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MEETING MINUTES

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

DATE: May 5, 2021

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 - Max Gierman
Environmental Representative - Evan Pratt
Washtenaw County Road Commission - Matt MacDonell
City of Saline – Jeff Fordice
City of Ann Arbor - Raymond Hess
MDOT University Region - Mike Davis
City of Milan - Stanley Kirton
TheRide – LaTasha Thompson
Non-motorized Representative - Sarah Walsh

Members Absent: Ann Arbor DDA – Amber Miller
City of Chelsea - John Hanifan
Disability Representative - John Waterman
Dexter Township - Vacant
City of Dexter – Dan Schlaff
Equity Representative - Weneshia Brand
Northfield Township - Ken Dignan
Pittsfield Township - Craig Lyon
Senior Representative - Ruth Ann Jamnick
University of Michigan – Steve Dolen
Ypsilanti Township - Jason Iacoangeli

Others Present: WATS – Ryan Buck, Nick Sapkiewicz, 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 •

MDOT - Anita Boughner, Kari Martin
OHM Advisors - Marcus McNamara
Stantec - Cassandra Winner
WAVE - Julia Roberts
WCRC - Michele Ford, Brent Schlack, Sheryl Siddall
Public - Jim Mogensen

1. Call to Order/Introductions

Chair Otto called the meeting to order at 9:36 am and led the group in introductions.

2. Approval of the Agenda

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

3. Approval of Minutes

Ms. Wessler made a motion to approve the March 3, 2021 minutes as corrected, Mr. Kirton supported the motion, motion approved.

4. Public Participation

Mr. Mogensen asked staff and committee members to continue encouraging more meaningful public engagement at meetings.

5. Communications and Announcements

Mr. Sapkiewicz provided the following updates:

- Reminder to obligate projects quickly. The obligation authority for the rural program is at 75% obligated and the non-rural program is at 82.3% obligated.
- The 2023-2026 TIP development is kicking off. WATS staff are working with SEMCOG to collaborate on the public participation process.
- The County's new Opportunity Index has been released.
- WATS, the City of Ypsilanti, and St. Joe's are partnering on a tactical urbanism project in the City of Ypsilanti. Public input meetings will be held later this month. WATS will also be partnering with the City of Chelsea on another tactical urbanism project in the Fall.
- The RTA has initiated their regional call for 5310 projects. WATS is participating in the project scoring committee.

6. Old Business

No old business.

7. New Business

A. HIP Covid Funding Strategy - Action

Mr. Buck explained that the Policy Committee has requested a recommendation from the Technical Committee on a process to allocate additional HIP Covid-Relief funds. These funds represent a significant influx of funding to the county, have special eligibilities, and do not require a local match. The Policy Committee showed support for the ReImagine Washtenaw

vision. Mr. Buck met with local partners at the County, AAATA, WCRC, and MDOT to identify if there was a project along Washtenaw Ave that could be sponsored by an Act-51 agency and would be able to obligate funding by FY 2024, as is required for these special funds. These discussions determined that ongoing plans for the midblock crossing/super stop, and sidewalk infill projects would not be able to move forward on time. Mr. Buck also provided the committee with a review of the current scoring process for project applications.

Discussion ensued regarding the purpose of these funds as Covid relief, and how to best prioritize projects that will directly address issues related to Covid. Discussion included the following points:

- The cost of materials and labor has increased significantly due to Covid, which has increased the funding needed for existing projects in the TIP.
- Cities and townships will receive Covid relief funding for non-infrastructure projects and transit has received relief funding through the CARES Act, while the WCRC has not received Covid relief funding.
- The existing WATS process for project scoring should be tweaked to include a flag for low/very low opportunity areas according to the County's new Opportunity Index and to include a flag for projects with special Covid eligibility.
- A supplemental call for 2023-2026 TIP projects should allow local agencies to submit an application for both existing and new projects.
- A supplemental call for projects should go through the FAC, Technical, and Policy committees for approval.

Mr. Pratt made a motion to recommend the Policy Committee to direct staff to make a supplemental call for FY 2022 and FY 2023 of the FY 2020-2023 TIP. All submittals will be flagged to indicate whether or not the project is included in a low or very low opportunity area. Applications will also indicate whether or not the project is being submitted under the special eligibilities of the HIP-COVID funds, supported by Mr. Voght, motion approved unanimously.

8. Agency Reports

A. City of Ypsilanti

_____ Ms. Wessler reported:

- Going out to bid this month for local roads projects with county road millage.

B. City of Ann Arbor

Mr. Hess reported:

- The City's Vision Zero transportation plan update will go to city council for approval in June.
- The Healthy Streets program was not approved for this year.

C. City of Saline

Mr. Fordice reported:

- Several local street projects went out for rebid and came in significantly lower

than last year.

D. Washtenaw County Road Commission (WCRC)

Mr. MacDonell reported:

- Federal funds programmed this year for pavements is \$3.6M for rural and urban areas and over for non-motorized is \$4.5M programmed in TAP.

E. TheRide

Ms. Thompson reported:

- Full service restoration is scheduled for August.
- Vaccine shuttle to EMU available.
- 2045 Long Range Plan will begin soon and will be completed in Spring 2022.

F. MDOT University Region

Mr. Davis reported:

- FY21 Cross St resurfacing project is out for bid with a goal of Fall construction
- Continuing to move forward on the Huron/Hamilton road diet project. Public meetings will be held this summer.

Ms. Martin reported:

- There will be an environmental linkages study for the M-14 / Barton Dr. interchange. MDOT is currently working on the scope of services and plan to hire a consultant by the end of the year.

G. Environmental Representative

Mr. Pratt asked committee members to support and ask their elected officials to support using funding from the American Rescue Plan (ARP) for rural street crossings.

H. City of Milan

Mr. Kirton reported:

- Gearing up for the FY 2021 small urban project on Platt Rd between Main and Redman.

I. WAVE

Ms. Roberts reported:

- The WAVE is offering free shuttles to the mass vaccination site at Pierce Lake Elementary in Chelsea.
- Planning for community engagement in the summer with the RTA.
- Pilot projects include Mobility as a Service platform, autonomous wheelchair securement, and working with an online booking platform (Ride at 50+) to help digitally reach out to older adults and sponsored by AARP.
- Board gearing up for their first retreat, which will include diversity, equity, and inclusion programming,

9. Adjournment

Mr. Otto adjourned the meeting at 11:29am.