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WASHTENAW AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

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MINUTES OF MEETING

POLICY COMMITTEE

DATE: November 17, 2010

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
City of Ann Arbor – Carsten Hohnke, Secretary-Treasurer
WCRC – Doug Fuller
Pittsfield Township – Mandy Grewal
Superior Township – Bill McFarlane
WCBC – Wes Prater
EMU – Leigh Greden
City of Ypsilanti – Peter Murdock
City of Saline – Gretchen Driskell
City of Milan – Mike Armitage
MDOT Statewide Planning – Kari Martin (for Pam Boyd)
Scio Township – Nancy Hedberg
Ypsilanti Township – Brenda Stumbo
Northfield Township – Deb Mozurkewich

Members Absent: University of Michigan – Hank Baier
Ann Arbor Township – Mike Moran
Dexter Township – Pat Kelly, Vice-Chair
City of Ann Arbor DDA – John Mouat
City of Chelsea – Jason Lindauer
AATA – Anya Dale
FHWA – Rachael Tupica
SWWCOG – Ron Mann

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, Ryan Buck, Nick Sapkiewicz, Mark Ferrall
MDOT – Paul Lott, Larry Dropiewski
SEMCOG – Carmine Palombo
WCRC – Steve Puuri
Michivan – Michelle Romano Rockwood
City of Ann Arbor – Tony Derezinski
Transportation for America – Cece Grant

1. Call to Order

Chair Carson called the meeting to order at 9:39 a.m. He asked those present to introduce themselves.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Prater made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Fuller 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 one wished to address the Committee and Chair Carson closed public participation.

4. Approval of the October 20, 2010 Policy Committee Minutes

Mr. Fuller made a motion to approve the October 20, 2010 Policy Committee Minutes. Ms. Driskell supported and the minutes were approved.

5. Communications and Announcements

Ms. Blackmore indicated that communications and announcements were included in the Directors Report at each place.

6. Approval of Bills over \$500

1. \$1,030.50 Mark Ferrall – WATS intern 10/18/10 - 11/10/10

Mr. Hohnke made a motion to approve the bill over \$500. Ms. Hedberg supported and the motion passed.

7. Old Business

A. Transportation for America – Presentation by CeCe Grant

Ms. Grant presented information on the Transportation for America campaign whose vision is to build a complete world-class transportation system to empower our communities by providing more transportation options and safer, healthier communities.

Mr. Hohnke asked who leads the group at the national level. Ms. Grant indicated that the national leaders of the campaign are SMART Growth America and Reconnecting America. She added that the group is funded locally by Mott and Kresge grants.

Ms. Blackmore indicated that the requested action was to join the coalition, which means to endorse the principles of the campaign. She added that there was no cost to join.

Mr. McFarlane asked if the group lobbies. Ms. Grant said that the group lobbies at the national level, but only advocate at the local level.

Mr. Prater recommended the Transportation for America campaign seek the support of the Michigan Association of Counties.

Ms. Grewal suggested the campaign seek the support of the Michigan Township Association.

Ms. Grewal made a motion that WATS join the Transportation for America coalition. Mr. Prater supported and the motion passed.

8. New Business

A. 2035 Plan Amendments - Action

Ms. Blackmore discussed the proposed amendments to the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan, including six project additions and eleven changes. The projects included Small Urban funding for the City of Milan and line item additions for the Western Washtenaw Area Value Express and Peoples Express.

Ms. Driskell made a motion to approve the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan amendments. Mr. Prater supported and the motion passed.

B. Resolution of Support for HB 6484 to Provide Local Match for \$161 M in Federal High Speed Rail Funding – Action

Ms. Blackmore reported that the Federal Rail Administration awarded the state grants totaling \$161 M in federal funding for high-speed rail. She added that the money requires a local match. The State will use \$150 M for acquisitions and upgrade of the existing Norfolk Southern line between Dearborn and Kalamazoo. She added that \$7.8 M will remove conflicts between freight and passenger trains west of Detroit and the State will use \$3.2 M to develop a service plan for high speed rail between Pontiac and Chicago.

Ms. Grewal recommended removing the last bullet item on the resolution discussing local tax option enabling.

Mr. Greden agreed but stated that the local tax option was worth discussing separately.

Mr. Greden made a motion to approve the resolution of support for HB 6484 to ensure the State receives the federal high-speed rail funding as amended. Ms Driskell supported and the motion passed.

C. Nomination of Personnel Committee – Action

Mr. Carson reported that the WATS Officers have been meeting with staff for several months regarding some needed changes to the WATS Personnel Policies such as a formal discipline policy.

Mr. Carson stated that he has nominated Mr. McFarlane and Ms. Grewal to work with the WATS Officers as the Personnel Committee to recommend final changes to the Personnel Policies to the Policy Committee.

Mr. Prater made a motion to approve the Personnel Committee members. Mr. Fuller supported and the motion passed.

E. 2011 Contract Proposal – Action

Ms. Blackmore reported that she and the WATS Officers were recommending a change in how staff contracts are approved on an annual basis. She indicated that WATS has a practice of voting on individual employee contracts in December of each year and approve the budget in March and June of each year.

Ms. Blackmore explained that under the new recommendation the Policy Committee would continue to review and approve the budget as well as the Executive Directors compensation. However, within budget, authority over non-executive director staff salary would be controlled by the Executive Director.

Ms. Stumbo stated that while she was unfamiliar with the WATS budget, she is looking to cut costs at Ypsilanti Township. Ms. Stumbo encouraged staff to take higher paying jobs as they become available.

Mr. McFarlane stated that bringing contracts to the Committee provides better transparency.

Mr. Armitage stated that the Milan City Council approves all staff contracts.

Mr. McFarlane stated that there are clearly different practices and policies everywhere.

Mr. Hohnke stated that a clean-up of the Personnel Policies triggered this and accountability equals authority. He stated that it wasn't important to him to know how much an intern was being paid each month.

Mr. Prater stated it was important to examine total compensation.

Ms. Mozurkewich stated the Policy Committee needs to focus on transportation policy and oversight and that oversight was afforded as part of the current proposal.

Ms. Driskell stated that she supports granting authority to the director because the oversight of the Policy Committee remains. Ms. Driskell suggested that this discussion be included in the charge of the Personnel Committee.

Ms. Mozurkewich stated that posting checks online would accommodate the need for transparency.

Mr. Carson stated that the Village of Dexter's contract is with the Village Administrator with whom goals and objectives are set for the Village and the staff contracts are with the Administrator.

Mr. Prater stated that accountability is needed and the Committee needs an oversight process to review the performance of the agency.

Mr. Fuller made a motion to refer the matter of contract proposals to the Personnel Committee. Ms. Driskell supported and the motion passed.

F. Complete Streets – Presentation by Ryan Buck

Mr. Buck presented information on the WATS Complete Streets Plan development process. Mr. Buck discussed recent Complete Streets legislation and its impact on both planning and its inclusion as a factor in determining Transportation Enhancement awards. Mr. Buck reported that a Complete Streets Steering Committee would meet at 10:30 am on December 1 at the WATS office to initiate the plan.

9. Agency Reports

A. City of Ann Arbor

Mr. Hohnke reported that the City is holding two public meetings on the Ann Arbor Connector Study, which evaluated several different transit alternatives between northeast and south Ann Arbor. He added that the Stadium Blvd. project is complete and open to traffic. Mr. Hohnke reported that work on Miller is expected to be complete next week.

B. AATA

A representative was not present.

C. Ann Arbor Township

A representative was not present.

D. City of Chelsea

A representative was not present.

E. Dexter Village

Mr. Carson had nothing to report.

F. Dexter Township

A representative was not present.

G. Eastern Michigan University

Mr. Greden reported that the University received a Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality grant for the intersection of Oakwood and Washtenaw.

H. FHWA

A representative was not present.

I. City of Milan

Mr. Armitage had nothing to report.

J. Northfield Township

Ms. Mozurkewich reported the new Township Master Plan is approximately 1/3 complete. She added that a new battery company was coming to Northfield Township. Ms. Mozurkewich thanked the Road Commission for their work on the Six Mile project.

K. Pittsfield Township

Ms. Grewal reported that the Township will work with Washtenaw County Health Department and the City of Ypsilanti on a Complete Streets ordinance. The State awarded funding through the County Health department to assist in the development of an ordinance.

L. MDOT Planning

Ms. Martin reported that approximately 330 employees will retire from MDOT by the end of the year. She added the five-year Plan will be sent to the State Transportation Commission on Thursday. Ms. Martin reported that the 2011 CMAQ projects were being forwarded to FHWA. Ms. Martin reported that construction work on M-52 will soon be done for the year. Ms. Martin added that there would be some emergency work where a truck struck a bridge on US-23 at 8 mile. Ms. Martin reported that construction of the Geddes roundabouts is complete.

Ms. Martin reported that the 2011 Traffic Summit is scheduled for November 30th at the Road Commission.

M. MDOT Region/TSC

Mr. Dropiewski had nothing to report.

N. City of Saline

Ms. Driskell reported the City of Saline adopted a Complete Streets ordinance on September 24. Ms. Driskell also reported the Willis Road improvement, including new non-motorized amenities was complete.

O. SWWCOG

A representative was not present.

P. SEMCOG

Mr. Palombo reported that progress is being made on the Ann Arbor to Detroit Rail. Mr. Palombo indicated that the Federal Railroad Administration is accelerating their approvals, which initially caused the cancellation of event trains in 2010.

Q. Scio Township

Ms. Hedberg reported that the township will submit a Connecting Communities Grant application to County Parks. She added that the township recently held a celebration of the land preservation work completed in the Township with the help of the City of Ann Arbor and County Parks.

R. Superior Township

Mr. McFarlane reported that the Road Commission is interested in constructing a roundabout at the intersection of Plymouth and Dixboro. Mr. McFarlane indicated that another possible location is the intersection of Plymouth and Cherry Hill. Mr. McFarlane reported that only one minor injury crash has been reported at the Superior and Geddes Rd. roundabout.

S. University of Michigan

A representative was not present.

T. County Board of Commissioners

Mr. Prater reported that the Board was holding a Public Hearing on the 2012 Budget tonight. He added that the updated cost of a Police Service Unit was \$176,000 per year, \$5,000 less than the previous estimate. Mr. Prater stressed the importance of public safety as it relates to economic development.

U. WCRC

Mr. Fuller reported that funding support for the Ford Road Bridge was approved.

Mr. Puuri reported that the Road Commission board would be voting on the 2011 budget on December 9. He added that MTF revenues are expected to be down only 1 Percent instead of 5 percent. Mr. Puuri reported that the Road Commission was recently awarded Category A grants for planned improvements on James L. Hart and Textile Roads. Mr. Puuri reported that the last piece of work on Huron River Drive was paved last week. He added that wide shoulders or bike lanes are not present on Huron River Drive between Zeeb and Wagner. Mr. Puuri reported that the Road Commission completed mid-block crossings and pedestrian refuge islands on Oak Valley Drive. Mr. Puuri reported that all federal aid road projects are complete for the year. Mr. Puuri added that several culverts would be installed in the next few days including one on Curtis Road and one on Jackson Plaza.

V. Ypsilanti Township

Ms. Stumbo had nothing to report.

W. City of Ypsilanti

Mr. Murdoch reported that Ypsilanti voters approved a Headlee override to fund transit in Ypsilanti.

10. Adjournment

Chair Carson adjourned the meeting at 11:20am.