

TPO Executive Board Minutes
May 27, 2015
9:00 a.m.
Small Assembly Room
City/County Building
Knoxville, TN

The Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Executive Board met on May 27, 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.

*Brad Anders	Knox County Commission
*Dawn Distler	Public Transit Representative
*John Lamb	Blount County, <i>for Mayor Ed Mitchell</i>
*Don Mull	Mayor, City of Alcoa
*Jeff Ownby	Sevier County, <i>for Mayor Larry Waters</i>
*Brenda Palmer	Councilwoman, City of Knoxville
*Pat Phillips	City of Loudon, <i>for Mayor Jim Greenway</i>
*Cindy Pionke	Knox County, <i>for Mayor Tim Burchett</i>
*Jack Qualls	State of Tennessee, <i>for Governor Bill Haslam</i>
*Madeline Rogero	Mayor, City of Knoxville
*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>
*Jim Wilburn	City of Lenoir City, <i>for Mayor Tony Aikens</i>
*voting members	

1. Approval of April 22, 2015 Minutes

Item Summary: Approval of April 22, 2015 TPO Executive Board Minutes.

A Motion was made by Brad Anders and seconded by Jeff Ownby to approve the April 22, 2015 TPO Executive Board Minutes. The Motion carried unanimously.

2. PUBLIC HEARING on the Federal Transit Administration Program of Projects:

Item Summary: As a requirement of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) a Public Hearing was held during the Executive Board meeting to allow for public input regarding the proposed transit Program of Projects (POP). The Executive Board is to consider all public comments in determining whether the POP should be approved as outlined in the form of amendments to the FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Each fiscal year the urban area receives from the FTA an allocation of Section 5307 Urban Area and Section 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities funds. These funds are primarily for use in providing public transit services. The City of Knoxville is the Designated Recipient of these funds. The City of Knoxville has an application process for agencies interested in receiving these funds. City of Knoxville Mayor Rogero and the TPO staff reviewed the applications. The City of Knoxville has the responsibility of making the final recommendation for funding distribution (Attachment #2A). There is an FTA requirement that a Public Hearing be held on the Program of Projects (POP). The POP is a specific list of projects to be funded by each agency (Attachment #2B). The Public Hearing was advertised in the regional newspapers and on the TPO website. The complete POP was available on the TPO website or citizens could call the TPO staff and have a copy mailed to them.

Discussion: Jeff Welch opened the Public Hearing. He reviewed the federal requirement precipitating the Hearing. There was no one from the public present to comment on the proposed transit Program of Projects (POP) and subsequent distribution of FTA Sections 5307 and 5339 funds. [There were no comments received by staff during the public comment period]. The Public Hearing was closed.

3. Motion to Approve a Resolution to Amend the FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program

Item Summary: The following are TIP amendments associated with the transit projects to be funded with FTA Section 5307 and Section 5339 funding. In addition to the transit TIP amendments, there are two TIP amendments for sidewalk projects.

Technical Committee recommends approval.

Discussion: Jeff Welch noted the Resolution reflects the proposed distribution of FTA Sections 5307 and 5339 funds which are outlined on the individual TIP sheets as well as summarized on the Agenda. He noted the first nine TIP Amendments involved moving FTA Section 5307 funds to KAT for several specific projects regarding maintenance, security and passenger amenities and to ETHRA and Knox County CAC Transit for operating assistance. It was clarified these funds are for the current federal fiscal year which ends September 30, 2015. Mayor Rogero noted these Amendments are actually reimbursements. Jeff Welch noted FTA Section 5339 funds are capital related expenditures. The Section 5339 funding was reflected in the next three TIP Amendments and involved distributing the funds to ETHRA and KAT primarily for the purchase of vehicles and ITS related equipment. The final two TIP Amendments are sidewalk projects: the first one removes the Fort Sanders Sidewalk project from the TIP (the City will use local funds to complete it) and the second one reallocates the CMAQ funds originally obligated to the Fort Sanders project to the East Knoxville Sidewalk Improvements project.

A Motion was made by Brad Anders and seconded by Brenda Palmer to Approve a Resolution to Amend the FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program. The Motion carried unanimously.

4. Motion to Approve a Letter of Support for a TIGER Grant Application by the City of Knoxville

Item Summary: The Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) is writing in support of the City of Knoxville's request to the U.S. DOT for funding from the TIGER Grant Program for the construction of the Knoxville South Waterfront Pedestrian/Bike Bridge, as part of the City's South Waterfront Initiative.

Discussion: Jeff Welch stated the Federal Highway Administration recently introduced a significant and nationally available pot of money for which agencies could apply for use with major projects. He noted these funds are for projects that invest in the community and generate economic recovery. Dawn Michelle Foster, Deputy Director of Redevelopment for the City of Knoxville, noted the proposed pedestrian bridge is to span from the upper concourse of the University of Tennessee over into South Knoxville into public Right-of-Way at Clancy Avenue, a length of approximately 1700 feet. She noted this project was well aligned for this grant as they already have environmental clearance from FHWA and TDOT which is necessary to for a project to receive federal funds. She noted part of the application process involves asking for partnerships in support of the project. The City is requesting \$24 million and would be providing a \$ 6 million match (or 20% of whatever funds are received).

A Motion was made by Mark Watson and seconded by Pat Phillips to Approve a Letter of Support for a TIGER Grant Application by the City of Knoxville. The Motion carried unanimously.

5. Presentation on the DRAFT FY 2016-2017 Transportation Planning Work Program

Item Summary: Staff has prepared a draft transportation planning work program for the next two fiscal years which was submitted to TDOT earlier this year. This draft reflects staff's responses to TDOT's comments which they have since approved. TDOT will now forward it on to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for their review.

Discussion: Jeff Welch noted this document, updated annually, outlines a 2 year transportation planning work program for the activities undertaken by the TPO and its state, federal and local partners. He noted the TPO receives approximately \$650,000 - \$700,000 of planning dollars annually from the Federal Highway Administration and approximately \$125,000 from the Federal Transit Administration, further noting all of these funds come to the TPO through TDOT. These dollars support the transportation planning process and are also to be used for special projects at request of our member jurisdictions and other planning partners. He gave a brief overview of the program highlighting several upcoming major undertakings in the next fiscal year including working towards the required 2017 update of our Regional Mobility Plan 2040 and working with our partners at TDOT to develop performance factors for our planning process as required by MAP-21. Mr. Welch noted staff will also be working with KAT to study the development of regional transit opportunities as well as looking at freight movement and facilities in the region. Mr. Welch also noted staff will be working with our transit partners to ensure the most effective delivery of our area's travel demand response services. TDOT has reviewed the Draft Program and forwarded it on to the FHWA and FTA.

6. Federal Funding Update

Item Summary: The US House of Representatives approved a two-month extension of surface transportation programs by a vote of 387-35 Tuesday [May 19, 2015]. The bill, HR 2353, moves to the Senate for a vote before the May 31 expiration. The bill authorizes surface transportation programs through July 31 and would provide over \$8 billion in additional contract authority for states to obligate. The extension offers a short reprieve to Congress to identify and reach agreement on a revenue stream to pay for surface transportation programs past the end of July.

Discussion: Jeff Welch noted MAP-21 is set to expire May 31 and just prior to its expiration Congress extended it for 2 months to July 31, 2015 allowing the funding of both highway and transit programs until then, using resources still available from the Highway Trust Fund. It was noted that there are local projects that simply cannot move forward without the commitment of long term funding.

7. State Legislative Update

Item Summary: Legislation that impacts the membership of the TPO Executive Board has passed the Tennessee Senate and House and has been signed by the Governor. The TPO will now need to amend their Executive Board by-laws to add one voting member who resides within the metropolitan planning organization's (MPO) boundaries. The new member will be chosen by the Tennessee County Highway Officials Association.

Discussion: Jeff Welch reviewed the new legislation noting it affects only the Knoxville and Nashville MPOs. He then noted we will now need to amend the Executive Board by-laws to add a new member who will be appointed by the Tennessee County Highway Officials Association. He then noted the legislation eliminated weighted voting which does affect Nashville (although they never exercised it on a vote). He stated amending the by-laws will require 2 readings. The Board will then consist of 19 voting members.

8. Update on the Smart Trips Program

Item Summary: Outreach coordinator Sara Martin will provide an update on the Smart Trips program. The Smart Trips funding structure is changing and Ms. Martin will present a recently-developed sponsorship structure geared towards local employers. Smart Trips aims to support the formation of new vanpools this year.

Discussion: Sara Martin noted the Smart Trips program is a free online program that allows you to win gift cards for driving less, a creative and out of the box way to manage traffic congestion and air quality issues in our region related to driving, specifically commuting to work. She noted a new initiative this year is the development of a local match program as Smart Trips used to be 100% funded through Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds however the TPO now needs to provide a 20% match. Ms. Martin then gave a comprehensive overview of the program. Ms. Martin concluded noting that although the program remains free to the employers and end-users, staff has developed an opportunity for employers to become more engaged with a tiered level of “premium” sponsorship with amenities offered such as a company logo on the Smart Trips website, to quarterly statistics reports up to benefits such as cooperative advertising and exclusive event sponsorship. An informative question and answer period ensued. The complete presentation is available online and can be found here: <http://www.knoxtrans.org/meetings/agendas/exec/may15/SmartTrips.pdf>

9. Other Business

- The TPO has issued a Call-for-Projects for Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) funding. The funding is for local governments to construct pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and for Safe Routes to School infrastructure and programs. TAP funding requires a 20% local match. The application is available on the TPO website at www.knoxtrans.org and it is due to Ellen Zavisca by July 6, 2015.
- On Wednesday, May 13, 2015, thirteen mayors and three of their representatives from our sixteen county region convened for the first East Tennessee Mayor’s Caucus. The meeting was held at the Knoxville Chamber. Matt Murray, UT’s Associate Director of the Center for Business and Economic Research and Director of the Howard Baker Center for Public Policy gave a presentation on the state of the region. The Caucus has agreed to meet quarterly. TPO will provide staff for these meetings. Jeff Welch noted the Caucus is modeled on Nashville’s Power of Ten group.
- Technical Committee meeting Tuesday, June 9, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City/County Building.
- Executive Board meeting Wednesday, June 24, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City/County Building.
- John Lamb noted that he will be presenting “Population at the Speed of Life” at the East Tennessee Quality Growth Brown Bag Lunch Speaker Series, June 1, 2015, 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM at the United Way of Greater Knoxville, 1301 Hannah Ave, Knoxville. He has given this presentation to the Oak Ridge, Loudon County and Blount County Planning Commissions. He is available to any member jurisdiction to develop this for planning commission training.

10. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

11. Adjournment

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned.