

TPO Executive Board Minutes
July 23, 2014
9 a.m.
Small Assembly Room
City/County Building
Knoxville, Tennessee

The Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Executive Board met on July 23, 2014 at 9:00 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City/County Building in Knoxville, Tennessee. Mayor Ralph McGill chaired the meeting and called it to order. It was determined there was a quorum.

*Jim Hagerman	City of Knoxville, <i>for Councilwoman Brenda Palmer</i>
*John Lamb	Blount County, <i>for Mayor Ed Mitchell</i>
*Ralph McGill	Mayor, Town of Farragut
*Don Mull	Mayor, City of Alcoa
*Toks Omishakin	State of Tennessee, <i>for Governor Haslam</i>
*Jeff Ownby	Sevier County, <i>for Mayor Larry Waters</i>
*Pat Phillips	City of Loudon, <i>for Mayor Judy McGill Keller and,</i> Loudon County, <i>for Mayor Estelle Herron</i>
*Madeline Rogero	Mayor, City of Knoxville
*Ed Shouse	ETDD
*Tom Taylor	Mayor, City of Maryville
*Mark Watson	City of Oak Ridge, <i>for Mayor Tom Beehan</i>
*Jim Wilburn	City of Lenoir City, <i>for Mayor Tony Aikens</i>
TPO Staff	
Partner Agency Staff	
Members of the Public	
* voting members	

1. Approval of May 28, 2014 Minutes

Item Summary: Approval of May 28, 2014 TPO Executive Board Minutes.

A Motion was made by Mayor Taylor and seconded by Mayor Rogero to approve the May 28, 2014 Executive Board Minutes. The Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING on the proposed Program of Projects (POP) funded by Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 and FY 2014 Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Transit Grant funds and Section 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities Grant funds.

Item Summary: Mayor Ralph McGill, Chair, will open the public hearing for comment.

2. Motion to Approve a Resolution to Amend the 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Item Summary: The following Amendments to the TIP were requested by our state and local governments.

Technical Committee recommends approval.

Discussion: Mayor McGill opened the public hearing. Doug Burton stated we will be discussing Federal Transit Administration funds qualified as either Section 5307 funds which come to our area to be used to provide transit and can be used as capital and/or operating funds, or Section 5339 funds, which come to our area also to be used to provide transit but for capital expenditures only.

He noted that when we utilize these funds, we have a specific process to follow and hence: A notice of public hearing was advertised in the regional newspaper, the proposed Program of Projects (POP) was posted on the TPO website and has been available in the Metropolitan Planning Commission library, and a public hearing is being held in conjunction with the TPO Executive Board meeting today. This process allows citizens multiple opportunities to provide comments on the proposed POP. Mr. Burton stated that staff has not received any public comment to date by phone, mail or email. Mr. Burton asked if there was anyone from the public that wished to comment on the proposed POP at this time. It was noted there was no one from the public that wished to speak. Mayor McGill then closed the public hearing.

Mr. Burton noted that the FY 2013 and FY 2014 funds have been put in one “pot” although the FY 2013 funds have already been awarded. This delay is a result of Congress’s lateness in approving the FY 2014 budget and subsequently there hadn’t been a final dollar amount to work with. These proposed Amendments before the Board today (with one exception) are to award the remaining funds available. Mr. Burton stated all of the proposed Amendments before the Board today are transit related with the exception of one greenway study project for Tellico Village (Attachment #2B) which is using L-STP funds. Attachment #2C is the project placeholder for FTA Section 5307 funds for projects being added to the TIP and identified in Attachments #2D through #2K, and amends the total project cost from \$26,687,065 to \$19,959,798. These amendments involve Associated Transportation Improvements, Security System Costs – E911 Fees, ADA Non-Fixed Route, Preventive Maintenance / Associated Capital Maintenance Items, Transit Planning Activities, Support Vehicles Purchase and Operating Assistance for CAC, ETHRA and KAT. Attachment #2L is the project placeholder for FTA Section 5339 funds for projects being added to the TIP and identified in Attachments #2M and #2N, and amends the total project cost from \$3,681,571 to \$2,195,202. These amendments involve capital funds to purchase bus and bus facilities for ETHRA and KAT. Mayor Rogero recognized Jeff Welch and Doug Burton for their support and assistance in navigating the awarding of these funds through a neutral and impartial process in addition to recognizing the cooperation between KAT, CAC and ETHRA in the process as well. She then introduced Dawn Distler, the new Director of Transit for the City and thanked Melissa Roberson for her great work, most recently as the Interim Director.

A Motion was made by Ed Shouse and seconded by Pat Philips to approve a Resolution to amend the 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The Motion carried unanimously.

3. Motion to Approve a Resolution to Adopt the Final Draft of the FY 2014-2015 Transportation Planning Work Program

Item Summary: The TPO staff has prepared an amended FY2014-2015 Transportation Planning Work Program. Minor modifications were made to the budget and additional tasks were added related FHWA emphasis areas and the PlanET Playbook.

Technical Committee recommends approval.

Discussion: Jeff Welch noted our partners at TDOT requested staff review the Work Program and make any necessary adjustments going forward into FY 2015. He then reviewed the Program giving a brief overview of the main initiatives. He noted there were no new major initiatives and that staff had looked at ways to integrate the results of the Plan East Tennessee process into the Work Program. Mr. Welch stated that staff want to again utilize the same resources produced from PlanET when they begin the process of updating the Long Range Mobility Plan. Mr. Welch noted the document has been reviewed by the Technical Committee, TDOT and the Federal Highway Administration and reflects their comments. Mr. Welch then noted staff will continue to look at opportunities to share resources for providing transit services and enhance cooperation between provider agencies in the region. He stated we need to look at how we design, develop and implement our projects to improve our overall quality of life while creating a true sense of place for our area. Mayor Rogero commended staff for incorporating the PlanET component to the Work Program.

A Motion was made by Mayor Taylor and seconded by Mark Watson to Approve a Resolution to Adopt the Final Draft of the FY 2014-2015 Transportation Planning Work Program. The Motion carried unanimously.

4. Motion to endorse the PlanET Playbook and other PlanET Documents and Products as resources for development of the next Regional Mobility Plan Update

Item Summary: TPO Staff requests that the Executive Board endorse use of the PlanET Playbook and other PlanET documents and products as resources for the development of the next Regional Mobility Plan for the Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization. The timeline for completion of the next mobility plan is 30 to 36 months (Spring 2017). The Playbook can be found online at <http://www.planeasttn.org/GrowStronger/RegionalPlaybook.aspx>

Technical Committee recommends approval.

Discussion: Jeff Welch highlighted 2 handouts, a flyer that lists all of the documents/resources produced during the PlanET project (available on the PlanET website) as well as one of those resources, a publication entitled *Navigating Our Future*, a “best practices” case study from the Tennessee Regions’ Roundtable Network, which shares successful examples of local, regional and state-level projects across the state as we all strive to grow our regions more effectively. Mr. Welch offered that this is great opportunity for enhanced collaboration statewide. Toks Omishakin added that we do not typically have a lot of examples when we are pushing for projects/growth of this nature and felt this publication offers those examples to jurisdictions across the state who are looking to develop similar projects.

A Motion was made by Mayor Rogero and seconded by Mayor Mull to Endorse the PlanET Playbook and Other PlanET Documents and Products as Resources for Development of the Next Regional Mobility Plan Update. The Motion carried unanimously.

5. Motion to Approve Dissolution of the Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC)

Item Summary: The purpose of the BAC was to advise the TPO Technical Committee and Executive Board on bicycle issues. Since 2001, our staff expertise on bicycle issues has increased to the point that they are able to fulfill this need. BAC members will continue to be involved with the TPO Bicycle Program, and will be able to use their time and energy working with the newly formed advocacy organization, Bike Walk Knoxville. Staff is exploring the creation of a transportation advisory committee, that will be multi-modal in nature, to assist in the update of the Regional Mobility plan.

Technical Committee recommends approval.

Discussion: Kelley Segars briefly reviewed the history of the BAC. She noted staff regularly hosts webinars for Technical Committee planners and engineers to learn about best practices across the country dealing with these issues. Ms. Segars also noted there is now a wide range of citizen engagement such as bicycle ambassadors, who are volunteers who go out to community events and talk about what is happening in the bicycle community and share resources available as well as volunteers who assist with presenting to every high school Driver’s Education class in the region on safety and sharing the road. Ms. Segars then noted staff manages an email list of over 1600 people with an open rate of 60 to 70% (much higher than industry standards) as well as 1100 followers on Facebook. She then spoke about the increasing challenge in finding roles for the BAC at the TPO level of higher level regional planning work, as well as identifying someone willing to chair the Committee this year. She noted Bike Walk Knoxville was formed about 2 years ago and offers BAC members an opportunity to be advocates. Ms. Segars noted that BAC members are in favor of this action. Ms. Segars also noted staff has begun to develop the framework for a multimodal committee as complete streets are about pedestrians, bicyclists and transit all working together. Ms. Segars also noted staff is available to any jurisdiction wanting to develop a BAC at the city or county level.

A Motion was made by Mayor Taylor and seconded by Pat Phillips to approve the dissolution of the Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC). The Motion carried unanimously.

6. Transit Representation on the Executive Board

Item Summary: MAP-21 requires that representation by provider(s) of public transportation be on the Policy Board of MPO's that have a population of greater than 200,000. There is a compliance date of October 1, 2014. FHWA/FTA just issued policy guidance on this issue.

Discussion: Jeff Welch stated this Item is only informational at this time. Referencing Attachment #4, an *FTA/FHWA Policy Guidance on MPO Representation by Providers of Public Transportation*, Mr. Welch noted that under MAP-21, there was language stating that MPO's with populations of over 200,000 must have representation by providers of public transportation on their Executive Board. With some clarification from the federal level and at the policy level from the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations, staff are working to identify the best way to accomplish this level of engagement with our local providers of public transportation. He noted that part of the discussion at the federal level is that transit agencies are typically either city or county departments and that there is already city and county (voting) representation on the Executive Boards. These transit departments would report to those city and county mayors/elected officials already sitting on the Board. However he noted, there is indication at the federal level that that would not meet the intent of the law, and there needs to be an actual member of the transit community sitting on the Boards. Mr. Welch stated the TPO is supportive of having representation from the transit community sitting on the Executive Board.

7. Highway Trust Fund Status

Item Summary: Staff will provide the latest information on federal transportation funding. There appears to be a willingness in Congress to pass a 9 month short term bill with approximately \$11 billion of funding to shore up the Highway Trust Fund. This action can provide additional time for Congress to pass a long term bill and avoid an immediate funding crisis in the transportation industry.

Attachment #5 - H.R. 5021 – Highway and Transportation Funding Act of 2014

Discussion: Jeff Welch noted last week in response to the impending funding crisis, the House of Representatives passed the Highway and Transportation Funding Act of 2014 which provides funding through May 2015. This is basically a 9 month extension to provide additional funding to the Highway Trust Fund with approximately with \$11 billion dollars from a variety of sources. This will apply to both the highway and transit sides of the Fund. Mr. Welch noted the Senate still needs to vote on this bill. Hopefully this will allow Congress in its next session to identify a multiyear solution.

8. TDOT Update

Item Summary: Mr. Omishakin will provide a general update of activities and strategic issues TDOT is engaged in.

Discussion: Toks Omishakin, Deputy Commissioner/ Environmental Bureau Chief, TDOT introduced 2 colleagues from TDOT present today, Liza Joffrion, Director of Multimodal Transportation Resources and Daniel Oliver, Director of Project Development, Region 1. He noted he wanted to briefly touch on 4 things today: the federal funding issue, TDOT's Long Range Plan, the CMAQ grant program and the new multimodal access grant. Regarding the federal funding issue, there are 13 projects (at roughly \$200 million dollars) that would have been affected had the Highway Trust Fund become completely insolvent at the end of August. In discussing their Long Range Plan, Mr. Omishakin noted they are 6 months away from a Draft that can be shared for comment and they hope to have it finalized in early 2015. He noted the plan is financially sound and takes community engagement to another level. Also, the Plan takes a more focused multimodal approach to transportation projects. Moving on to the CMAQ program, he noted this region applied for several grants in the most recent CMAQ application cycle. TDOT is aware of the significant delay in the timeline between the application deadline and awarding of the grants and their intent is to decrease that timeframe. He further noted the recipients will be announced within the next 4 weeks. Lastly, he noted the new multimodal access grant program fits nicely into TDOT's vision to be the best multimodal state transportation department in the country.

Mr. Omishakin stated the Commissioner awarded 13 projects for \$10 million dollars in the last round of applications, further stating there is a true demand for multimodal projects. There was discussion surrounding creation of the statewide and regional Freight Advisory Committees to include input from representatives of the freight community to assist in incentivizing TDOT to make investments necessary to move freight away from “rubber wheels” and subsequently the roadways.

9. Greenway Guidelines for the East Tennessee Region

Item Summary: Created as part of the PlanET process, the Greenway Guidelines offer resources for greenway design professionals, trail activists, and newcomers to the world of greenway planning and design. Staff will present an overview of what’s included in the Greenway Guidelines. They can be found online at <http://planeasttn.org/GrowStronger/DemonstrationProjects/GreenwayGuidelines.aspx>.

Discussion: Ellen Zavisca noted this was another publication funded by PlanET done in partnership with the University of Tennessee. She noted it arose from a demonstration project done with faculty and students from the UT School of Landscape Architecture program who did greenway design projects which ultimately precipitated the concept of developing a design manual for the region. The project team intended for the Guidelines to have multiple uses: as an introduction to the design and planning of greenway systems and corridors, as a graphic reference for greenways in East Tennessee and also as a resource to guide readers to additional information. She noted the Guidelines contain an introduction to greenways and trail design, an overview of greenways in 3 typical east Tennessee landscapes, those being along water, those following a road network and the third, along rails. She then noted there is a visual index that provides details about things like surface materials, seating arrangements and amenities, to name a few. Appendices added at the end include information on trail maintenance, mile markers, recommended plant palettes, a sidepath checklist, and guidelines for signing. It was noted that greenway usage has grown exponentially both here and in Nashville over the last decade.

10. Other Business

- Technical Committee Meeting Tuesday, August 12, at 9 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City County Building.
- Executive Board Meeting Wednesday, August 27, 2014 at 9 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City County Building.
- Commissioner Schroer’s Bus tour for this area is October 14th and 15th. We will share more details as they come out.

11. Public Comment

Members of the public may address the Executive Board with a five-minute time limitation for each person. There was no public comment.

12. Adjournment

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned.