

**MINUTES
HAGERSTOWN EASTERN PANHANDLE
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

November 27, 2006

The HEPMPO held its regular meeting on Wednesday, November 27, 2006 at 3:30 p.m. at the offices of the Washington County Administrative Annex, 80 West Baltimore Street, Hagerstown, Maryland.

The following members were present: Chairman Greg Snook, Washington County Board of County Commissioners; Robert Gordon, HEPMPO Director; Mike Nixon, MD DOT; Don Bailey, WV DOT; Carol Crabtree, Eastern Panhandle Region 9 Planning & Development Council; Greg Corliss, Jefferson County Commissioner; Mark Baldwin, City of Martinsburg; Lynn Walker, Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority; Mike Thompson, Director of Planning and Jill Baker, Senior Planner, Washington County Planning Department; Kevin Cerrone, Washington County Public Transportation. Also present was: Debra Eckard, Administrative Assistant, Washington County Planning Department; Jeff Cline, Councilman, Town of Williamsport; and Jeff Blanton, Federal Highway Administration.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Greg Snook called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

MINUTES

Ms. Walker made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 13, 2006 regular meeting as presented. Seconded by Mr. Nixon. Unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS

- FY 2007 UPWP – Revisions

Mr. Gordon presented for review and approval revisions to the FY 2007 UPWP. Mr. Gordon provided an update regarding the hiring of a transportation planner. Five applications were received; however, only one individual had any relative experience. Mr. Gordon proceeded with a discussion regarding the collection of GIS data in West Virginia and a GAP analysis of the Transportation Plan that is needed in order to comply with the new SAFETEA-LU requirements. We currently have approximately \$100,000 in the current work program for two transportation planners and extra funds that have not been programmed. Mr. Gordon recommended revising the work program to combine these funds and hire a consultant to prepare the basic GIS information required for Berkeley and Jefferson Counties. The MPO could then hire a planner when we begin the new fiscal year to maintain this information for the next Long Range Plan update.

Discussion: There was a brief discussion regarding the cost of hiring a consultant versus hiring a planner. Members also suggested contacting local colleges for students that may have the educational GIS background and may be graduating in December. Mr. Corliss stated that Jefferson County recently hired a new GIS planner and would contact Mr. Gordon with the names of the other applicants that were not hired. There was also a brief discussion regarding an increase in the salary being offered. Mr. Snook recommended that if an increase in salary is needed to hire an applicant, Mr. Gordon should contact the Commissioner from each County for their authorization to proceed with such action.

Mr. Bailey made a motion to allow Mr. Gordon to proceed in contacting the unsuccessful candidates from Jefferson County and contacting the Commissioners from each County to make any necessary adjustments in salary. Seconded by Mr. Cerrone. Unanimously approved.

- TIP Amendments

- **West Virginia**

Mr. Bailey presented for review and approval the following TIP Amendments for Berkeley and Jefferson Counties in West Virginia:

- Project Name: Martinsburg John Street – Enhancement Project; Water Street to East John Street Bridge, 80/20 match, \$150,000 Federal funds and \$37,500 Sponsor Funds
- Project Name: Ceramic Drive Signal – Installation of a traffic signal; Total Project Cost is \$225,000, 100% Federal funds
- Project Name: Shepherdstown Streetscape, Phase II – Construction of sidewalks, resetting curbs and the installation of street lights and pedestrian amenities along King Street, one block north and two blocks south of German Street; 80/20 match, \$250,000 Federal funds and \$62,500 Sponsor funds
- Project Name: Shepherdstown Battlefield, Faraway Farm – Enhancement Project; Acquisition of land; 80/20 match, \$100,000 Federal funds and \$25,000 Sponsor funds
- Project Name: Charles Town Revitalization – Enhancement Project; Samuel Street to US 340 Bypass; Reconstruct sidewalks, CW, lighting; \$400,000 Federal funds and \$100,000 sponsor funds

Ms. Walker stated that PanTran was awarded the “United We Ride” grant which is a one-time, 12-month State grant in the amount of \$64,970.00 to hire a mobility manager to facilitate coordination of transportation between agencies with federal and state funding.

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

- Participation Plan for Transportation Planning

Mr. Gordon presented for review and comment the “Participation Plan for Transportation Planning”. He stated that during the TAC meeting held immediately prior to this meeting, the following comments were made regarding the plan. On page 3 of the Plan, “Availability of Information” section, Mr. McGee recommended charging a research fee for requested information, which is allowed under the State of Maryland’s Freedom of Information Act. On page 4 of the Plan, “Specific Participation Strategies” section, Mr. McGee made an inquiry regarding the list of those interested or affected by the plans and programs of the MPO that should be notified. There was a brief discussion that the language in this section may be too broad and should be modified. Mr. Gordon stated that the MPO must demonstrate that they have made an effort to contact certain groups of people or agencies. There was also a brief discussion regarding the number of days to advertise prior to meetings.

- Project Update

Mr. Gordon presented an invoice for the Coordinated Transit Plan for Berkeley, Jefferson and Morgan Counties. RLS & Associates has been contracted by the MPO and Region 9 to prepare the plan. The contract is for approximately \$24,000.

- Director's Report

Mr. Gordon stated that the MPO has initiated a contract with DiVinci to develop a website for the MPO that will link all the counties involved in the MPO and Region 9.

Mr. Gordon also reported an accident during a recent return trip from Denver. He stepped off of the long-term parking bus and was hit by the bus and knocked out of the way. The bus ran over his luggage and destroyed the MPO's laptop and his personal camera equipment. The insurance company is taking the position that they are not liable once he stepped off of the bus. Mr. Gordon is working with Washington County's Risk Manager and County Attorney's Office to resolve the issue. The laptop has been replaced.

OTHER BUSINESS

- Citizen Comments

There were no comments from the audience.

- Future Meetings

Mr. Gordon asked for the Board's input regarding daytime versus evening meetings. Mr. Snook stated his opinion that the new Washington County Commissioners would prefer evening meetings due to their job schedules.

The next MPO meeting will be held on January 17, 2007 in Martinsburg. Time and location to be determined and will be announced at a later date.

- Special Presentation

Mr. Nixon presented a special plaque to Chairman Snook for his sixteen years of service and involvement with the MPO.

AJOURNMENT

Chairman Snook adjourned the meeting at 4:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert S. Gordon, Director

RSG/dse

