

**TPO Executive Board
9 a.m., February 23, 2011
Small Assembly Room
City/County Building
Knoxville, Tennessee**

The Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Executive Board met on February 23 at 9:00 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City/County Building, Knoxville, Tennessee. Don Mull, Chair of the Executive Board, presided. It was determined a quorum was present.

*Perrin Anderson	for Mayor Larry Waters, Sevier County
*Mike Hammond	Knox County Commission
*Dale Hurst	for Mayor Tony Aikens, Lenoir City
*Brent Johnson	for Mayor Daniel Brown, City of Knoxville
*John Lamb	for Mayor Ed Mitchell, Blount County
*Ralph McGill	Mayor, Town of Farragut
*Angie Midgett	Tennessee Department of Transportation
*Don Mull	Mayor, City of Alcoa
*Brenda Palmer	for Vice Mayor Joe Bailey, City of Knoxville
*Patrick Phillips	for Mayor Estelle Herron, Loudon County
*Cindy Pionke	for Mayor Tim Burchett, Knox County
*Ed Shouse	East Tennessee Development District
Jeff Welch	Transportation Planning Organization Director
Bryan Berry	Metropolitan Planning Commission
Don Brown	East Tennessee Development District
Doug Burton	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Mike Conger	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Karen Estes	Knox County CAC Transit
Katie Habgood	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Cindy McGinnis	Knoxville Area Transit
Grant Meyer	Brown, Pearman, Russell, LLC
Darryl Smith	Town of Farragut
Kevin Tilbury	Graham, Smith & Partners
Jim Ullrich	Citizen
Anne Wallace	City of Knoxville
Charlotte West	Transportation Planning Organization Staff
Ellen Zavisca	Transportation Planning Organization Staff

*Voting Member

Determination of Quorum

1. Approval of December 21, 2010, minutes

Action Possible Action Discussion

Presenter: Mayor Don Mull, Chair

Item Summary: Approval of December 21, 2010, TPO Executive Board minutes.

Attachment #1.

A motion was made by Brenda Palmer and seconded by Mike Hammond to approve the December 21, 2010, minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Election of Officers

Action Possible Action Discussion

Presenter: Mayor Don Mull, Chair

Item Summary: The Bylaws state that the Executive Board shall elect a Chair and Vice Chair from its membership. Such election shall be by a majority vote of that membership. Election of officers shall take place on the first meeting of the calendar year, and the term of office shall be for two years. An officer is eligible to serve a maximum of two consecutive terms. Mayor Don Mull has served one two-year term.

Background: Attachment #2 – TPO Chairs and Vice Chairs from 1993 to present.

Mayor Mull asked for nominations for the Chair and Vice-Chair positions. Mike Hammond was nominated for Chair and Mayor Ralph McGill was nominated for Vice-Chair. Mayor Mull asked if there were any other nominations and there was none.

A motion was made by Dale Hurst and seconded by Brenda Palmer to nominate Mike Hammond as Chair and Mayor Ralph McGill as Vice Chair. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Approval of a Resolution Amending the 2011-2014 Transportation Improvement Program

Action Possible Action Discussion

Technical Committee recommends approval of the Resolution-Attachment #3.

Presenter: TPO Staff

a. Add TIP Project #2011-075 (Jackson Ave bridge replacement at Gay St). This project is funded with Bridge Rehabilitation and Replacement funds for local projects (BRR-L) and will either replace or rehab the two ramps leading to the Gay St Bridge along Jackson Ave in Knoxville. **Attachment #3a.**

b. Add TIP Project #2011-076 (Creekwood Park Blvd Sidewalk and Lighting Improvements) with CEI cost overruns funded with L-STP (\$17,800 Fed/\$2,600 Local). **Attachment #3b.**

c. Add TIP Project #2011-077 (Harrison Road). This project is a roadway widening for turn lanes, drainage improvements, sidewalks and lighting on Harrison Rd and Kingston St near Lenoir City High School. This improvement project was previously in the TIP as Project #2008-020. **Attachment #3c.**

d. Amend TIP Project #2011-053 (Loudon County, SR-73 at SR-2 (US-11) to East of Little Tennessee River) to add more NHS funds to the construction phase of the project. This amendment is at TDOT's request. **Attachment #3d.**

e. Add TIP Project # 2011-078 Knox County Traffic Equipment control Upgrade Hardin Valley/Pellissippi Parkway. This project was previously in the TIP as Project #2008-150. (CMAQ- \$215,000) **Attachment #3e.**

f. Amend TIP Project #2011-063, Lenoir City Downtown Streetscape. Add High Priority Project (HPP) funds in the amount of \$119,970 for PE-N/PE-D/RW/CN for FY 2011. **Attachment #3f.**

Katie Habgood stated there are six TIP amendments that need the Board's approval. She discussed each one. Ed Shouse asked about Attachment #3a (Jackson Avenue Bridge ramps) and when it would be determined whether the ramps could be rehabbed or whether it would need to be replaced. Brent Johnson of City Engineering (Knoxville) responded that the bridge project has to go through the environmental process because it is a historic structure. The application will be submitted first to the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Based on the findings of the environmental study and in consultation with both the local and State Historic Commissions a determination will be made. Brent said it could take up to a year for the determination. Ed Shouse asked about Attachment #3d (Loudon County, SR-73) and why the project cost went from \$33 to \$58 million. Jeff Welch stated that there will be a significant cost to build the bridge. It was noted that 80 percent of the cost of this project would be funded by federal dollars and the remaining 20 percent through state funds.

A motion was made by Pat Phillips and seconded by Ed Shouse to approve the amendments to the TIP. The motion carried unanimously.

Jeff announced Katie Habgood is leaving MPC to move back home to Florida. He thanked her for her work on the TIP and the Knoxville Regional Mobility Plan.

4. U.S. DOT/TDOT Every Day Counts Initiatives and TDOT Needs Assessment Pilot Project Process

Action Possible Action Discussion

Presenter: TDOT and TPO Staff

Item Summary: The U.S. DOT Every Day Counts (EDC) initiative is designed to identify and deploy innovation aimed at shortening project delivery, enhancing the safety of our roadways, and protecting the environment. **Attachment #4a Background on the EDC effort and focus areas of TDOT and FHWA for Tennessee.**

The TDOT Needs Assessment process is seen as a way to identify major issues and to develop a preliminary 'Purpose and Need' statement very early in the project development process. One of the major goals of this effort is to better link the existing transportation planning efforts into the NEPA processes, resulting in a faster, more reliable project delivery. TDOT, with the Knoxville TPO staff, have identified two corridors, Western Avenue and the Pellissippi Parkway, to demonstrate the new Needs Assessment process. **Attachment #4b and 4c- Maps of the corridors.**

Jeff introduced Jeanne Stevens, Director of Long Range Planning for TDOT. She stated that FHWA is trying to combine or remove some of the steps in development and implementation of transportation projects. Often, much of the information required in the planning process is already available. The new process is looking at how to capture or utilize this existing information thus preventing the local and state staff or consultants from having to recreate it and save time.

TDOT is piloting the new Needs Assessment process for two priority roadway projects in the Knoxville area. The projects are Pellissippi Parkway from Edgemoor Road to Dutchtown Road and Oak Ridge Highway from Byington-Beaver Ridge Road to Schaad Road. Jeanne said some of this was an outgrowth of the context sensitive design process that TDOT began several years

ago. There are many concepts within the context sensitive design process that should be incorporated into all projects. Context sensitive design is more than just the aesthetics of a project. The process focuses on community involvement, consensus building, cataloging of environmental issues, and identification of other critical issues. All of this work product should flow into the NEPA planning process thereby shortening project delivery time. Currently, road projects can take 12-to-13 years to develop, design, and build. While some of the steps can not be shortened, there are some through documentation and coordination that can be reduced which should reduce the length of time to construct a project. Jeanne said part of the designing the new Needs Assessment process is to work with and gain input from the technical staffs.

The two pilot corridors selected by TDOT were selected for different reasons. The Pellissippi Parkway corridor is an example of a roadway with more access control to serve high speeds and significant traffic volumes. Oak Ridge Highway is more suburban with access to commercial and residential areas directly from the roadway. Another reason for choosing Pellissippi Parkway is that since the Knoxville Parkway is no longer planned to be built, this area will need to continue to examine ways to improve existing roads that will help us ease traffic on I-40/75 corridor.

Ed Shouse asked if the new parts of Pellissippi Parkway would be controlled access and Jeff said it would be strongly considered.

5. Federal funding

Action Possible Action Discussion

Presenter: TPO Staff

Item Summary: Staff will provide a brief overview of the discussion that is occurring at the federal level regarding federal transportation funding.

Jeff Welch stated that there has been a change in leadership at the federal level in the House of Representatives, and they are looking at cutting federal funding across the board. The House passed a bill to cut \$61 million out of the budget this year, which would take transportation back to the 2008 level of funding. This would be a \$152 million reduction to Tennessee. The Senate does not have a budget for this year. Appropriations could be cut that would impact us. But at this point it is too early to predict the impact. The best way to avoid losing federal funding is to get our projects obligated. One target area is the High Priority Program Funds which may see a 10 percent cut if they are not obligated. President Obama is interested in initiatives for high speed rail. John Duncan, Subcommittee Chair for Transportation, is in a position of great importance and we should, as a community, make him aware of our needs.

6. Other business

Technical Committee Meeting, March 8 at 9 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City County Building

The Technical Committee meeting scheduled for March 8 has been cancelled.

Executive Board Meeting, April 27 at 9 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City County Building

Joe Hultquist stated that the second Plain Talk on Quality Growth Conference is being held on March 30th-31st at the Knoxville Convention Center. There will be a variety of presenters who are recognized both nationally and regionally. The conference will focus on issues that relate to the community, including: Education and Economy, Healthy and Livable Communities, Linking Transportation and Land Use, and Sustainable Communities and Economic Vitality. We are focusing on tools that will be useful to local government officials. A goal of the conference is to share best practices and to begin a dialog that will lead towards consensus building on common-ground policies. Also at the conference an East Tennessee Quality Growth Toolbox will be introduced.

Joe thanked TDOT and the TPO for helping in sponsoring this event. TDOT has been instrumental in funding the Quality Growth Toolbox. Joe said he is hoping to have as least 700 people attend. He distributed flyers regarding the conference and said registration material can be found at www.etqg.org.

7. Public comment

There was no public comment.

8. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.