

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

The Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Executive Board met on April 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.

*Tom Beehan	Mayor, City of Oak Ridge
*Tim Burchett	Mayor, Knox County
*Scott Burton	Mayor, City of Clinton
*Amy Broyles	Knox County Commission, <i>for Brad Anders</i>
*Terry Frank	Mayor, Anderson County
*Jim Hagerman	City of Knoxville, <i>for Mayor Madeline Rogero</i>
*John Lamb	Blount County, <i>for Mayor Ed Mitchell</i>
*Ralph McGill	Mayor, Town of Farragut
*Don Mull	Mayor, City of Alcoa
*Brenda Palmer	City of Knoxville
*Pat Phillips	City of Loudon, <i>for Mayor Judy McGill Keller</i>
*Cindy Pionke	Knox County, <i>for Mayor Tim Burchett</i>
*John Schroer	Commissioner, TDOT, <i>for Governor Haslam</i>
*Ed Shouse	East Tennessee Development District (ETDD)
*Eddie Simpson	Loudon County, <i>for Mayor Estelle Herron</i>
*Tom Taylor	Mayor, City of Maryville
*Larry Waters	Mayor, Sevier County
*Jim Wilburn	Lenoir City, <i>for Mayor Tony Aikens</i>
TPO Staff	
Partner Agency Staff	
Members of the Public	
* voting members	

Board Chair Mayor McGill noted we had guest speakers joining us today: TDOT Commissioner John Schroer and Hunter Bethea, Legislative Assistant to US Senator Bob Corker.

1. Approval of February 26, 2014 Minutes

Item Summary: Approval of February 26, 2014 Minutes TPO Executive Board Minutes.

A motion was made by Mayor Beehan and seconded by Brenda Palmer to approve the February 26, 2014 Minutes. The Motion carried unanimously.

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: Bryan Berry noted the Technical Committee was requesting approval of a Resolution (Attachment #2A) to Amend the FY 2014 – 2017 TIP, further noting all proposed Amendments pertained to FTA Section 5310 funds. The first 2 Amendments, Attachments 2B and 2C involve Section 5310 funds that had been awarded by TDOT, who has requested they be added to our 2014-2017 TIP. These both involve the purchase of lowered floor minivans for entities serving seniors and individuals with disabilities, Evergreen Presbyterian Ministries and Agape Outreach Homes. The remaining Amendments reflect Section 5310 funding that was awarded through the TPO in July of 2013 to Knox County CAC Transit, ETHRA and the Cerebral Palsy Center. At the time of approval these projects were added into the FY 2011-2014 TIP. Mr. Berry then noted that for administrative purposes we need to add them into our 2014-2017 TIP. Mr. Berry also noted Attachment 2D is a project placeholder for Section 5310 funds and takes 1.1 million dollars and distributes it to the remaining 4 projects (Attachment #2E - #2H). These are: The purchase of lowered floor minivans for the Cerebral Palsy Center; funds for the Demand Response and Mobility Manager Project at ETHRA involving program operations and purchasing; the purchase of vehicles for Knox County CAC Transit and lastly funding for continuation and expansion of the Knox County CAC – Volunteer Assisted Transportation Program.

A Motion was made by Brenda Palmer and seconded by Ed Shouse to Approve a Resolution to Amend the 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The Motion carried unanimously.

3. Discussion on Air Quality Monitoring

Item Summary: A brief presentation will be made on issues related to data collection, monitoring and analysis of Particulate Matter (PM2.5) in the Knoxville region.

Discussion: Lynne Liddington, Director of Knox County Air Quality Management described the function of her department, noting it is the local authority delegated by the State of Tennessee to enforce the standards of the Federal Clean Air Act. They perform ambient air monitoring of ozone particulates and lead for Knox County. She then touched on the strict testing parameters. Out of 5 monitors in Knox County, only one is slightly above the National Air Quality Standards (NAQS) for Particulate Matter in the 2.5 micron size (PM2.5). Ms. Liddington noted they have been using the Knoxville location of the Tennessee Dept. of Health Laboratory for their analytical services. Back in 2011, Ms. Liddington noted her staff noticed that the temperature and humidity readings for the filters did not meet the EPA guidelines which led to the ultimate shut down of the Knoxville lab in 2012. In early 2013 EPA did a systems wide audit in the state and confirmed that that lab also had the same issues resulting in EPA saying that all data from 2012 and 2013 should be nullified. Ms. Liddington noted they have taken a proactive approach and are out to bid for a contract on a new laboratory which is out of state. She further noted that if EPA nullifies 2012 and 2013 data, Knox County would be in nonattainment for at least 3 years as you need 3 consecutive years of clean data to be in attainment. Ms. Liddington noted the counties surrounding Knox are under TDEC who is going through the same process also having used the same Knoxville state lab. Mayor Beehan noted he and Mayor Waters were on the local air pollution control board representing local government and they are very concerned about this issue and how it is/will negatively impact economic development in the region. Mayor Beehan asked if the testing is being corrected. Ms. Liddington noted it is her understanding that the State of Tennessee is working with a consultant to try and prove that temperature and humidity fluctuations do not adversely affect the numbers and the above noted data in question was indeed valid.

Mayor Burchett agreed this has had an economically devastating impact and has met with Sr. Lamar Alexander and his staff. He noted one issue is that one of the monitoring stations is near the Smoky Mountains National Park where they do controlled burns, which is the monitor from which we always get the higher reading. He again stressed that there were major companies not investing in the region due to its being in nonattainment. Mayor Burchett suggested a more aggressive approach to addressing the issue of the monitoring station in the Smoky Mountains. Members were encouraged to contact their senators and congressmen about this issue. Ms. Liddington agreed to forward specific talking points to the Board members on these issues through the TPO to support conversations with our Congressmen and Senators going forward.

4. Overview of TDOT's Three Year Transportation Improvement Plan for the TPO Area

Item Summary: On April 3, 2014 Governor Haslam and TDOT Commissioner John Schroer released the three year transportation program for Tennessee. The improvement plan includes funding for 14 transportation programs. There were 6 highway projects listed for the TPO area.

Discussion: Jeff Welch reviewed the 6 projects identified in TDOT's TIP for our urbanized area to be funded in some respect by TDOT, dependent on whether or not the funds become available. He noted there is one widening project in Blount County on Alcoa Highway near the Hall Road intersection. There are three in Knox County; Phase II of the I-640/Broadway interchange, the other two are on Alcoa Highway for construction at Maloney and Woodland Drives and for Right-of-Way from Woodson Drive to Cherokee Trail by the UT Hospital. Mr. Welch noted there was one project in Loudon County for intersection improvements at US 11/321. The last one is in Sevier County and is to add a center turn lane for approximately 1.2 miles on US 441.

5. Presentation on the Status of Transportation Funding in Tennessee

Item Summary: Commissioner Schroer will provide an overview of federal and state transportation concerns and the challenges these issues create for state and local governments.

Discussion: Comm. John Schroer thanked the Board members for their efforts. He started by noting how critical both state and federal funding are to transportation. He noted he has been quite involved at the federal level with regards to funding of transportation nationwide. Comm. Schroer noted that basically we at a crossroads nationally with regards to transportation funding further noting that through MAP-21 we have funded 51 billion dollars in excess from the General Fund in the last 5 years to keep our transportation funding going and this is set to expire 9-30-14. Basically investments in our transportation infrastructure have not kept up with population growth nor inflation. He then noted we have been at fixed revenue since 1993 at the federal level and 1989 at the state level. Comm. Schroer clarified that infrastructure was just not about roads but included rail, river, international port facilities, airports etc. Regarding transportation infrastructure nationally, he noted we have gone from #1 to #25 in the world, effectively reducing our competitive edge internationally. He stated that over the next 15 years we will see vehicle miles traveled increase about 25% and a 64% increase in large commercial truck mileage. He noted safety is their number one concern and that the number of vehicle related deaths has dropped. Comm. Schroer stated that a staggering 50% of these deaths are due to drivers and passengers not wearing seatbelts.

Comm. Schroer then touched on TDOT'S FY 2015 budget which assumes level funding. TDOT is sitting on an \$8.5 billion dollar backlog with only \$500 million dollars in discretionary funds. He noted there were no new starts in their three year plan this year. He then touched on whittling down the backlog through their Expedited Project Delivery Program, which he described noting after analyzing a project to determine what is really necessary and important, eliminating what is not. It simply moves the projects to constructing faster. TDOT's top three project selection criteria are safety, preservation and maintenance and economic development. On a good note he stated Tennessee is ranked Number 2 in the nation for Transportation and Infrastructure and is the only state topping that list that has no transportation debt, done in tandem with having the least amount of revenue per capita and per Vehicle Miles Traveled nationally. Comm. Schroer noted this shows Tennessee spends its transportation dollars wisely. He touched briefly on a recent TDOT customer survey. Mayor Beehan thanked the Commissioner for his commitment and efforts to personally communicate to each community on a local level. Comm. Schroer's full presentation can be found at the following link: http://www.knoxtrans.org/meetings/agendas/exec/apr14/tdot_crossroads_pres.pdf

6. Update on Federal Transportation Legislation

Item Summary: The current federal transportation legislation, MAP-21, is set to expire on September 30, 2014. Hunter Bethea will provide an update on congressional efforts to pass new transportation legislation.

Discussion: Mr. Bethea introduced himself and noted he was a legislative assistant for Senator Bob Corker in Washington D.C. and assists the Senator with transportation (as well as environmental) issues. On the federal side, Mr. Bethea noted that for the foreseeable future there is between a \$16 and \$17 billion dollar difference between what revenue is being generated with the federal gas tax and what the baseline spending should be out of the trust fund. In order to use a pure user fee system that money needs to be transferred out of the general fund which then needs to be offset with other revenue or spending cuts. Another possibility is enacting a dedicated revenue stream such as raising the gas tax. Functionally he noted this means it has become pretty much politically impossible to pass any long term, sustainable transportation legislation. He noted between SAFTEA-LU and MAP-21 there was over \$50 billion dollars of fund transfers that had to be offset. He noted that they will be dipping below the prudent balance of the general fund sometime in July which will directly impact funds going out to the states, well before the end of September when MAP-21 expires, and could hit a zero balance in August. Mr. Bethea noted any solution will be ugly, unpopular and probably temporary at best. Mr. Bethea stated they did not feel that that the general fund will be allowed to hit a zero balance. He did note there was bipartisan consensus that there needs to be funds spent on transportation.

7. Other Business

- Bike Month activities, May 2014. Complete information is available at the following link: <http://www.knoxtrans.org/bikemonth/>
- PlanET Consortium Partners Meeting - Wednesday, April 30th, 9:00 a.m. at the East TN History Center
- ETcompetes! Speaker series event featuring Jason Schupbach from the National Endowment of the Arts speaking on Creative PlaceMaking. May 13th and 14th. **Attachment #5 – Schupbach flyer**
- PlanET Full Board of Mayors Meeting - Wednesday, May 28th, 10:00 a.m., Small Assembly Room, directly following the TPO Board Meeting
- Technical Committee Meeting Tuesday, May 13, 2014 at 9 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City County Building.
- Executive Board Meeting Wednesday, May 28, 2014 at 9 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City County Building.

8. 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.

9. Adjournment

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned.