

**TPO Executive Board Minutes
December 16, 2015
9:00 a.m.
Small Assembly Room
City/County Building
Knoxville, TN**

The Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Executive Board met on December 16, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City/County Building in Knoxville, TN. Mayor Madeline Rogero chaired the meeting and called it to order. It was determined there was a quorum.

*Dawn Distler	Public Transportation Representative
*Terry Frank	Mayor, Anderson County
*John Lamb	Blount County, <i>for Mayor Ed Mitchell</i>
*Ralph McGill	Mayor, Town of Farragut
*Don Mull	Mayor, City of Alcoa
*Jeff Ownby	Sevier County, <i>for Mayor Larry Waters</i>
*Brenda Palmer	City of Knoxville
*Pat Phillips	City of Loudon, <i>for Mayor Jim Greenway</i>
*Billy Pickel	Loudon County, <i>for Mayor Buddy Bradshaw</i>
*Cindy Pionke	Knox County, <i>for Mayor Tim Burchett</i>
*Harold Pitner	Tennessee County Highway Officials Association
*Madeline Rogero	Mayor, City of Knoxville
*Jack Qualls	State of Tennessee, <i>for Governor Bill Haslam</i>
*Ed Shouse	Knox County Trustee representing East TN Development District
*Tom Taylor	Mayor, City of Maryville
*Mark Watson	City of Oak Ridge, <i>for Mayor Warren Gooch</i>
*Dave Wright	Knox County Commission
TPO Staff	
Partner Agency Staff	
Members of the Public	
*voting members	

1. Motion to Approve October 28, 2015 Minutes

Item Summary: Approval of October 28, 2015 TPO Executive Board Minutes.

A Motion was made by Mayor Frank and seconded by Mark Watson to approve the October 28, 2015 TPO Executive Board Minutes. The Motion carried unanimously.

2. Motion to Approve a Resolution to Amend the FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program and the accompanying Air Quality Conformity Report

Item Summary: A short conformity report was prepared since this amendment involves an air quality non-exempt project.

Technical Committee recommends approval.

Discussion: Discussion: Mike Conger reviewed the proposed TIP Amendment for a project to widen Lovell Road (SR-131) between Cedardale Lane and Middlebrook Pike from 2 to 4 lanes, including pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

Knox County has requested the addition of \$48,600.00 of L-STP funds to initiate the PE-NEPA phase of the project. Mr. Conger then noted that as this project is considered an air quality non-exempt project an air quality conformity determination was required. The short conformity report (Attachment #2B) was developed to document that this project has been previously accounted for in a regional emissions analysis, demonstrating conformity. He noted that this report was also run through the Interagency Consultation process. Staff are requesting approval of a Resolution to approve both the Amendment and the short conformity report.

A Motion was made by Mayor Taylor and seconded by Mayor Mull to approve a Resolution to amend the FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program and the accompanying Air Quality Conformity Report. The Motion carried unanimously.

3. **Presentation of the Annual Listing of Projects Report**

Item Summary: Each year the TPO is required to make available to the public a listing of all transportation related projects in which federal funds were obligated in the past fiscal year.

Discussion: Bryan Berry reviewed the genesis and reasoning for the Annual Listing of Projects along with a brief historical overview. He then discussed the FY 2015 obligations, reviewing them as summarized by programming authority, funding source and system type. He also noted that this information is available on the TPO's website, www.knoxtrans.org. Jeff Welch referred Committee members to the attached detailed Knoxville Regional TPO listing of FHWA obligated projects for FY 2015. The complete presentation is available online and can be found here:

[http://www.knoxtrans.org/meetings/agendas/exec/dec15/Annual Obligated Presentation.pdf](http://www.knoxtrans.org/meetings/agendas/exec/dec15/Annual%20Obligated%20Presentation.pdf)

4. **Overview of Multimodal Access Grants received by the TPO Staff**

Item Summary: TDOT has a call for projects for its Multimodal Access Grants, which fund infrastructure for people walking and bicycling. The TPO has been asked to submit two projects from the region. Project applications were due to the TPO by December 8th. A review committee will make recommendations to the Technical Committee, to be voted on at the January meeting.

Discussion: Ellen Zavisca briefly touched on the history of this 3 year cycle of grants noting they are 95% state funded with a 5% local match with a maximum project amount of \$1 million. She noted that staff has received 3 applications; one each from the City of Lenoir City for improvements to Broadway and their downtown, from the City of Oak Ridge for sidewalk investments and safer crosswalks primarily along the turnpike and a third from the City of Knoxville for a multimodal project along Hall of Fame Dr. A review committee consisting of staff and 6 community volunteers is meeting later today to rank the applications which will be brought before the Technical Committee in January for approval of the final 2 projects to be submitted to TDOT. She further noted that 2 City of Knoxville projects have been funded in the 2 previous rounds of these grants, one each year. These projects involved pedestrian and transit improvements along Clinton Highway and Merchants Ave. improving access to transit as well as for improvements to the pedestrian, transit and bicycle infrastructure along Kingston Pike in the Papermill area. Ms. Zavisca also noted that in past years TDOT had heavily weighted awarding of these grants to projects with locations that had fixed route transit but they have tweaked the rules somewhat to make the application process more competitive for those jurisdictions submitting applications that don't have fixed route transit

5. **Overview of the Federal Certification Review Conducted Last Week**

Item Summary: Federal regulations require the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration to jointly review and evaluate the metropolitan transportation planning process no less than every four years. Staff will provide a brief overview of the certification process which took place with the TPO last week.

Discussion: Jeff Welch gave a brief overview of the recent certification process which started at a public meeting followed by 2 days of an onsite review of our planning process, which included a listening session with the Technical Committee. Preliminary findings based on public input were very good and the TPO did not receive any corrective actions. There were multiple accommodations as well as some recommendations surrounding best practices. The final report should be out sometime in March of 2016.

6. Presentation on the University of Tennessee's Smart Communities Initiative

Item Summary: The University of Tennessee's Smart Communities Initiative (SCI) was developed in 2013 in collaboration with the Transportation Planning Office and Plan East Tennessee, and has since become a primary focus of the University's Quality Enhancement Plan. The program engages courses across campus with one partner community each year to address projects tied to economic viability, environmental sustainability, and social integrity. Past and current SCI community partners have included the City of Cleveland, TN and the Southeast Tennessee Development District. The program invites TPO Executive Board communities to apply to host the SCI in 2016-17 or future years.

Discussion: Kelly Ellenburg, Director of Service Learning, University of Tennessee gave a brief history of the Smart Communities Initiative. She reviewed the SCI rationale, framework and process touching on the impact the SCI has had on partnering communities as well as the students involved. She briefly touched on several examples of multiple types of projects and courses they have developed under this initiative. Ms. Ellenburg thanked the TPO for its support during the development of the SCI further noting the program continues to benefit from this partnership. The complete presentation is available online and is located here:

http://www.knoxtrans.org/meetings/agendas/exec/dec15/UT_SCI_Overview.pdf

7. Update on the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST)

Item Summary: Congress finally passed a 5 year transportation act that should provide a reasonable expectation of funding of transportation programs for the next several years.

Discussion: Jeff Welch noted Congress passed a 5 year transportation act, Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST), which has been signed by the president for both highway and transit. He noted that each year the funds allocated will need to be approved by Congress such that the final amounts may vary. He noted staff will share details as they become available.

8. Presentation and Discussion on Regional Transportation Projects

Presenter: TDOT Commissioner John Schroer

Item Summary: Commissioner Schroer will discuss the Governor's Project initiatives and in particular, transportation projects in our region.

Discussion: Commissioner Schroer described the issues surrounding transportation funding both nationally and in Tennessee. He touched on the funding needs, inflation's effect on TDOT buying power and the new federal transportation bill. He briefly described the current backlog of projects as well as new project needs. He noted we need to partner together to work towards maintaining and improving our infrastructure to keep Tennessee nationally competitive. There was further discussion surrounding the Executive Board drafting and approving a Resolution in support of increased funding. Comm. Schroer noted they were seeking: support for, and a recommendation from the Board on their

needs list, that the Board concurs with the state that these are needed projects across our region, and that we would ask our legislators to do what was necessary to complete these projects as soon as possible. There was consensus that TPO staff would work with TDOT staff to craft a Resolution to bring back to the Board. The presentation is available online and is located here:
<http://www.knoxtrans.org/meetings/agendas/exec/dec15/TDOT Project Needs.pdf>

9. Other Business

- Jeff Welch noted that both Bryan Berry and Sara Martin are moving onto new career opportunities, thanking them for their contributions to the TPO and wishing them good luck on behalf of the TPO staff, Executive Board and Technical Committee members.
- 2016 TPO Executive Board meeting schedule. **Attachment #6**
- Technical Committee meeting Tuesday, January 12, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City/County Building.
- Executive Board meeting Wednesday, January 27, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City/County Building.

10. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

11. Adjournment

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned.