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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

NOTICE OF MEETING

WATS POLICY COMMITTEE

DATE: Wednesday, December 21, 2011

TIME: 9:30 a.m.

PLACE: WATS meeting space – 705 N Zeeb, 2nd Floor – Access through WATS

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order / Introductions
2. Changes/Approval of Agenda
3. Public Participation
4. Approval of Minutes – November 16, 2011 WATS Policy Committee (attached) – Action
5. Communications and Announcements
6. Approval of Bills over \$500
7. Old Business
 - A. MPO Exploration Committee Update
 1. Minutes of October 20, 2011 MPO Exploration Committee (attached) – Information
 2. Letter to SEMCOG on MOU/Pass-Through Agreements (attachments)
Rabhi/Blackmore – Action
8. New Business
 - A. 2040 Regional Development Forecast (Presentation) Xuan Liu - Discussion
 - B. Special Interest Technical Committee membership selection (attached) – Action
 - C. PA 152 Insurance Requirements (attached) – Action

POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

• CITY OF ANN ARBOR • ANN ARBOR DDA • ANN ARBOR TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY • ANN ARBOR TOWNSHIP •
• CITY OF CHELSEA • VILLAGE OF DEXTER • DEXTER TOWNSHIP • EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY •
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• 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

9. Agency Reports

SWWCOG
Scio Township
Superior Township
U of M
WCBC
WCRC
City of Ypsilanti
Ypsilanti Township

City of Ann Arbor
Ann Arbor DDA
AATA
Ann Arbor Twp
City of Chelsea
Village of Dexter
Dexter Township
EMU

FHWA
City of Milan
MDOT Planning
MDOT/TSC/Region
Pittsfield Township
Northfield Township
City of Saline
SEMCOG

10. Adjournment



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MINUTES OF MEETING

POLICY COMMITTEE

DATE: November 16, 2011

TIME: 9:30 a.m.

PLACE: WATS Meeting Space, 705 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Members Present: Village of Dexter – Jim Carson, Chair
Dexter Township– Pat Kelly, Vice-Chair
WCRC – Doug Fuller
AATA – Jesse Bernstein
WCBOC – Yousef Rabhi
Northfield Township – Deb Mozurkewich
City of Chelsea - Jason Lindauer
City of Saline – Gretchen Driskell
EMU – Leigh Greden
City of Ann Arbor – Tony Derezinski
City of Ann Arbor DDA – John Mouat
Pittsfield Township – Mandy Grewal
Superior Township – Bill McFarlane
City of Ypsilanti – Peter Murdock
MDOT Statewide Planning – Kari Martin (for Pam Boyd)
Scio Township – Nancy Hedberg

Members Absent: City of Milan – Mike Armitage, Secretary-Treasurer
Ann Arbor Township – Mike Moran
University of Michigan – Hank Baier
SWWCOG – Ron Mann
Ypsilanti Township – Brenda Stumbo

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Others Present: WATS – Terri Blackmore, Ryan Buck, Eric Bombery, Nick Sapkiewicz
MDOT Brighton TSC – Mark Sweeney
VPSI – Michelle Romano Rockwood
WCRC – Steve Puuri
SEMCOG – Carmine Palombo
AnnArbor.com – Lisa Allmendinger

1. Call to Order

Chair Carson called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. He asked those present to introduce themselves.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Ms. Grewal made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Rabhi supported and the Policy Committee approved the agenda.

3. Public Participation

Chair Carson asked if any members of the public wished to address the Policy Committee. No one wished to address the Committee so Chair Carson closed public participation time.

4. Approval of the October 19th Policy Committee Minutes

Mr. Derezhinski made a motion to approve the October 19, 2011 Policy Committee Minutes. Mr. Mouat supported and the Committee approved the minutes.

5. Communications and Announcements

Ms. Blackmore briefly outlined some of the recommendations brought forth by Governor Snyder to address transportation funding issues in the state including raising the registration fee and indexing the fuel tax to the price.

6. Approval of Bills over \$500

1. Brian Rakovitis - \$985.00 Toyota Intern
2. Terri Blackmore - \$738.68 Travel, supplies and training

Mr. Fuller made a motion to approve the bills over \$500. Mr. Rabhi supported and the motion passed.

7. Old Business

A. MPO Exploration Committee Update - Information

Mr. Rabhi provided the Committee an update on the MPO Committee's progress. Mr. Rabhi indicated that the minutes from the previous (September) MPO Committee meeting were provided to all members of the Policy Committee. Mr. Rabhi reported that the MPO committee would meet tomorrow.

8. New Business

A. Michigan Road Data Dashboard - Presentation

Mr. Puuri presented information on a CRAM tool to visualize the condition of the road system and asset management data. The tool provides information on pavement, bridges, safety, maintenance, and finance.

Mr. Palombo thanked Mr. Puuri and State Warren from the Kent County Road Commission for their work in developing this tool, which will provide access to local data for people all over the state.

B. State Funding Option - Presentation

Representative Olson presented information on some of the transportation issues facing the state and some of the solutions under exploration. Rep. Olson indicated that this is a two-part discussion with the first including the data collected on the transportation system and the second being ways to address the issues. Rep. Olson provided a draft handout listing issues.

Mr. Mouat commented that the vehicle fleet may change significantly in the coming years and encouraged Rep. Olson to continue to explore fuel based vs. vehicle based fees.

C. getDowntown! program - Presentation

Mr. Mouat introduced Ms. Shore, Director of the getDowntown! Program.

Ms. Shore presented information on the getDowntown program. Ms. Shore outlined the program mission, history, future services and outlined the results of this year's commuter challenge.

Mr. Mouat commented that he hopes people outside the City of Ann Arbor consider adding similar programs.

D. Complete Streets Plan and Toolkit - Information

Mr. Buck reported that both the Complete Streets Plan and the Toolkit are available for public review. He reported that WATS scheduled four public meetings and encouraged members to attend. Mr. Buck stated that WATS would close the 45-day comment period on December 16.

9. Agency Reports

A. City of Ann Arbor

Mr. Derezinski had nothing to report.

B. City of Ann Arbor DDA

Mr. Mouat had nothing to repost.

C. AATA

Mr. Bernstein reported the AATA is hosting a number of Transit Master Plan Public Meetings. Mr. Bernstein reported that Carlisle-Wortman is assisting with public involvement. Mr. Bernstein added that the Unincorporated Act 196 Board has met twice.

Rep. Olson commented that there was a task force meeting the previous week to discuss Regional Transit Authority legislation.

D. Ann Arbor Township

A representative was not present.

E. City of Chelsea

Mr. Lindauer had nothing to report.

F. Dexter Village

Mr. Carson had nothing to report.

G. Dexter Township

Ms. Kelly had nothing to report.

H. Eastern Michigan University

Mr. Greden had nothing to report.

I. FHWA

A representative was not present.

J. City of Milan

A representative was not present.

K. Northfield Township

Ms. Mozurkewich had nothing to report.

L. Pittsfield Township

Ms. Grewal had nothing to report.

M. MDOT Planning

Ms. Martin reported that the MDOT would hold the maintaining traffic summit for Washtenaw County on December 2 at the road commission.

N. MDOT Region/TSC

Mr. Sweeney reported that M-52 from Austin to Dutch has started. M-52 from Dutch to I-94 is almost done. The concrete patching work is complete on M-14. Mr. Sweeney added that the split-merge on US-23 will be removed in December.

O. City of Saline

Ms. Driskell had nothing to report.

P. SWWCOG

A representative was not present.

Q. SEMCOG

Mr. Palombo reported that SEMCOG received a 2 million dollar grant award from FTA for alternatives analysis for the potential extension of the Woodward light rail line from 8 Mile Rd. to 15 Mile Rd.

Mr. Palombo reported that the US Senate has been discussing a possible two-year federal transportation reauthorization bill, but added the House has taken no action.

R. Scio Township

Ms. Hedberg reported that Scio Township would host a WATS Complete Streets meeting on November 22.

S. Superior Township

Mr. McFarlane had nothing to report.

T. University of Michigan

A representative was not present.

U. County Board of Commissioners

Mr. Rabhi had nothing to report.

V. WCRC

Mr. Puuri reported that the Road Commission continues to work on the budget. He added that the Teamsters contract expired in June. Mr. Puuri stated that he anticipates staff to be down to 1960's level by 2012.

W. Ypsilanti Township

A representative was not present.

X. City of Ypsilanti

Mr. Murdock had nothing to report.

10. Adjournment

Chair Carson adjourned the meeting at 11:20 A.M.



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MINUTES OF MEETING

MPO EXPLORATION COMMITTEE

DATE: October 20, 2011

TIME: 9:00 a.m.

PLACE: WATS Meeting Space, 705 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Members Present: Village of Dexter – Jim Carson, Policy Committee Chair
Dexter Township– Pat Kelly, Policy Committee Vice-Chair
WCRC – Doug Fuller
WCBOC – Yousef Rabhi
City of Saline – Gretchen Driskell
City of Ann Arbor – Tony Derezinski
WATS Technical Committee Chair – Eli Cooper
AATA – Chris White

Members Absent: Ypsilanti Township – Brenda Stumbo

Others Present: WATS – Terri Blackmore, Ryan Buck
WCRC – Roy Townsend

1. Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions

Chair Rabhi called the meeting to order at 9:04 AM.

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2. Approval of September 22, 2011 minutes

Mr. Carson made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. White supported the motion.

Ms. Driskell and Mr. Cooper clarified comments reflected in the draft minutes and provided additional detail.

Ms. Kelly asked if the level of detail provided was necessary.

Mr. Carson stated he felt many on the Policy Committee would like to see a high level of detail.

The Committee approved the minutes.

3. SEMCOG Board and Officer Selection Process - Discussion

Ms. Blackmore asked SEMCOG to provide information on their Officer selection process. She indicated SEMCOG provided a recent call for nominations. SEMCOG offered to provide more information if requested.

Ms. Driskell stated interested parties submit a letter of interest for consideration. Ms. Driskell stated she did not understand how this related to the discussion on the potential value of a separate MPO.

Ms. Blackmore stated the MPO process is only a small portion of the overall SEMCOG Region process. Ms. Blackmore stated that it has been approximately 12 years since Washtenaw County Chair of SEMCOG.

Ms. Driskell stated that we need more participation by county commissioners on the SEMCOG Committee. Ms. Driskell stated she requested to be first vice-chair and SEMCOG did not select her. She felt frustrated that SEMCOG did not understand that her term as Mayor was expiring, which affected her ability to commit as a representative of the City of Saline. Ms. Driskell stated she did not know why she was not selected as first vice-chair.

Mr. Cooper stated that in addition to the MPO issues, it was important to discuss the broader relationship from a policy level to assert the leadership of Washtenaw County. Mr. Cooper indicated that the fact Washtenaw County has not had a Chair in 12 years indicated that either Washtenaw County is not engaged or that SEMCOG County does not want Washtenaw County engaged.

Mr. Cooper stated that looking at the history of growth of development and investment there is a lot of support of suburbanization while in Washtenaw County there is a support of urban cores, urban areas and preserving rural areas. Mr. Cooper stated if SEMCOG in fact continues to plan for and support sprawl, WATS may be better as a separate entity from both a Policy and Administrative standpoint. Good planning supports good decision-making and investment.

Ms. Blackmore indicated that while Washtenaw County no longer has a planning department, WATS has taken on many of the planning functions.

Mr. White stated the misunderstanding between the two functions of SEMCOG is causing confusion. He stated that it would be helpful to have a concise explanation, particularly for Policy oriented people to understand the difference between the transportation planning function and the function of the Region. Mr. White stated that many of the issues the Committee is discussing would not change even if WATS became a separate MPO.

Ms. Blackmore explained that a large part of the MPO function is processing, programming and ensuring projects get funding. Ms. Blackmore stated that we are at a disadvantage in this area because we have a duplicate process. Ms. Blackmore stated SEMCOG is holding 1/3 of the WATS budget because it has not been processed.

Mr. Rabhi asked Ms. Blackmore to prepare a summary of the differences between the MPO process and the Region function.

Mr. Derezinski asked if other Counties in SEMCOG were having similar problems.

Ms. Blackmore replied that they are not having the same problems because most only have one process.

4. Review of List of Proposed Data Collection

Ms. Blackmore outlined the items included in the proposed list of data collection items and the rationale for collecting each. She recommended removing STP funds because Washtenaw County gets a separate allocation.

Mr. White indicated the same was true for formula funds.

Ms. Blackmore indicated that while PL 112 funds are allocated specifically to Washtenaw County, SEMCOG has under represented the amount available to Washtenaw County and we now have a balance of approximately 1 million dollars. Ms. Blackmore indicated that 5303 dollars have not increased despite an increase for SEMCOG.

Mr. White indicated that CMAQ money is taken off the top of the allocation for the SEMCOG ride share program, which does not cover Washtenaw County.

Mr. Cooper stated that there are three types of funds shown; formula funds, which are controlled by congress, state controlled funds and regional controlled funds. He requested staff organize the funding sources into those categories to determine if we are getting our fair share.

Mr. Townsend stated that Bridge funding is an MDOT process and that Safety is becoming an MDOT process.

Ms. Blackmore acknowledged that some of the data items are qualitative.

Mr. White stated that public participation is an important consideration for this issue. He indicated that SEMCOG is focused on receiving comments while in Washtenaw County the focuses on an exchange of information.

Ms. Blackmore stated that SEMCOG uses the quality of Washtenaw County public involvement to help meet the federal requirements.

Mr. Rabhi indicated that his top priority was focusing on dollars.

Mr. Cooper stated he feels that items such as planning and reducing sprawl are quantifiable and that the numbers are large. He noted that there is a value of reducing sprawl. He stated that over the course of decades and across an entire metropolitan area the benefit of proper planning reduces costs by approximately 15%.

Mr. Rabhi stated that it is difficult to prove that we do any of these qualitative items better.

Ms. Kelly asked if there was specific data or sources to reference.

Mr. Cooper stated the cost benefit of regional planning is well documented. Mr. Cooper stated that there is a question of who has the information. Mr. Cooper stated if an organization like SEMCOG did planning, they would have this information but reiterated that SEMCOG does not do planning. Mr. Cooper cited Nashville, Utah, Seattle and Charlotte as areas with a well-established basis for quantifying the cost of sprawl. Mr. Cooper also mentioned the federal document, *The Cost of Sprawl of Revisited*. Mr. Cooper said that the short answer from these documents was that the cost of sprawl is 15% across the board.

Mr. White stated that SEMCOG will justifiably argue that Regional Planning is largely illegal in Michigan.

Mr. Cooper said there is nothing illegal about steering investments based on community plans. He stated that Washtenaw County is succeeding based on the planning efforts of the past decades.

Ms. Blackmore stated that WATS has had policies on spending STP dollars on transit and non-motorized for decades while SEMCOG rarely spends STP dollars on anything but roads.

Ms. Driskell stated she did not feel Washtenaw County is better off alone. She stated that the Region, in many ways, needs Washtenaw County and its leadership to help drive the Region.

Mr. Driskell asked Ms. Blackmore to provide a flow chart of the federal funding process through WATS.

Ms. Blackmore distributed the flyer *Planning of a Federally Funded Project*.

Mr. Derezinski stated it was important that we identify barriers preventing Washtenaw County from being leaders in the Region. He stated that this was likely the strongest example of the County's seriousness at addressing these issues.

Mr. Rabhi stated that there is rarely dissent at SEMCOG meetings.

Ms. Driskell stated that just as important as attending SEMCOG meetings is having outside discussions with other county commissioners.

Mr. Cooper stated that successful areas foster a sense of collaboration and competition.

Ms. Kelly stated that in order for our Region to lead and be successful it must save Detroit.

Mr. White stated SEMCOG is in a difficult situation because it is nearly impossible to get all the major players to agree to anything. Mr. White stated we must ask if we are more effective as another competing interest at the SEMCOG table or if we would be more helpful as a separate example of successful planning.

Ms. Blackmore asked if the Committee wanted to wait until all the data items were available before distribution.

Mr. Rabhi asked that Ms. Blackmore provide the information available at the time of the next meeting.

5. Identification of Future Meeting Topics

Mr. Rabhi asked if any members of the Committee had new meeting topics to suggest.

Mr. Derezinski stated other areas have likely experienced similar issues.

Ms. Blackmore stated that in the late 80s, FHWA decertified Grand Rapids. FHWA temporarily moved the MPO to the road commission and then a new Region was formed as the Grand Valley Metro Council and the MPO is housed within the Metro Council. Ms. Blackmore stated that Kalamazoo and Battle Creek are also very frustrated with their Region.

Mr. Carson stated that becoming an MPO is only one potential solution.

Ms. Driskell asked when the next Long Range Planning cycle begins.

Ms. Blackmore stated SEMCOG would release the draft forecast numbers next month.

Mr. White stated that WATS and AATA have signed MOU's with SEMCOG and the State that are under review. He stated that these MOU's identify an agreed upon process.

Ms. Kelly asked if we could offer our own MOU for consideration.

MPO Exploration Committee Minutes

October 20, 2011

Page 6 of 7

Mr. White stated that this is a good opportunity to review the contents of the MOU's with the federal officials performing the certification process at SEMCOG in January 2012.

Ms. Blackmore stated that there are four MOUs. One covers all agencies, one is SEMCOG, AATA and WATS for planning, one between SEMCOG and WATS for passing through funds, and one discusses issues related to travel demand modeling.

Ms. Blackmore stated that an indemnification clause was added to the new proposed agreements that she is investigating.

Mr. Rabhi said that discussing the MOU's would be a good discussion item for the next meeting.

Mr. Derezinski stated he would investigate what is going on in Grand Rapids.

6. Next meeting date and time

Mr. Rabhi stated the next meeting would be November 17 at 9Am at the WATS office.

7. Adjournment

Mr. Rabhi adjourned the meeting at 10:50AM.



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MEMORANDUM

To: Policy Committee
From: Terri Blackmore, Executive Director
Date: December 9, 2011
Re: SEMCOG MOUs and Letter

Background

As you are aware, the MPO Exploration Committee has been meeting since September to review the process and discuss options to resolve the planning issues. During this process, SEMCOG provided the attached group of Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's) that govern the responsibilities of the agencies involved in the Southeast Michigan transportation planning process. The four MOU/Pass-through agreements are detailed below with an explanation of their purpose (and are in this order in the attached PDF).

NEWMPOMOU w/ all agencies – This MOU ties all transportation planning and transit providers together in one process.

DRAFTWATSAATASEMCOGMOU – This MOU outlines the transportation planning responsibilities and rights for the planning process in the Washtenaw Planning Area.

WATS MPO Pass Through agreement w Blackmore and Dereziński comments - This MOU outlines the funding responsibilities and rights of both agencies.

Model MOU w SEMCOG w Blackmore comments – This MOU outlines the WATS travel model responsibilities and when the WATS or SEMCOG model will be used for planning studies.

The WATS MPO Exploration Committee reviewed each of the memorandums of understanding and the pass through agreement with the executive director comments. The MPO Committee requested that the executive director prepare a letter to accompany the MOUs and requested Mr. Dereziński review them prior to Policy Committee consideration.

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If SEMCOG agrees to the changes, the MPO Exploration Committee feels that WATS and SEMCOG should agree upon MOUs prior to the FHWA/FTA planning process certification that takes place January 11-13. As part of the certification, FHWA and FTA will jointly hold a listening session on the southeast Michigan planning process on January 11 from 4-7 pm at SEMCOG, 535 Griswold, Suite 300 in Detroit. Comments may also be submitted in writing to Andy Pickard, FHWA, 315 W. Allegan, Room 211, Lansing, MI 48933.

Recommendation

The MPO Exploration Committee recommends that the Policy Committee authorize the Policy Committee chair to sign the attached letter and send it with the three Memorandums of Understanding and the Pass-Through Agreement with the recommend changes to SEMCOG. The MPO Exploration Committee further recommends the Policy Committee authorize a Policy Committee member to work with the WATS executive director to negotiate the MOUs and Pass-Through agreement with SEMCOG.

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December 21, 2011

Paul E. Tait, Executive Director
Southeast Michigan Council of Governments
535 Griswold, Suite 300
Detroit, MI 48226

Re: Draft Memoranda of Understanding and Pass-Through Agreement with Washtenaw Area Transportation Study (WATS) and Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG)

Dear Mr. Tait:

As you are aware, WATS has been carefully reviewing the drafts of these proposed agreements with SEMCOG through its Policy Committee officers and staff. Our particular aim is to resolve various planning and funding reimbursement issues which have been of concern to WATS since 2009 and to the present. These include but are not limited to the following matters:

- *Late payments—as an example, WATS submitted the April 2011 payment request submitted to SEMCOG on May 20; SEMCOG submitted it to MDOT on September 27, and WATS was finally paid on November 2, 2011
- *Length of time for WATS 2035 Plan for small transit, safety, enhancement, congestion, and bridge projects to be incorporated into SEMCOG Regional Plan
- *Lack of sufficient TIP and LRP amendment opportunities

The attached documents and the changes and comments provided with them are intended to reconcile the concerns expressed by both our agencies, and to further formalize the processes they establish. They are further intended to eliminate future confusion as to respective roles of each of our agencies and that of the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority (AATA) as well, and specifically to identify WATS as the lead agency for planning functions in the Washtenaw Planning area.

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Tait Letter
SEMCOG
December 21, 2011
Page 2

Finally, and in reference to the Pass Through Agreement between WATS and SEMCOG, WATS proposes that the bilateral ability of either party to terminate the agreement be restored in it, as it was part of the agreement in the past. In the event that WATS must terminate the agreement, it requests that SEMCOG work expeditiously with MDOT to execute a Master Agreement with WATS to eliminate SEMCOG as the pass-through agency. WATS has also provided revised timelines for billings and payments.

The WATS Policy Committee would be happy to discuss these proposed changes with you, and requests that you identify one or two SEMCOG representatives that can meet and come to resolution with WATS on these matters. Please contact Terri Blackmore to schedule this discussion.

Sincerely,

James Carson, Chair
WATS Policy Committee

CC: Pam Boyd, MDOT Bureau of Planning
Andy Pickard, FHWA Michigan Division



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MEMORANDUM

To: Policy Committee
From: Terri Blackmore, Executive Director
Date: December 9, 2011
Re: Technical Committee Special Interest Representatives

Background

In 2009, the Washtenaw Area Transportation Study amended its bylaws to add five special interest representatives to the WATS Technical Committee; Non-motorized, Senior, Disabled, Environmental and Freight. Representatives for the five special interest groups have served on the WATS Technical Committee for the past two years

In October 2011, WATS sent local stakeholders invitations to apply and requested the public submit applications for WATS consideration for one of the five interest seats. WATS received 11 applications as noted in the list below. The names that are in bold currently serve in those positions.

Non-motorized: Norm Cox, Aaron Champion, **Larry Deck**, Karl Racenis
Senior: **Wes Armbruster**, Ruth Ann Jamnick
Disabled: David Klenk, David Reid, John Waterman
Environmental: Scott Miller, James Ridgeway
Freight: none to date

Despite efforts to recruit freight interests to apply for the freight seat, WATS received no applications.

WATS staff reviewed and discussed each of the applications. WATS staff also feels that the positions were created to obtain insight from varied viewpoints and that two-years of service provided the optimal time period for applicants to familiarize themselves with the WATS process and be productive. There was also considerable discussion about developing relationships with varied groups that represent a

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particular interest. WATS staff feels that rotating the representation among different individuals within an interest groups will provide the transfer of more knowledge about the interest groups special needs.

Applications and information on each of the candidates is available at the WATS offices for your review.

Recommendation

WATS staff recommends the Policy Committee appoint the following special interest representatives and alternative special representatives pending acceptance by the candidates.

Non-motorized: Norm Cox
Non-motorized alternate: Karl Racenis

Senior: Ruth Ann Jamnick
Senior alternate: Wes Armbruster

Disabled: John Waterman
Disabled alternate: David Klenk

Environmental: Scott Miller
Environmental alternate: James Ridgeway

WATS staff also requests the Policy Committee grant the Executive Director authority to appoint a representative to the freight special interest seat if a viable candidate applies. Staff also requests that the Policy Committee amend the WATS Bylaws to change the term to two years and to indicate that the seats will rotate when possible.



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MEMORANDUM

To: Policy Committee
 From: Terri Blackmore
 Date: December 9, 2011
 Re: Public Act 152

Background

On September 27, 2011, Governor Snyder signed Public Act 152, Publicly Funded Health Insurance Contribution Act into law and it limits what public employers can contribute to employee health insurance.

Beginning in July 2009, WATS changed its employee health insurance to a high deductible plan (\$1,200 single/\$2,400 double) and combined the dental and optical insurance into the HSA plan. In July 2010, employees agreed to a higher deductible (\$2,000 single/\$4,000 double) and doubled the co-pays or out of pocket costs for employees to \$4,000 and \$8,000. These changes have allowed WATS to hold its insurance costs to a minimum with increases since FY 2009 of -6.7%, 2.5% and 14.8%. The FY 2012 14.8% increase in medical insurance expenses was reduced from 15.6% by employees accepting the doubling of their co-pay deductibles and out of pocket costs. If the employees had known that Michigan would pass this law, the employee’s insurance plan selection may have been different.

The Policy Committee has three options available to them for meeting the requirements of PA 152 that will take effect in July 2012. The Committee may require the employees to pay 1) twenty percent of the insurance costs; 2) any amount over the “hard cap calculation” of \$5,500 for singles, \$11,000 for doubles or \$15,000 for family coverage; or 3) WATS could waive the requirement for FY 2013 but would need to review it each year. This requirement takes effect with the start of a new insurance year, which coincides with the WATS Fiscal Year beginning July 1.

The penalty for not meeting this requirement is the withholding of 10% of State provided school aid or economic incentive funding.

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Recommendation

Given the increases in employee cost sharing since 2009, I recommend that the WATS Policy Committee select the “hard cap” and require employees pay anything over the “hard cap.” This will not affect any employee until July 2012 when WATS must renew its insurance contract.