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WASHTENAW AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

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MINUTES OF MEETING

POLICY COMMITTEE

DATE: December 15, 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
Dexter Township– Pat Kelly, Vice-Chair
City of Ann Arbor – Carsten Hohnke, Secretary-Treasurer
WCRC – Doug Fuller
Pittsfield Township – Mandy Grewal
WCBC – Wes Prater
EMU – Leigh Greden
City of Ypsilanti – Peter Murdock
AATA – Anya Dale
City of Chelsea – Ann Feeney (for Jason Lindauer)
SWWCOG – Ron Mann
City of Milan – Mike Armitage
MDOT Statewide Planning – Kari Martin (for Pam Boyd)
Scio Township – Nancy Hedberg
Northfield Township – Deb Mozurkewich

Members Absent: University of Michigan – Hank Baier
Superior Township – Bill McFarlane
City of Saline – Gretchen Driskell
Ypsilanti Township – Brenda Stumbo
Ann Arbor Township – Mike Moran
City of Ann Arbor DDA – John Mouat
FHWA – Rachael Tupica

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, Mark Ferrall
MDOT – Mark Geib
SEMCOG – Carmine Palombo
City of Ypsilanti – Michael Bodary

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

Mr. Prater made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Mann 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 November 17, 2010 Policy Committee Minutes

Mr. Greden made a motion to approve November 17, 2010 Policy Committee Minutes. Ms Mozurkewich supported and the Committee approved the minutes.

5. Communications and Director's Report

Ms. Blackmore reported that the US DOT reallocated high-speed rail funding, previously allocated to the states of Ohio and Wisconsin after the newly elected Republican governors of those states terminated the rail projects. Ms. Blackmore stated over \$1.19B was reallocated to projects in 14 different states but Michigan did not receive any funding.

Ms. Blackmore reported that the Governor has appointed the entire 18 member Complete Streets Advisory Council. She added Washtenaw County has three representatives: Chris White, AATA representing transit, Andrea Brown, Michigan Association of Planning representing planning, and Jim Magyar, Center for Independent Living representing disabled persons organizations.

Ann Arbor to Detroit Rapid Transit Service –SEMCOG reports that FHWA received a notice of intent from the project team (MDOT/SEMCOG) to proceed with completion of an environmental assessment with public meetings in early 2011. MDOT received Round Two ARRA funding totaling \$161 million with \$150 million to purchase the rail line between Kalamazoo and Dearborn, \$7.8 million for the west Detroit connection track project that will result in reduced travel time and a more efficient line, and \$3 million for additional planning and engineering. These high-speed rail investments will result in a direct benefit to the proposed commuter rail service and reduce the funding necessary to implement passenger service. The

MDOT Rail Safety team along with SEMCOG, the City of Ypsilanti, representatives of Wayne County, and officials from Norfolk Southern railroad met at each proposed station site in the corridor to determine safety requirements for boarding platforms and other station amenities.

North – South Rail Coalition – The WALLY Coalition held a meeting on December 6 with good attendance from most communities. The Station Committee will begin meeting to initiate station design.

Asset Management – WATS, MDOT, and WCRC collected two years of data in 2010 and the agencies will not collect data in 2011.

Traffic Counts – The WCRC has offered to help WATS prepare the recently received electronic City of Ann Arbor counts in a format similar to WCRC's.

HPMS – WATS will complete the HPMS submission in January once staff analyzes and incorporates the City of Ann Arbor data.

Plan Reviews – WATS continues to assist to Pittsfield Township during their Master Plan Update. WATS is also assisting the interns working on the CAPT/DART Access Plan. WATS has received the City of Saline and Dexter Township Master Plans for review and a copy of the City of Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation plan for review.

Project Assistance – WATS is assisting Northfield Township as they initiate development of a Non-motorized plan. WATS is assisting the Reimagining Washtenaw committee during Anya Dale's absence.

Transportation Profile – WATS has nearly completed the data collection for the 2009 Transportation Profile. An intern will assist with the data collection and drafting portions of the report.

Federal Funding Program Management – WATS issued the final 2035 Plan amendment call on December 7. The WATS Federal Aid Urban Committee met on December 1 at 9:00 am to amend the program. The Technical and Policy Committees will act on the amended program at their January meetings. WATS will call the next TIP amendment in early January.

Complete Streets Plan – WATS kicked off development of its Complete Streets Plan on December 1. The Complete Streets Committee plan will meet on the second Wednesday each month (unless cancelled) at the County LLRC at 10:30 am.

Implement the Countywide plans –

WATS hosted a workshop on Reimagining Washtenaw on Monday November 29 and most of the communities had several representatives. The City of Ypsilanti and Pittsfield Township have passed resolutions of support for the Reimagining Washtenaw Strategy and intent to form a CIA.

WATS is participating in an effort to make Ann Arbor – Ypsilanti Service improvements to improve the existing service provide economic benefit to both the City of Ann Arbor and the City of Ypsilanti. WATS is providing and analyzing data on the work commuters traveling between the two cities and adjacent townships.

WATS provides educational support to Partners for Transit though development of the Partners newsletter. WATS is coordinating an effort to staff Partners for Transit table at each of the AATA Transit Master Plan Public meetings. WATS is providing assistance on the AATA Transit Master Plan and the Blake Transit Center. WATS provided assistance on the evaluation of alternatives.

6. Approval of Bills over \$500

1. \$1,045.25 – Intern for November 15 to December 10
2. \$565.39 – Blackmore for travel, email, bulb for projector

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

7. Old Business

A. Report from Personnel Committee

Mr. Carson reported that the personnel committee, comprised of Mr. Carson, Ms. Kelly, Mr. Hohnke, Mr. McFarlane and Mr. Greden met to discuss the personnel policies. Mr. Carson noted that Ms. Grewal was unable to attend. He stated that the group met for approximately three hours and produced recommended changes to the personnel policies. Mr. Carson reported that the committee would meet one more time and bring forward a final set of recommendations for Policy Committee consideration in January.

Mr. Prater stated that the committee is discussing significant changes and accountability is critical. He stated a review process needs to be established and that the Committee needs specific measures to be able to evaluate performance. Mr. Prater stated that the county received an ISO 9000 certification and has a presentation on internal controls he would provide.

Ms. Kelly stated that much of the personnel committee discussion has been about the review process.

Mr. Carson stated that during his time as Chair of the Policy Committee he has witnessed the amount of WATS undertakes and how much the Agency produces.

Ms. Mozurkewich thanked members of the personnel committee for their time and effort on this important process.

8. New Business

A. FY 2011-2014 TIP Amendments – Action

Ms. Blackmore reported that the City of Ann Arbor requested an amendment to the FY 2011-2014 TIP to include additional federal dollars made available to the City through the TIGER II grant program. She noted that the amendment would remove the STP Urban funds, add the TIGER II funds, and add a Right of Way phase to the project.

Mr. Prater made a motion to approve the FY 2011-2014 TIP amendment. Mr. Armitage supported and the motion passed.

B. Financial Policy Amendment– Action

Ms. Blackmore reported that the Agency has not updated its financial policy since 2001. Ms. Blackmore stated that the banking industry and standards have changed significantly since the policy was developed and staff recommends several changes. Ms. Blackmore stated that the purpose was to maximize the returns on local investments through safe, secure, and reputable banking institutions. She added that interest on investments has helped subsidize agency dues but that higher interest rates are difficult to attain given the current policy.

Ms. Blackmore reported that each Committee member received a copy of the investment policy with recommended changes. The major substantive change requires a rating of three, four, or five stars using bankrate.com's Safe and Sound rating system.

Ms. Blackmore also noted that the Agency currently uses TCF bank for its checking account but that TCF only has a three star rating.

Ms. Grewal recommended allowing the Agency to continue with TCF provided it is for daily banking only.

Ms. Kelly asked if there were other rating sources that could or should be used.

Ms. Blackmore reported Mr. Lindauer who has a strong financial background and works in the investing business noted that bankrate.com was a trusted source.

Mr. Fuller stated that he prefers banks in Washtenaw County where he can go in and talk to a real person.

Mr. Hohnke affirmed that bankrate.com is the standard and reputable.

Mr. Greden recommended additional modifications to clarify the Agency's policy as it relates to potential changes in FDIC insured levels.

Mr. Mann made a motion to approve the Financial Policy as amended. Ms. Grewal supported and the motion passed.

C. Extension of 2010 Contracts – Action

Mr. Carson stated that much of the discussion on this item had already taken place under Old Business. He stated that there was a proposal to extend the current employee contracts through the end of January 2011.

Ms. Kelly made a motion to extend current staff contracts through January 2011. Ms. Hedberg supported and the motion passed.

9. Agency Reports

A. City of Ann Arbor

Mr. Hohnke reported that the City of Ann Arbor needs many road improvements, citing the the City's Asset Management Summary sheet provided by WATS.

B. AATA

Ms. Dale reported that an exciting second round of Master Plan public involvement meetings have been scheduled for early 2011. She reported that AATA is examining the possibility of taking over the Mich-i-van service. She added that AATA was expecting final designs on the Blake Transit center in February. Ms. Dale reported that Chris White has been working extensively with McKinley to add a park and ride lot at the Glencoe Crossing shopping center.

C. Ann Arbor Township

A representative was not present.

D. City of Chelsea

Ms Feeney reported that the Chelsea hospital system would be investing 60 million dollars at the Chelsea medical complex. She added that the City is hoping to perform roadwork on McKinley Street soon.

E. Dexter Village

Mr. Carson reported that the Village now allows the sale of alcohol before noon on Sundays.

F. Dexter Township

A representative was not present.

G. Eastern Michigan University

Mr. Greden reported that Ypsilanti City Council approved the Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality grant for the intersection of Oakwood and Washtenaw.

Mr. Greden recommended WATS convene a special Legislative session and invite Washtenaw County Congressional and State Legislative representatives along with other key players.

H. FHWA

A representative was not present.

I. City of Milan

Mr. Armitage had nothing to report.

J. Northfield Township

Ms. Mozurkewich reported the Township is preparing a Connecting Communities Grant Application. She also invited everyone to the Northfield Township Open House from 2:00 to 4:00 pm on December 20.

K. Pittsfield Township

Ms. Grewal reported that the Road Commission has sent out an RFP for the State Street Environmental Assessment on the Township's behalf.

L. MDOT Planning

Ms. Martin reported that the Transportation Commission approved the Draft 5 Year Plan and that the comment period closes December 31. She expects approval of the document in January 2011 but that if a no new funding becomes available there will be no new projects in the region in 2012 and no new bridge jobs in the State in 2013.

M. MDOT Region/TSC

Mr. Geib complimented the Washtenaw County Road Commission on their work to clear snow and ice from roads following the recent storm.

N. City of Saline

A representative was not present.

O. SWWCOG

Mr. Mann reported that a group of residents approached the Manchester Village Council as well as the Joint Planning Commission about constructing a two-mile non-motorized path including a crossing over the River Raisin. Mr. Fuller suggested that perhaps they could use the unused Bell Road Bridge

P. SEMCOG

Mr. Palombo reported that they hope to offer Ann Arbor-Detroit event train service to the Detroit Tigers opening day game.

Q. Scio Township

Ms. Hedberg reported that the township held a meeting last night with a presentation on the Connecting Communities grant application. She added that the meeting was well attended and not everyone supports the path.

R. Superior Township

A representative was not present.

S. University of Michigan

A representative was not present.

T. County Board of Commissioners

Mr. Prater reported that the Board is working on the 2012 budget and that currently there is a \$20 million shortfall.

U. WCRC

Mr. Fuller reported that the Road Commission has copies of a brochure outlining snow removal policies. Mr. Fuller reported that the Ford Road Bridge will be improved in 2013. Mr. Fuller added that many local bridges are deteriorating quickly and stated that the Austin Road Bridges were among his top priorities.

V. Ypsilanti Township

A representative was not present.

W. City of Ypsilanti

Mr. Murdoch reported that the City looks forward to improvements at the intersection of Oakwood and Washtenaw.

10. Adjournment

Chair Carson adjourned the meeting at 10:40 A.M.