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WASHTENAW AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

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MINUTES OF MEETING

POLICY COMMITTEE

DATE: August 18, 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 – Tony Derezhinski for (Carsten Hohnke, Secretary-Treasurer)
WCRC – Doug Fuller
Pittsfield Township – Mandy Grewal
Ann Arbor Township – Mike Moran
Superior Township – Bill McFarlane
SWWCOG – Ron Mann
City of Ypsilanti – Bill Nickels
City of Milan – Mike Armitage
AATA – Anya Dale
Scio Township – Nancy Hedberg
University of Michigan – Steve Dolen for (Hank Baier)

Members Absent: Northfield Township – Deb Mozurkewich
EMU – Leigh Greden
FHWA – Chris Dingman
City of Saline – Gretchen Driskell
Ypsilanti Township – Brenda Stumbo
City of Chelsea – Jason Lindauer
WCBC – Wes Prater
MDOT Statewide Planning – Pam Boyd

Others Present: WATS – Terri Blackmore, Ryan Buck, Eric Bombery, Nick Sapkiewicz, Mark Ferrall
SEMCOG – Carmine Palombo
MDOT – Kari Martin, Paul Lott, Larry Dropiewski

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

1. Call to Order

Chair Carson called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m. He asked those present to introduce themselves.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Ms. Kelly made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Mann supported and the agenda was approved.

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 he closed public participation.

4. Approval of the June 16, 2010 Policy Committee Minutes

Ms. Grewal made a motion to approve the June 16, 2010 Policy Committee Minutes. Mr. Fuller supported and the Committee approved the minutes.

5. Communications and Announcements

Ms. Blackmore reported the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) received 77 applications from 25 states for the most recent round of High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR) grant funding. Application requests total more than \$8.5 billion for the \$2.345 billion appropriated in FY 2010. Ms. Blackmore added this is in addition to the \$8 billion appropriated in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) as a down payment for the HSIPR program. From this amount, the program reserves \$245 million for individual projects within a corridor that is ready to begin construction. FRA received 20 applications from 10 states totaling \$7.8 billion for high-speed rail corridor development programs. FRA also received 57 applications from 18 states totaling \$700 million for smaller, individual projects within rail corridors that are ready to begin construction. Ms. Blackmore stated that FRA is scheduled to announce awards at the end of September.

Ms. Blackmore reported the County's STP Urban funding increased by \$100,000 and that WATS is working to allocate it to the North University Transit Center advanced construction conversion.

Ms. Blackmore reported the TIGER II pre-applications were due on July 26 and final applications are due on Monday, August 23. She reported transportation agencies and local communities submitted over 1,000 pre-applications totaling over \$2.1 billion. Only \$600,000 is available for TIGER II funding.

Ms. Blackmore reported the State House has introduced a bill that would allow local agencies to match federal dollars if MDOT is unable in 2011 and beyond. Mr. Fuller asked Ms. Blackmore to email the Bill number to the Committee when available.

6. Approval of Bills over \$500

July

1. Sarah Pressprich – Intern - \$1,405.00
2. Eric J Bombery – MTPA Conference Hotel for 3 employees - \$640.61

August

1. Konica Minolta – Printing - \$544.31
2. Mark Ferrall – Intern - \$607.50
3. Julie Nixon – Website updates - \$560.00

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

7. Old Business

A. Report from Bylaws Committee – Information

Mr. Moran, Chair of the Bylaws Committee read the proposed changes to the WATS bylaws. The Committee recommends one substantive change extending the term of office to two years from one year. Numerous minor changes and updates were read at the meeting and others were recommended.

The WATS Policy Committee will vote on the changes to the WATS bylaws read at the August Policy Committee meeting at the September meeting.

B. 2035 Transportation Plan for Washtenaw County – Action

Ms. Blackmore reported SEMCOG moved Washtenaw County approved improvements from the Direction 2035 Regional Transportation Plan and placed them in an illustrative list of unfunded improvements. Ms. Blackmore stated that Technical Committee asked staff to draft a resolution for Policy Committee consideration asking SEMCOG to restore Washtenaw County projects to the funded list.

Ms. Blackmore described several issues citing the importance of transparency and a full public participation process. She stated that the Long Range Plan should be a planning document that reflects specific planned improvements and not an accounting document such as the TIP. Ms. Blackmore also stated that this is the first time SEMCOG staff removed WATS projects, all previous projects approved by the WATS Policy Committee have been included in the Regional plans since the 2015 LRP.

Mr. Fuller made a motion to approve the resolution for the purposes of discussion. Ms. Dale supported.

Mr. Carson noted that WATS and SEMCOG had been meeting to work the issues out.

Ms. Grewal asked Mr. Palombo respond to the concerns raised by the WATS Technical Committee, reiterating the importance of having all projects listed.

Mr. Palombo of SEMCOG responded to the concerns. Mr. Palombo stated that SEMCOG views these issues as administrative in nature. He stated that it is important to have the entire region follow one procedure. He added that every other agency at SEMCOG, with the exception of the City of Detroit had voted in favor of this process, allowing maximum flexibility. Mr. Palombo noted that the funds awarded at the state level, of which MPO's have less control over, were the only general programing account items.

Ms. Kelly stated it was important that WATS maintain a level of autonomy to reflect the agency's unique planning methods.

Mr. Puuri stated that the WCRC commonly uses general programming accounts to help with their Capital Improvements Program.

Mr. Fuller quoted from the resolution "***Be it further resolved, that although SEMCOG has agreed to administratively amend the WATS 2035 Transportation Plan improvements into the Direction 2035 as SEMCOG receives written confirmation of funding, the WATS Policy Committee feels this is a violation of the public involvement process and circumvents the approvals of the Washtenaw County elected officials.***" He added that he felt this statement was very strong and that Committee members needed to consider the wording carefully.

Mr. Moran made a motion to table discussion until the next meeting when the Technical Committee Chair, by Ms. Blackmore and by Mr. Palombo would provide position papers. Mr. McFarlane supported and the motion passed.

8. New Business

A. Presentation on Washtenaw County ITS

Stephanie Palmer presented information about the upcoming implementation of ITS infrastructure in and around Washtenaw County.

Mr. Puuri raised concern over the placement of the digital message sign near the Kalmbach curve. Ms. Palmer noted that physical conditions limited placement of the board.

Mr. Armitage inquired about the process of adding ITS improvements in the region. Ms. Palmer stated that MDOT can quickly add requests from communities to a list of improvements for when funding is available. Mr. Armitage requested that additional signage be added to US-23 near Carpenter Road. He agreed to provide the request in writing to Ms Palmer.

B. Resolution to Support State Action on Transportation Funding - Action

Ms. Blackmore reported that at the August Technical Committee meeting SEMCOG reported that the funding level of improvements in the TIP had declined from \$3.8 billion to \$1.4 billion. She

reported the Technical Committee passed a motion requesting the Policy Committee approve a resolution to urge the Legislature and the Governor to act immediately on transportation funding.

Ms. Blackmore reported that the Committee had passed a similar resolution in 2006 but that staff updated it to incorporate the Michigan Department of Transportation's direction to reassign funds from maintenance and personnel to match the FY 2011 federal funds.

Mr. Fuller made a motion to approve the resolution. Ms. Dale supported and the motion passed.

C. Resolution to Support State High Speed Rail application - Action

Ms. Blackmore reported the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) published a notice of funding availability identifying \$2.5 billion for high-speed intercity rail engineering, design, or construction with applications due August 6. She stated WATS provided a letter of support with the signature of the Executive Director but that a resolution from the Policy Committee would be stronger. The Technical Committee requests that WATS Policy Committee adopt the attached Resolution and direct staff to transmit it to Congressman Schauer for inclusion with application at FRA.

Mr. Derezinski made a motion to approve the resolution and to transmit it to Congressman Schauer. Mr. Fuller supported and the motion passed.

D. 2009 Crash Report - Information

Mr. Bombery reported that the Draft 2009 Crash Report was at each place. Mr. Bombery stated that the final report would be on the September Policy Committee agenda for acceptance. Mr. Bombery requested comments no later than August 25.

9. Agency Reports

A. City of Ann Arbor

Mr. Derezinski reported that the City was working on the Plymouth Road project at the same time as the Geddes Road Roundabout project because of some ARRA provisions requiring dollars be spent this year. He added that Anya Dale would present information on the Reimagining Washtenaw project to City Council on September 13.

B. AATA

Ms. Dale reported that a lot of outreach is occurring for the Transit Master Plan. She added that AATA would be holding quarterly rider forums prior to board meetings held at the Library.

C. Ann Arbor Township

Mr. Moran reported that the Township continues to preserve agricultural lands and that the Township will have preserved approximately 1,000 acres by next year. He added the Township is working with a developer on 38 residential units proposed near Pontiac and Warren road.

D. City of Chelsea

A representative was not present.

E. Dexter Village

Mr. Carson reported that the Dexter-Ann Arbor Road improvement was complete. He added the Village would be doing some crack seal work using the City of Chelsea's machine. Mr. Carson thanked the City of Chelsea for helping.

F. Dexter Township

Ms. Kelly reported that there appears to be more support for Special Assessment Districts to fund repaving of subdivision roads.

G. Eastern Michigan University

A representative was not present.

H. FHWA

A representative was not present.

I. City of Milan

Mr. Armitage reported that Milan would be performing a significant amount of local street resurfacing in 2011. He added that the City is looking to better develop an alternative north-south corridor in the city. Mr. Armitage added that the City is having many issues with truck traffic as well.

J. Northfield Township

A representative was not present.

K. Pittsfield Township

Ms. Grewal had nothing to report.

L. MDOT Planning

Ms. Martin reported construction of the HAWK signal on Huron at Chapin and Third Street commences this fall. She added that a website to help educate the public is available.

M. MDOT Region/TSC

Mr. Dropiewski reported that M-52 will remain closed into September for thru traffic. He added MDOT would perform ramp work at US-23/M-17 and US-23/I-94. He reported that the Geddes Road roundabout project continues. Mr. Dropiewski said that there would be upcoming single lane nighttime and weekend closures on US-23 between Willis and Washtenaw.

N. City of Saline

A representative was not present.

O. SWWCOG

Mr. Mann reported that the M-52 project was affecting traffic in the SWWCOG area. Mr. Mann added that it was helpful to have Michael Ford of AATA speak about the Transit Master Plan and Vision.

P. SEMCOG

Mr. Palombo reported that SEMCOG and AATA attend the Ypsilanti Heritage Festival to answer questions about Ann Arbor-Detroit Rail and WALLY. He added that the Ann Arbor to Detroit project team is looking at two event rides later this year including the Thanksgiving Day parade and possibly the "Big Chill" hockey game at Michigan Stadium in December. Mr. Palombo also stated that there are new discussions taking place regarding the formation of a Regional Transit Authority.

Q. Scio Township

Ms. Hedberg reported that the Township now has a quarterly newsletter available on the Township website.

R. Superior Township

Mr. McFarlane reported that the Road Commission is installing more non-motorized paths and reported they are receiving favorable reviews. He added that Superior Township is fortunate enough to be paving subdivision streets without Special Assessment Districts.

S. University of Michigan

Mr. Dolan reported that work continues on the U of M Central Campus Transit Center.

T. County Board of Commissioners

A representative was not present.

U. WCRC

Mr. Fuller distributed a written description of current Washtenaw County Road projects. He discussed the Ann Arbor Biking and Touring Society's collective fundraising of more than \$40,000 to repave a portion of Huron River Drive.

Mr. Puuri added the Road Commission has received numerous complaints regarding its chip seal program. Information on the chip seal program and its benefits are available on the Washtenaw County Road Commission website.

V. Ypsilanti Township

A representative was not present.

W. City of Ypsilanti

Mr. Nickels had nothing to report.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was declared adjourned at 11:55am.