG.

Ms. Driskell stated she was uncomfortable voting on such an important issue with the City of Ann Arbor missing and five alternates at the table.

Mr. Fuller stated that the Road Commission voted unanimously to oppose a separation from SEMCOG.

Ms. Grewal stated she was particularly concerned with the language in the planning MOU that says that SEMCOG must approve corridor studies.

Mr. Ford stated that WATS is a strong partner with AATA and that he is concerned with the extra time required for the duplicate process.

Mr. Palombo stated that he understood all MOU issues were resolved. He stated he thought responses had been made to all concerns and stated that information was not provided to the Policy Committee.

Ms. Kelly noted that WATS staff had provided the data to the Committee.

Ms. Grewal clarified that the delay was because the MOUs would be very different if WATS becomes a separate MPO.

Mr. Rabhi made a motion to move discussion to the September WATS meeting. Ms. Grewal supported and the motion passed with Ms. Boyd voting no.

Mr. Cameron stated it was time for the Committee to move forward because this process is taking up too much staff time.

10. Agency Reports

Chair Carson deferred agency reports to the next regularly scheduled Policy Committee meeting at the direction of the members present.

11. Adjournment

Ms. Grewal made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Rabhi supported the motion and the meeting adjourned at 11:25 a.m.