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## WASHTENAW AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

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### MINUTES OF MEETING

#### POLICY COMMITTEE

DATE: October 15, 2008

TIME: 9:30 a.m.

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

Members Present: Ypsilanti Township – Ruth Ann Jamnick, Vice-Chair  
Dexter Township/WCPAB – Pat Kelly, Secretary-Treasurer  
Pittsfield Township – Jim Walter  
Village of Dexter – Jim Carson  
SWWCOG – Ron Mann  
City of Ann Arbor – Mike Anglin  
City of Ypsilanti – Bill Nickels  
AATA – Jesse Bernstein  
WCBOC – Jessica Ping  
Northfield Township – Cindy Wilson  
Superior Township – Brenda McKinney  
EMU – John Donnegan  
WCRC- Fred Viegel  
City of Chelsea – Ann Feeney  
MDOT Statewide Planning – Pam Boyd

Members Absent: City of Saline – Gretchen Driskell, Chair  
U of M – Hank Baier  
Ann Arbor Township – Mike Moran  
Scio Township – Jean King

Others Present: WATS – Terri Blackmore, Ryan Buck, Eric Bombery, Nick Sapkiewicz  
WCRC – Steve Puuri  
MDOT – Paul Lott

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#### 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

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

2. Public Participation

Vice-Chair Jamnick 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 September 17, 2008 Policy Committee Minutes

Mr. Viegel made a motion to approve the September 17, 2008 Policy Committee minutes. Mr. Walter supported the motion and the minutes were approved as submitted.

4. Communications and Announcements

Ms. Blackmore reported that WATS met with Cambridge Systematics on October 14<sup>th</sup> to discuss using Asset Manager NT for the 2035 Long Range Plan as well as the Transportation Improvements Program (TIP).

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

1. Upcoming meetings
2. Statewide Transit Vision PowerPoint
3. MDOT PowerPoint on funding
4. Time line of transit efforts

5. Approval of Bills over \$500

Ms. Blackmore reported that there were two bills over \$500.

1. LSA Associates - \$23,177.22 final billing for travel model contract
2. Terri Blackmore - \$599.16 – Hard drive, postage, phone email, flexible spending and travel

Ms. Kelly made a motion to approve the bills over \$500. Mr. Walter 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 Planning Committee met and is recommending that AATA allocate staff resources to manage the WALLY project. Ms. Blackmore stated that the AATA

board was scheduled to take action later in the day on staff resources as well as movement towards being the operating authority for the WALLY line.

Ms. Blackmore stated that AATA has asked for WATS position on the taking over of the project. Ms. Carson asked what affect it would have on Ms. Blackmore's time. Ms. Blackmore stated that it would allow more of her time to go towards other projects.

Mr. Nickels made a motion that WATS recommend AATA provide staff resources to take a leadership role in the WALLY project as well as support a potential reorganization to a PA 196 agency that would be the operating authority for the WALLY. Ms. Ping supported the motion and the motion passed with Mr. Bernstein abstaining.

Ms. Blackmore reminded Committee members that the 2008 Asset Management Data collection is complete and that WATS has begun to provide the data to communities for inclusion in their planning documents upon request.

Ms. Blackmore reported that WATS is beginning to process HPMS counts for this year.

Ms. Blackmore reported Ms. Burleigh is working on the last week of September crashes and waiting on some corrections from August and September.

Ms. Blackmore reported that the new travel demand forecast model has been delivered and the final bill approved earlier in the meeting. She added that Mr. Buck will be giving a presentation on the new model and what it can do for member agencies at the next meeting.

Ms. Blackmore reported that she has presented information on the WATS Transit Plan to several regional groups such as the Washtenaw Metro Alliance, the Milan Organization for Regional Excellence, Saline Sustainability Circle, Chelsea Area Planning Team/Dexter Area Regional Team, Saline City Council and Manchester Area Joint Planning Commission. She noted that she presented the plan to the Ann Arbor Township Board and Planning Commission on September 22 as well as at the Ypsilanti Chamber's Public Policy meeting on October 7. Ms. Blackmore added that the presentation will be made to the Ann Arbor Chamber's Board, their Public Policy Committee as well as Chamber members interested in Transit on October 27 and to the Ann Arbor City Council on November 10. She stated that these presentations were aimed at providing local leaders with an understanding of the concepts in the plan and how it affects each area and what local groups can do to help implement the ideas.

Ms. Blackmore stated a group has been meeting to discuss the preservation of transit service in Eastern Washtenaw County. WATS has assisted this group by providing maps that show the origin of students and staff for EMU, WCC, St. Joseph Hospital and U of M. Ms. Blackmore added that EMU president, Dr. Susan Martin has committed to buying bus passes. President Whitworth of WCC has also committed to purchasing bus passes and selling them to students at a reduced rate and possibly setting up a ridesharing program with St. Joseph hospital.

Ms. Blackmore reported that in an effort to begin implementing the WATS Transit Plan, staff has been collecting data on other authorities' funding, organizational framework and voting structure.

She stated that WATS has been working with the county board chair to meet with the Ann Arbor City Council members to advance the county wide transit plan.

Ms. Blackmore stated that WATS has been involved in developing a Statewide Vision for transit. She thanked Mr. Sapkiewicz for his work in compiling data on other statewide efforts. She stated that a draft document has been completed along with an executive summary and PowerPoint presentation which was presented to the Transportation Funding Task Force.

Ms. Blackmore reported that an individual has been hired for the mobility management function for the county. She stated that funding for the position is made available through grants and allocations of Job Access Reverse Commute and New Freedom Funds.

7. Old Business

There was no old business.

8. New Business

A. FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program Amendments- Action

Mr. Bombery stated that this was the first call for amendments for FY 2009. Of the projects submitted as amendments, 23 are additions, 5 deletions and 24 changes to existing projects. With the amendments the TIP remains fiscally constrained with the addition of new federal, state and local dollar to fund the new projects.

Mr. Bombery reported that an Environmental Justice analysis showed that the eight projects within EJ areas would have positive impacts on the community.

Mr. Bombery stated that in order to fulfill a federal requirement, SEMCOG performed an Environmental Mitigation analysis that looked at the potential impact of the projects as a whole on the environment.

Ms. Kelly made a motion to approve the FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program amendments as presented. Ms. Ping supported and the motion passed.

B. FY 2009 First Quarter Financial Statements - Action

Ms. Blackmore stated that in the first quarter the Agency expended about 24% of the budget and took in 35% of expected revenues. Ms. Blackmore added that the schedule for development of the Long Range Transportation Plan had changed since the time the budget was created which resulted in 44% of the fiscal year's budget being expended in the first quarter. Ms. Blackmore stated that a budget amendment is necessary to increase funding for Plan Development and decrease budget for Plan Monitoring, Planning Services and Implementation with no change to Plan Administration or the total budgeted amount.

Ms. Ping made a motion to amend the budget to increase the Plan Development task by \$42,000 and reduce Plan Monitoring by \$5,500, reduce Planning Services by \$12,000 and reduce Plan Implementation by \$25,000 and to approve the First Quarter Financial Statements. Ms. Feeney supported and the motion passed.

C. MDOT Presentation on Financial Outlook - Action

Ms. Boyd from MDOT Statewide Planning gave a presentation on the financial outlook for MDOT over the next several years. The presentation discussed reducing Highway Trust Fund Revenues as well as the State's likely inability to match all Federal funds that would come to Michigan. The presentation also discussed alternatives of where to cut programs to fall in line with a significantly reduced budget. She noted decrease in expected revenues require that the current five year program would be "stretched" out over several more years.

Ms. Kelly asked if this presentation had been given to the State legislature. Ms. Boyd replied that the presentation was given to the Transportation Funding Task Force.

Ms. Feeney asked how reducing MTF revenues would impact funding for Transit. Ms. Boyd stated that the same funding sources that pay for roads, pays for transit and that the funding problem is multi-modal.

Ms. Blackmore stated that some of the recommendations from TF2 seemed to minimize the magnitude of the problem by recommending inadequate funding solutions.

Ms. Blackmore stated that included with the meeting packet was a resolution urging the legislature to take action on several specific items to reduce the impact of the states likely inability to match federal funds.

Ms. Blackmore also stated that some members of the legislature are saying that they are not hearing transportation referred to as a problem by a large number of constituents and she suggested anyone with concerns over transportation contact their State Senators and Representatives.

Ms. Kelly made a motion to approve the resolution. Ms. Feeney supported and the motion passed.

The resolution is attached to the meeting minutes at the WATS office.

D. Presentation on Statewide Vision - Information

Ms. Blackmore gave a presentation on the Statewide Transit Vision that she had previously made to the TF2 group. The presentation discussed the importance of Michigan having a comprehensive transportation system serving all Michiganders. The presentation also discussed how transit promotes economic development and job creation and that the state must make a major investment in the system today to succeed economically in the future.

E. Consideration of additional WATS membership - Action

Ms. Blackmore reported that based on a public comment from the previous Policy Committee meeting, she investigated the possibility of expanding WATS Committee membership to special groups such as the elderly or people with disabilities. She stated that other similar agencies do have representatives at the table but that it is at the Technical Committee level. Ms. Blackmore stated that there is also the possibility of setting up a citizens advisory committee that would be open to anyone interested in transportation. She added that changing membership would require an update to the bylaws and that a bylaws subcommittee would need to be formed.

Mr. Viegel said that if membership is opened up to some groups, it will end up being open to all and that the group will become too large. Mr. Mann stated that as a representative for the SWWCOG, he already represents all residents including special groups. Ms. Feeney stated that if membership is opened up to special groups that the Policy Committee needs to be prepared to listen to the recommendations they have. Mr. Puuri stated he felt an advisory committee would best address the needs. Mr. Lott stated that at other similar agencies, citizen representatives of special groups are usually a paid staff member.

Mr. Bernstein made a motion to have additional membership considered at the next meeting of the bylaws subcommittee in May of 2009. Ms. Ping supported and the motion passed.

9. Agency Reports

A. City of Ann Arbor

Mr. Anglin stated he would like to see more consideration by planning officials with regard to access for transit into shopping centers and other destinations. He added that particularly the elderly and disabled are often forced to get off the bus too far from their ultimate destination.

B. AATA

Mr. Bernstein stated that the AATA is looking to spend 3 million dollars on improvements to the Blake Transit Center and that AATA continues to work on the "hubs" of its system including a joint project with U of M on North University. Mr. Bernstein also stated he was very excited as he feels AATA is focusing its services based on what it is hearing from its users. He cited recent discussions with WCC regarding bus schedules and the need to match them up with class schedules.

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 reported that the road commission held a meeting to discuss the Dexter-Pinckney Bridge project. She added that the road commission received a lot of input.

G. Planning Advisory Board

Ms. Blackmore had nothing to report.

H. Eastern Michigan University

Mr. Donnegan had nothing to report.

I. FHWA

A representative was not present.

J. Northfield Township

Ms. Wilson had nothing to report.

K. Pittsfield Township

Mr. Walter had nothing to report.

L. MDOT Planning

Ms. Boyd reported that revenue estimated for the new TIP and the Long Range Plan should be made available to WATS in mid November.

M. MDOT Region/TSC

Ms. Lott stated that October 21<sup>st</sup> MDOT will be holding a Maintaining Traffic Summit on the terrace level of the Washtenaw County Road Commission building to discuss State and local projects. Mr. Lott added that the only current MDOT project with work continuing is along M-14.

N. City of Saline

A representative was not present.

O. SWWCOG

Mr. Mann had nothing to report

P. SEMCOG

A representative was not present.

Q. Scio Township

A representative was not present.

R. Superior Township

A representative was not present.

S. University of Michigan

A representative was not present

T. County Board of Commissioners

Ms. Ping reported that at the Board of Commissioners meeting that night the board would be voting on a Road Commission appointment. She added that the board is considering how they award contracts and will consider how to offer priority to bids from local companies and workers to help the local economy.

U. WCRC

Mr. Puuri reported that the Holmes Road project has had the top course layer added on the west end of the project and that work continues on the east end. The temporary road for the Jackson phase III project is carrying traffic during current utility work. One abutment is complete at the Dexter Main St. Bridge and a second is expected later in the week.

Mr. Puuri added that the Old State road permit project near Wal-Mart is underway and nearly complete.

Mr. Puuri stated that the road commission is accepting comments through the end of next week on the Capital Improvement Program. Mr. Puuri showed a map which displayed the anticipated per capita expenditures by minor civil division.

V. Ypsilanti Township

Ms. Jamnick had nothing to report.

W. City of Ypsilanti

Mr. Nickels had nothing to report.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 A.M.