

MEETING MINUTES

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

DATE: January 6, 2020

TIME: 9:30 am

PLACE: This meeting was held virtually via Zoom in accordance with executive orders during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Members Present: Eastern Michigan University – Dieter Otto, Chair
Washtenaw County – Nathan Voght, Vice-Chair
City of Ypsilanti - Bonnie Wessler, Second Vice-Chair
MDOT Statewide Planning - Richard Bayus
City of Chelsea - John Hanifan
Disability Representative - John Waterman
Washtenaw County Road Commission - Matt MacDonell
City of Saline – Jeff Fordice
City of Ann Arbor - Eli Cooper (for Raymond Hess)
Equity Representative - Weneschia Brand
MDOT University Region - Mike Davis
City of Milan - Stanley Kirton
TheRide – John Metzinger
Non-motorized Representative - Sarah Walsh
Northfield Township - Ken Dignan
Pittsfield Township - Craig Lyon

Members Absent: Ann Arbor DDA – Amber Miller
Dexter Township - Vacant
University of Michigan – Steve Dolen
Ypsilanti Township - Jason Iacoangeli
Senior Representative - Ruth Ann Jamnick
City of Dexter – Dan Schlaff
Environmental Representative - Evan Pratt

Others Present: WATS – Ryan Buck, Nick SaSapkiewicz, Suzann Flowers, Emily Lake

POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

City of Ann Arbor • Ann Arbor DDA • Ann Arbor Township • City of Chelsea • City of Dexter
Dexter Township • Eastern Michigan University • Michigan Department of Transportation • City of Milan • Northfield Township •
Pittsfield Township • City of Saline • Scio Township • Southwest Washtenaw Council of Governments • Superior Township • The Ride
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 •

SEMCOG - Christina Ignasiak
Washtenaw County Road Commission - Michele Ford, Brent Schlack
MDOT - Max Gierman
OHM Advisors - Travis Pietila
Fleis & VandenBrink - Daniel Cabage

1. Call to Order/Introductions

Chair Otto called the meeting to order at 9:33 am and led the group in introductions.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Ms. Walsh made a motion to approve the meeting agenda, Ms. Wessler supported the motion, motion approved.

3. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Cooper made a motion to approve the October 7, 2020 minutes, Ms. Wessler supported the motion, motion approved.

4. Public Participation

There were no public comments.

5. Communications and Announcements

Mr. Buck provided the following updates:

- WATS staff continue to work remotely. The offices at 200 N. Main are open by appointments only.
- All FY 2020 projects successfully obligated funding. Thank you to those at SEMCOG, FHWA, and WATS staff who helped coordinate the obligation of projects.
- The dues letters for FY 2021 have been sent out. A 33 percent reduction has been included in all local member dues to help alleviate some of the financial burdens from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The WCWB Coalition put together a task force to discuss cycling conditions and safety along the Packard St. corridor that spans several jurisdictions.
- WATS staff continue to work with the City of Chelsea on pop-up demonstration projects and have started discussions similar projects with the City of Ypsilanti.
- WATS has received TheRide's transit safety plan, as federally mandated.

6. Old Business

No old business.

7. New Business

A. 2021 State of Good Repair for Rural Transit Targets - Action

Ms. Flowers explained that as part of the federally required performance measures, WATS Committee's, in partnership with SEMCOG, are required to take action on statewide Rural Transit Targets. MDOT has provided these statewide targets for 5310 and 5311 funding sources based on the average statewide useful life benchmark (ULB). These targets would be applied to the rural transit providers in Washtenaw County, including the Western

Washtenaw Area Value Express (WAVE) and the People's Express (PEX) bus services.

Mr. Metzinger made a motion to approve the 2021 State of Good Repair targets for rural transit providers as presented, supported by Ms. Wessler, motion approved.

Discussion ensued regarding how the goals provided would or would not impact funding to rural providers in Washtenaw County. The consensus was that these targets would not impact funding as performance measures are not currently tied to federal funding allocations. Ms. Ignasiak noted that SEMCOG has a working group for transit performance measures with representatives from providers across the region to discuss these topics.

B. Bridge Performance Measures - Action

Ms. Flowers explained that as part of the federally required performance measures, WATS Committee's, in partnership with SEMCOG, are required to take action on statewide bridge performance measures. The information provided is based on a statewide midway performance measures evaluation for bridges on the National Highway System, and does not include local roads. The bridge targets, including on/off ramps, structure substructure, deck, and culverts, and a performance measures methodology were provided from MDOT. In addition to the statewide targets, WATS tracks and monitors local bridges across the county as part of the 2045 Long Range Plan.

Mr. Kirton made a motion to approve the bridge performance measures as presented, supported by Mr. Voght, motion approved.

C. Urban-Federal Aid Program Updates - Action

Ms. Flowers explained that the Federal Aid Committee has put forth a recommendation to address target reductions, funding allocations, and programming of FY 2020 HIPU funds. The program as presented and recommended by the Federal Aid Committee would allow the Committees to:

- backfill projects with HIPU funds that would otherwise see funding reductions.
- meet all of the requests put forward from the City of Ypsilanti and MDOT regarding regionally significant projects, as directed by the WATS Policy Committee, and made possible through the additional allocation of funds from TheRide.
- allocate the remaining HIPU funding to projects in the City of Saline and the City of Ann Arbor.

Ms. Wessler made a motion to approve the bridge performance measures as presented, supported by Mr. Davis, motion approved.

D. Chelsea POP-Tactical Urbanism - Presentation

Ms. Lake presented the following information:

- The Chelsea POP tactical urbanism project in the City of Chelsea is complete with strong support indicated on the post-project surveys.

- WATS provided project coordination and planning assistance for the Chelsea POP project, and has now added a task to the UPWP to provide these services to member communities.
- Members are encouraged to reach out to WATS staff should they be interested in deploying a tactical urbanism project.

8. Agency Reports

A. City of Ypsilanti

Ms. Wessler reported:

- The Huron River Dr. project is in the design phase.
- The City is working with MDOT on the Cross St project and the Huron/I-94 project.

B. City of Ann Arbor

Mr. Cooper reported:

- The City's Vision Zero transportation plan update was recently submitted to the planning commission and city council, who have authorized it for public release, at which point the 60 day public comment period will begin. Mr. Cooper encourages everyone to comment on the plan update.

C. City of Saline

Mr. Fordice reported:

- There was nearly a 1 point improvement in PASER condition as a result of the City addressing a number of street projects in the past year.

D. Washtenaw County Road Commission (WCRC)

Mr. MacDonell reported:

- The WCRC is working to obligate projects for FY 2021 and look forward to a large construction year.
- Thanked WATS, Ms. Flowers, and SEMCOG for their assistance with obligating projects in JobNet.

Discussion regarding the next TIP adoption and any changes to scoring applications. Mr. Buck noted that the state has provided WATS with a preliminary schedule for the 2023-2026 TIP development. As scoring applications are reviewed during that process, WATS staff will work with Committee members and look for direction from Policy to determine the appropriate metrics.

E. Non-Motorized Representative

Ms. Walsh reported:

- Friendly reminder to keep pathways clear of snow and ice for non-motorized users.

F. Northfield Township

Mr. Dignan reported:

- Northfield Twp is planning for a non motorized pathway to connect to the lakeland trail, which could eventually connect to Ann Arbor Township and then to the City of Ann Arbor.

G. Pittsfield Township

Mr. Lyon reported:

- Efforts are underway for the U-12/US-23 project
- The midblock crossing on Packard St at Hawks was recently completed.
- The township worked with the WCRC over the summer to complete their local road paving program with over \$3 million of projects.
- The Platt Rd Phase II project is underway and includes an extension to the non motorized path south of Michigan Ave.

H. TheRide

Mr. Metzinger reported:

- TheRide's fiscal year ended September 30, 2020 and the annual ridership report is now available.
- Ridership numbers were impacted by the COVID pandemic in a significant way. In 2020 ridership numbers were down three million trips from prior years (decline of about 43%).
- TheRide anticipates ridership numbers will return to pre pandemic levels after the pandemic and TheRide will be restoring service to 100% service level by August 2021. Public input period will be forthcoming where the public can provide input on route selections before August 2021.

I. MDOT Statewide Planning

Mr. Bayus reported:

- MDOT staff continue to work from home
- Reminder that the due date for changes to SEMCOG's Spring TIP amendment is coming up on January 29, 2021.
- MDOT is in the public comment period for the US-23 project.
- MDOT will continue to work with WATS staff as changes are made in JobNet.

J. MDOT University Region

Mr. Davis reported:

- Thank you to WCRC and Pittsfield Twp for the Packard St midblock crossing at Hawks.
- Ongoing stakeholder meetings for non-motorized flex routes in Livingston County.
- MDOT has been working with the City of Ypsilanti on the Huron/Hamilton road diet and the non motorized pathway over Huron/I-94 projects.

K. People with Disabilities Representative

Mr. Waterman reported:

- Noted the importance of snow and ice clearing during the winter. Corner curb ramps are particularly hazardous.

L. Washtenaw County

Mr. Voght reported:

- Efforts to develop a local manual for standardizing midblock crossing elements, including lighting, signage, geometry, and markings are underway.

M. City of Chelsea

Mr. Hanifan reported:

- Thank you to WATS for their work on Chelsea POP. The project was very well received.
- This year the City constructed cross islands along Wilkinson St, which has successfully calmed traffic.
- A public meeting with Washtenaw County Parks and Huron Waterloo Pathways Initiative is upcoming. The discussion will focus on connecting the Border to border trail north of Chelsea to Sibley Rd.

N. SEMCOG

Ms. Ignasiak reported:

- A reminder that the TIP Spring Amendment deadline for changes is at the end of January.
- SEMCOG will be hosting the TCC and Executive Committee meetings next week, and action items include performance measures for safety, CMAQ, and bridge.

9. Adjournment

Mr. Otto adjourned the meeting at 10:51am.