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WASHTENAW AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

705 NORTH ZEEB ROAD 2ND FLOOR
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN 48103-1560
PHONE: (734) 994-3127 FAX: (734) 994-3129
WEBSITE: WWW.MIWATS.ORG
E-MAIL: WATS@MIWATS.ORG

MINUTES OF MEETING

POLICY COMMITTEE

DATE: November 19, 2008

TIME: 9:30 a.m.

PLACE: Scio Township Hall, 827 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Members Present: City of Saline – Gretchen Driskell, Chair
Ypsilanti Township – Ruth Ann Jamnick, Vice-Chair
Dexter Township/WCPAB – Pat Kelly, Secretary-Treasurer
Village of Dexter – Jim Carson
City of Ypsilanti – Bill Nickels
WCBOC – Jessica Ping
WCRC- Doug Fuller
City of Chelsea – Ann Feeney
MDOT Statewide Planning – Pam Boyd
Scio Township – Charlie Nielsen

Members Absent: Pittsfield Township – Jim Walter
SWWCOG – Ron Mann
AATA – Jesse Bernstein
EMU – John Donnegan
Superior Township – Brenda McKinney
Northfield Township – Cindy Wilson
City of Ann Arbor – Mike Anglin
U of M – Hank Baier
Ann Arbor Township – Mike Moran

Others Present: WCRC – Steve Puuri
U of M – Dave Miller
MDOT – Paul Lott, Kari Martin
SEMCOG – Carmine Palombo
WATS – Terri Blackmore, Ryan Buck, Eric Bombery, Nick Sapkiewicz

POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

• CITY OF ANN ARBOR • ANN ARBOR TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY • ANN ARBOR TOWNSHIP • CITY OF CHELSEA • VILLAGE OF DEXTER •
• DEXTER TOWNSHIP • EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY • MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION • NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP • PITTSFIELD TOWNSHIP •
• CITY OF SALINE • SCIO TOWNSHIP • SOUTHWEST WASHTENAW COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS • SUPERIOR TOWNSHIP • UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN •
• WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS • WASHTENAW COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION • CITY OF YPSILANTI • YPSILANTI TOWNSHIP •
• EX OFFICIO: FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION • SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS •

AN INTERMUNICIPALITY COMMITTEE ORGANIZED UNDER ACT 200 OF PUBLIC ACTS OF MICHIGAN (1957)
REPRESENTING WASHTENAW COUNTY

1. Call to Order

Chair Driskell called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m. She asked those present to introduce themselves.

2. Public Participation

Chair Driskell asked if any members of the public wished to address the Committee. There were no members of the public present so public participation time was closed.

3. Approval of the October 15, 2008 Policy Committee Minutes

Ms. Jamnick made a motion to approve the October 15, 2008 Policy Committee minutes. Mr. Nielsen supported the motion and the minutes were approved as submitted.

4. Communications and Announcements

Ms. Blackmore reported that WATS held a meeting with elected officials representing portions of Washtenaw County. Ms. Blackmore added that the meeting was well attended and that three of the four members of the legislature agreed to work towards increased funding during the lame duck session.

Ms. Blackmore reported that WATS received a response from Governor Granholm's office that thanked the agency for its concern on funding issues and initiatives and that the WATS resolution will be considered.

Ms. Blackmore reported that an error was discovered in the WATS Transit Plan. The map on page 18 has an incorrect name. Labels were made available for Committee members to correct the mistake in their copies. She noted that WATS would make the corrections if members brought them to the next meeting.

Ms. Blackmore explained the handouts at each place, which included:

1. Upcoming meetings
2. WATS Travel Demand Model Presentation
3. September and October Crashes
4. Information on important legislation

5. Approval of Bills over \$500

Ms. Blackmore reported that there was one bill over \$500.

1. Terri Blackmore - \$1,809.25 – Power supply backup for server, phone email plan, flexible spending and one month of travel.

Mr. Fuller made a motion to approve the bill over \$500. Ms. Ping supported and the motion passed.

6. Report on WATS Activities

Ms. Blackmore stated that the current plan for the Ann Arbor to Detroit rail line is four roundtrips per day which will begin in October 2010. She noted that these trips would be in addition to the existing three roundtrips made by AMTRAK.

Ms. Blackmore reported the AATA board took action on October 28th to allocate staff time to the WALLY project and formally take over as the Authority for WALLY. Ms. Blackmore stated that the group is looking for an ADA waiver for the rail cars and to complete an archeological review required at one of the stops.

Ms. Blackmore reported that WATS is processing this year's Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS) data.

Ms. Blackmore reported that WATS provided comments on both the Ann Arbor Transportation Plan Update and the Scio Township Master Plan Update.

Ms. Blackmore reported that Ms. Burleigh is working on the last week of October crashes as well as September and October corrections. Ms. Blackmore stated that the WATS crash program will be eliminated after all the 2008 data has been collected. The State is now correcting information such as crash type. Ms. Blackmore also reported that CLEMIS received a grant from the Office of Highway Safety Planning and it is anticipated that local agencies will be able to begin submitting crashes electronically beginning in late 2009.

Ms. Blackmore reported that WATS was approached by Toyota to perform special crash analysis. Toyota has submitted a proposal outlining the information the company is interested in. WATS is in the process of reviewing the proposal.

Ms. Blackmore reported that WATS is working on collecting information on six types of deficiencies in the transportation system as part of the development of the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan. Identification of both crash and bridge deficiencies is complete and work on transit, non-motorized, congestion and pavement is underway. Ms. Blackmore added that WATS is waiting for financial projections from SEMCOG and MDOT which is needed to develop projects for the Long Range Plan. WATS is planning to have a set of kick-off meetings in January to review goals and objectives and a set of meetings in March to review projects.

Ms. Blackmore stated that the WATS blog has received five comments on deficiencies so far. She added that FHWA has taken an interest in the blog and has submitted it nationally as a best practice for public involvement.

Ms. Blackmore reported that the WATS transit plan has been presented at five of the regional planning groups, the Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor City Councils, two Chambers of Commerce and a Township board. This work is to help communities better understand the plan and its recommendations. Five additional presentations have already been scheduled. WATS has been working to collect data on other examples of transit authority funding and organizational structure

and working with the Chair of the County Board of Commissioners to help advance the implementation of the Countywide Transit Plan.

Ms. Blackmore stated that WATS has been involved in developing a Statewide Vision for transit. She stated that a draft plan and summary will be posted on the WATS website.

Ms. Blackmore reported that the necessary agreements for the Mobility Management position have been signed by MDOT and that the Director and Board are working on a work plan as well as goals and objectives for the first year of service.

7. Old Business

There was no old business.

8. New Business

A. 2030 Long Range Plan Amendments- Action

Mr. Bombery stated that WATS issued a call for amendments for FY 2009 of the 2030 Long Range Plan. Twelve additional projects were proposed to be added. Each of the projects was taken from an existing line item project in the Long Range Plan which allows the Long Range Plan to remain fiscally constrained. The projects affecting Environmental Justice areas had positive effects. For the amendments, SEMCOG performed an Environmental Mitigation analysis which Mr. Bombery discussed.

Mr. Bombery informed the Committee that the Technical Committee reviewed the proposed amendments and recommended approval by the Policy Committee.

Ms. Kelly made a motion to approve the 2030 LRP amendments. Mr. Fuller supported and the motion passed.

B. Milan National Functional Classification Changes - Action

Mr. Buck reported that the City of Milan is working to update the National Functional Classification of some of the City's roads. Mr. Buck stated that the National Functional Classification is a hierarchical system that determines a road's eligibility to receive federal dollars for improvements. While the system is updated every ten years as a result of the decennial census, interim updates are allowed if the changes are warranted.

Mr. Buck reported that the City of Milan is requesting 5 changes to the NFC system including; Lewis from Dexter to North, Arkona from Dexter to the City Line, Marvin from County to Lewis, Dexter from County to Main and E. Main from County to US-23.

Mr. Buck stated that the Dexter Road and E. Main upgrades will need to be approved by the Monroe Federal Aid Committee as well.

Mr. Buck stated that if the proposed changes are approved by WATS they will be forwarded to SEMCOG, MDOT and ultimately submitted to FHWA for approval.

Mr. Puuri asked if the portion of Arkona Road under the jurisdiction of the Washtenaw County Road Commission was already eligible for federal aid. Mr. Buck indicated that the segment of Arkona from Platt to the W. Milan City limit was already classified as a Rural Minor Collector.

Ms. Jammick made a motion to approve the proposed NFC changes. Ms. Ping supported and the motion passed.

C. WATS Travel Model - Presentation

Mr. Buck gave a presentation on the new WATS Travel Demand Forecast Model. The presentation gave a background on how travel models work and the improvements to the new model. The model provides information used in developing congestion deficiencies for the Long Range Transportation Plan and also allows staff to analyze potential transportation system improvements. Mr. Buck stressed that, time permitting; many of the ideas from Committee members can be tested using the model to analyze potential impacts to the transportation system.

Mr. Fuller asked if information from the model was available for any Township. Mr. Buck stated that, indeed, information was available for any Township. Mr. Fuller also asked if the model has a time of day component to reflect times where there are higher levels of congestions. Mr. Buck indicated that the model did have a time of day component.

Mr. Puuri inquired as to whether or not the model could reflect signal timing improvements such as signal interconnects. Mr. Buck cautioned that macro scale models such as the WATS model use a surrogate link based delay method rather than intersection based but that the impacts of a signal interconnect could be reflected by the model.

Ms. Jammick stated that this information would be very helpful to police and fire agencies.

D. 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan Schedule - Information

Mr. Buck discussed the schedule of the 2035 Long Range Plan development which was distributed at each place. The Plan Development schedule highlighted major events and processes in Long Range Plan Development including Goals and Objectives, deficiency identification, project development and public involvement.

E. Nomination Committee – Chair Action

Ms. Driskell stated that a nominating committee needed to be established to nominate to replace WATS Vice-Chair and the FAC representative. Mr. Carson and Ms. Feeny were asked to serve as the nominations Committee by Chair Driskell, both Mr. Carson and Ms. Feeny accepted. The Committee will bring forward a nominee at the December Policy Committee meeting.

F. Personnel Committee – Chair Action

Ms. Driskell stated that a Personnel Committee to discuss and make a recommendation to the Policy Committee on 2009 contracts needed to be established. Ms. Driskell asked Ms. Feeney and Ms. Kelly to join her as members of the Personnel Committee. Both Ms. Feeney and Ms. Kelly agreed to sit on the Personnel Committee.

The three person committee will bring forth recommendations for 2009 contracts at the December Policy Committee meeting.

9. Agency Reports

A. City of Ann Arbor

A representative was not present

B. AATA

A representative was not present

C. Ann Arbor Township

A representative was not present.

D. City of Chelsea

Ms. Feeney had nothing to report.

E. Dexter Village

Mr. Carson had nothing to report.

F. Dexter Township

Ms. Kelly had nothing to report.

G. Planning Advisory Board

Ms. Blackmore reported that the PAB reviewed the Scio Township Master Plan. She also reported that she was reappointed to the board for 2009.

H. Eastern Michigan University

A representative was not present.

I. FHWA

A representative was not present.

J. Northfield Township

A representative was not present.

K. Pittsfield Township

A representative was not present.

L. MDOT Planning

Ms. Boyd reported that MDOT project planning is working on developing a list of projects for submission for any new sources of funding which have been rumored as part of a possible economic stimulus bill. Chair Driskell inquired whether the US-12 project would be submitted. Ms. Martin added that the environmental documentation for a possible US-12 project needed to be updated and that it would not be feasible to have the project be included in a list of projects for 2009 but that the update process could be worked through quickly.

Ms. Boyd reported that revenue estimates for the TIP were just released to MPO's. She stated that revenue estimates are being held flat after a 5.7% rescission in urban funds and a 7.6% rescission in rural funds for FY 2009. Funding is being held flat for FY 2010 and FY 2011 and a 3.2% increase is proposed for FY 2012 and FY 2013.

M. MDOT Region/TSC

Mr. Lott reported that with the exception of work on M-14, the rest of the MDOT projects in Washtenaw County have been completed.

N. City of Saline

Ms. Driskell reported that she was elected to the Board of Directors of the National League of Cities and that Transportation Policy is a huge issue with the group. She stated that it is critical that areas have lists of needs so that if increased funding is made available that projects are ready to move forward.

Ms. Driskell also reported that the Transportation Funding Task Force's recommendations have been released.

O. SWWCOG

A representative was not present.

P. SEMCOG

Mr. Palombo reported that the SEMCOG General Assembly meeting will be held on Thursday, November 20th. The meeting will include updates on the various transit initiatives going on in the area. Mr. Palombo also stressed the importance of making sure the legislature understands the importance of the transportation funding issues over the next three weeks so that progress can be made during the lame duck session. Mr. Palombo stated that if change isn't made now, it may be delayed by several years.

Q. Scio Township

Mr. Nielsen had nothing to report.

R. Superior Township

A representative was not present.

S. University of Michigan

Mr. Miller had nothing to report.

T. County Board of Commissioners

Ms. Ping reported that the Commission would be acting on the Road Commission appointment to fill the position currently held by Mr. Viegel as his term is up in January.

U. WCRC

Mr. Puuri reported that the WCRC Capital Improvement program is going to print later in the week. He reported that the Road Commission is hoping that the Dexter Main Street Bridge will lanes of the two-way traffic open before the frost sets in. He added that Holmes Road has received the top course. The Jackson Road Phase III project will have all driveways on the north side of the road tied to the temporary road for the winter. He added that the E. Delhi bridge work continues but that it will not be open this winter. An accident occurred at the bridge site where a beam fell on one of the consultants.

V. Ypsilanti Township

Ms. Jamnick thanked everyone for their support and time working with her as a member of the WATS Policy Committee.

W. City of Ypsilanti

Mr. Nickels had nothing to report.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 A.M.