

**MINUTES
HAGERSTOWN EASTERN PANHANDLE
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

May 31, 2006

The HEPMPO held its regular meeting on Wednesday, May 31, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. at the offices of the Berkeley County Commission, Dunn Building, 2nd Floor, Martinsburg, West Virginia.

The following members were present: Chairman Greg Snook, Washington County Board of County Commissioners, Vice Chairman Howard Strauss, Berkeley County Commission; Jim Kercheval, Washington County Board of County Commissioners; Bob Bruchey, Mayor, City of Hagerstown; Mike Nixon, MD DOT; Don Bailey, WV DOT; Robert Gordon and Carol Crabtree, Eastern Panhandle Region 9 Planning & Development Council; Mark Baldwin, City Manager, City of Martinsburg; Greg Corliss, Jefferson County Commissioner; Richard L. Warner, WV DOT; Lynn Walker, Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority; Mike Thompson, MPO Coordinator, and Jill Baker, Senior Planner, Washington County Planning Department; Also present was: Debra Eckard, Administrative Assistant, Washington County Planning Department and Jeff Blanton, Federal Highway Administration.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Greg Snook called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Mr. Bruchey made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 15, 2006 and April 19, 2006 meetings as presented. Seconded by Mr. Nixon. Unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS

Adoption of FY 2007 Unified Planning Work Program

Ms. Baker noted there is a change in the amount of carry-over funds of approximately \$120,000 from FY 2006. Comments from the Maryland and West Virginia Federal Highway Administrations will also prompt changes to the 2007 UPWP.

Mr. Strauss made a motion to adopt the FY 2007 Unified Planning Work Program contingent upon resolution of the comments from the Maryland and West Virginia Federal Highway Administrations. Seconded by Mr. Nixon. Unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS

T.I.P. Amendments – West Virginia

Mr. Bailey presented a TIP Amendment for the Federal TCSP grant for the Martinsburg Roundhouse for the design and construction of restroom facilities, the installation of an HVAC system and interior lighting, improvements to the storm drainage system and completion of the landscaping element. The total project cost is approximately \$732,946.00.

Mr. Baldwin made a motion to approve the TIP Amendment as presented. Seconded by Mr. Strauss. Unanimously approved.

T.I.P. Amendments – Maryland

Mr. Nixon presented a TIP Amendment for bridge replacement and rehabilitation projects to add \$250,000 to FY 2006 for a total of \$1 million.

Mr. Bruchey made a motion to approve the TIP amendment as presented. Seconded by Mr. Kercheval. Unanimously approved.

Memorandum of Understanding

Ms. Baker presented a draft Memorandum of Understanding between the HEPMPO and Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority (Pan Tran). This agreement is required under the TEA 21 and SAFETEA-LU and formalizes the agreement between the HEPMPO and Pan Tran to transfer information to each other regarding the use of Federal monies.

Mr. Strauss made a motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding contingent upon acceptance of the MOU by the Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority Board. Seconded by Mr. Baldwin. Unanimously approved.

Presentation by Jim Sothen, WVDOT

Mr. Jim Sothen, Deputy for the West Virginia Division of Highways, made a presentation regarding West Virginia DOH finances. The purpose of this presentation is to make the public aware of the inadequacy of funding, the crisis that is coming and to determine how to fund transportation in West Virginia in the future. Mr. Sothen's presentation included the following key points:

- A major challenge facing the Division of Highways is the ability to recruit, train and retain quality staff. There are currently 4,700 employees with 53% of the workforce age 50 or more, 70% of the workforce is age 45 – 50 and 30% of the workforce is age 45 and less.
- West Virginia is one of four states that are responsible for all state and county roads. West Virginia has the sixth largest State maintained highway system in the nation and maintains approximately 36,000 miles of road, 21,380 which is paved, and approximately 6,800 to 6,900 bridges.
- West Virginia is second to last in the country in capital investment per State maintained mile. Approximately \$7,600 per lane mile is spent on highways; whereas, the national average is approximately \$24,000.
- The last gas tax increase of \$.05 was in 1993. The tax brings in approximately \$55 million per year and is critical in the operations of the Highway Department. The total gas tax is \$.27 per gallon.
- There are four State funding sources for the Highway Department as follows:

Gas Tax	\$315 million	
Privilege Tax	\$176 million	
Registration Fees	\$ 90 million	
Miscellaneous	<u>\$ 11 million</u>	
	\$592 million	TOTAL Source of Revenue
- Expenditures (absolute) as follows:

Debt Service	\$ 43 million	
Required Set Asides	\$ 45 million	
Routine Highway Maint.	\$228 million	
Administrative Support	\$ 64 million	
State Matching Funds	<u>\$ 83 million</u>	
	\$463 million	TOTAL Expenditures
- There is approximately \$129 million for improvements.

- The Federal highway funds for individual programs are apportioned by a formula using factors relevant to a particular type of program. Typically the states receive only 90% of the apportionment.
- The FHWA apportionments are as follows:

FA Interstate Maintenance (80%)	\$43.4 million
National Highway System	\$43.7 million
Service Transportation Program	\$48.8 million
Bridge Replacement	\$56.2 million
Congestion and Air Quality Mitigation	\$ 8.5 million
Appalachian Development Highway System	\$86.5 million
Recreation trails	\$ 1.1 million
Metropolitan Planning	\$ 1.5 million
- Extra funding of approximately \$35 to \$50 million per year has been received annually through the West Virginia congressional delegation. The Federal funding must be spent on specific projects in the Federal Aid System.
- The DOH has developed a Long Range Transportation Plan for projects that are needed around the State. There are approximately 170 major projects at a cost of \$20 billion at 2005 costs. Essentially the program is unfunded.
- The projects were prioritized and ranked from highest priority to lowest priority based on economics, traffic flow, safety, environmental, and local and regional planning. Projects based on economics focused on benefits to existing business, potential for new business, and economic development. Projects based on traffic flow focused on current and projected levels of service. Safety projects were based on crash rates and fatality rates. Environmental projects were based on the time frame needed to clear the environmental process. Local and regional planning has been consistent with the planning goals of the county development authorities and the MPO. A complete list of prioritized projects was presented; however, it is not the State Highway Department's approved list. There are approximately \$20 billion of priority projects needed around the State.
- Additional revenue is needed to help fund projects. The DOH has explored the following options to raise additional revenue:
 - a) Tolls on highways
 - b) Public/private partnerships
 - c) Charitable contributions
 - d) Garby bonds
 - e) Legislative bill to City and County to sell bonds and charge user fees
- The amount of Federal funds is limited each year; however, there is an appropriations bill that provides additional funds.

Citizen Comments

No citizen comments were given.

CLOSED SESSION

In accordance with Article 6-9A-4(b)(2)(A) of the West Virginia Open Governmental Proceedings Act – To consider matters arising from the appointment, employment, retirement, promotion, transfer, demotion, disciplining, resignation, discharge, dismissal or compensation of a public officer or employer or prospective public officer or employee.

Mr. Bruchey made a motion to proceed into closed session. Seconded by Mr. Corliss. Unanimously approved.

Following a discussion regarding employment issues, Mr. Strauss made a motion to end the closed session and go back into open session. Seconded by Mr. Baldwin. Unanimously approved.

OTHER BUSINESS

Future Meetings

The next meeting will be scheduled at a later date.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Snook adjourned the meeting at 8:50 p.m.

Gregory I. Snook, Chairman