

**MINUTES
HAGERSTOWN EASTERN PANHANDLE
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

May 16, 2007

The HEPMPO held its regular meeting on Wednesday, May 16, 2007 at 1:00 p.m. in the offices of the Berkeley County Commission Chambers, Dunn Building, Room 205, 400 West Stephen Street, Martinsburg, West Virginia.

The following members were present:

- Bob Gordon, HEPMPO Director
- Jim Kercheval, Washington County Board of County Commissioners
- Mike Nixon, Maryland Dept. of Transportation
- Don Bailey, West Virginia Dept. of Transportation
- Martin E. Brubaker, City of Hagerstown
- Bill Stubblefield, Berkeley County Commission
- Greg Corliss, Jefferson County Commission
- Lynn Walker, Pan Tran
- Mark Baldwin, City of Martinsburg
- Carol Crabtree, Region 9
- Dave Mills, City of Ranson
- Perry Keller, WV Dept. of Transportation, DOH Planning & Research
- Derek Meyers, Town of Boonsboro
- Jeff Blanton, Federal Highway Administration
- Mike Thompson, Director of Planning, Washington County Planning Dept.
- Jill Baker, Washington County Planning Dept.
- Larry Smith, WV Dept. of Transportation, EEO Division
- Debra Eckard, Washington County Planning Dept.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Kercheval called the meeting to order at 1:25 p.m.

MINUTES

Mr. Stubblefield made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 21, 2007 meeting as presented. Seconded by Mr. Brubaker. Unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS

TIP Amendments – West Virginia

Mr. Bailey presented for review and approval a TIP Amendment for Federal Project No. HSIP-0811(001) to replace a 5.68-mile section of cable barrier with a concrete median barrier from north of Martinsburg to south of Martinsburg. The funding level would be \$20,000 for preliminary engineering in FY 2007 and \$4 million for construction in FY 2008.

Mr. Stubblefield made a motion to approve the TIP Amendment as presented. Seconded by Mr. Corliss.

Discussion: There was a brief discussion regarding the need for the change from the cable barrier to the concrete median barrier. Safety issues were discussed as a factor in making the change. Mr. Baldwin expressed his concern that ICC members did not receive sufficient

information and supporting documentation regarding the need for the change. He requested that WVDOT provide some official supporting documentation regarding this project.

Mr. Stubblefield's motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Bailey presented an administrative change for Federal Project No. STPG-3402(003,004)E for the Wheatland Road Railroad Crossing (Federal Project number changed) and an administrative change for the Tabler Station Road project. Mr. Gordon noted that the change to Tabler Station would include separating the project into three phases; however, a time schedule has not been determined at this time. A meeting is scheduled with the Federal Highway Administration to address these issues; therefore, no action is required at this time. Mr. Stubblefield stated that this project is "the most important item in Berkeley County".

Personnel and Salary Issues

Chairman Kercheval began a discussion regarding increases in salary for personnel that needs to be included in the UPWP. He recommended comparing the percentage used by Washington, Berkeley and Jefferson counties in determining salary increases for their employees each year. The percentage range could be pre-determined and worked into the UPWP each year. Following an annual evaluation, members of the ICC would then determine the actual salary increase. There was a brief discussion regarding the percentages currently used by each County and the evaluation process.

Mr. Gordon stated that any increase in salary would affect the UPWP. Establishing a maximum percentage rate for annual increases in salary would be helpful in preparing the UPWP.

Adoption of FY 2008-2011 TIP

Mr. Gordon presented for review and approval the FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program. Comments from the Federal Highway Administration have been addressed and changes to the TIP have been made as follows:

- Page 1-1, paragraph 1 – The Federal Highway Administration requested a modification to state that the TIP's are included directly in the West Virginia TIP document, not by reference.
- Page 1-2, paragraph 1 – Changed to reflect that the TIP is a **four**-year document.
- Sections 4.0 and 4.1 – Changed to reflect that the project selection is a "cooperative process" between the MPO and the West Virginia DOT.
- Tables 4-1 and 4-2 – Column showing Post 2010 was changed to show FY 2011.
- FHA recommended removing all projects shown on the map that are not funded.

Comment: Mr. Gordon stated his opinion that the mapping should show all projects listed in the TIP, not only the funded projects. During the TAC meeting, Mr. Bailey suggested providing a separate map that shows all projects.

Mr. Gordon noted that transit projects have not been provided; however, they will be included.

Discussion: Mr. Stubblefield noted that the Tabler Station project has been delayed for at least two years and he asked what influence the MPO has to reverse the delay process. Mr. Gordon stated that the WV DOT determines the projects to be funded and when they will be funded. The MPO can decline to amend the TIP to move the project and that would trigger a meeting between the local governments, the DOT and the MPO. Mr. Stubblefield expressed his concern that the Tabler Station timeline has been changed. Mr. Gordon recommended that adoption of the TIP should be tabled pending a meeting with the WV DOT to discuss this issue. Mr. Keller stated that in order for the project to make it into the statewide Transportation Improvement Program, it must be approved at the local level by June 13, 2007 in order to be advertised and given to FWHA by June 29, 2007. Delaying approval of the TIP Amendments could cause problems because the

West Virginia Statewide Transportation Improvement Program will not be SAFETEA-LU compliant as of July 1, 2007.

By consensus, members decided to table adoption of the TIP and to schedule a meeting on June 6th at 1:30 p.m. in Hagerstown, Maryland.

Director's Report

- Staffing Update

Mr. Gordon provided an update regarding the hiring of additional staff. The GIS Analyst and Transportation Planner positions have been re-advertised with a deadline of Friday, May 11, 2007. Mr. Gordon received one resume for the Transportation Planner position from a recent graduate in Arlington, Virginia and five resumes for the GIS position from recent graduates with varying degrees of educational background from various areas around the country. Mr. Gordon noted that Washington County does not pay for travel expenses associated with the interviewing process. He would like direction from the ICC to determine their policy for interviewing expenses. Chairman Kercheval recommended phone interviews for qualified applicants to determine their interest and qualifications.

Website

Mr. Gordon announced the new website for the HEPMPO is operational. All documents and "Draft" documents are available for review. The website is www.hepmpo.net.

Gap Analysis Update

Cambridge Systematics is currently preparing the gap analysis outlining what needs to be done to transition from TEA-21 to SAFETEA-LU requirements. The "Draft" document should be ready the first part of June and will be distributed to members for their review and comment. Mr. Gordon requested comments to be sent to him as soon as possible in order to adopt the Gap Analysis document prior to June 30th.

OTHER BUSINESS

Future Meetings

The next meeting of the HEPMPO will be held on Wednesday, June 6, 2007 at 1:30 p.m. in Hagerstown, Maryland.

Changes to UPWP

Mr. Gordon noted that comments have been received from the Maryland DOH and the West Virginia DOH and have been incorporated into the UPWP. The comment from the Maryland DOH was to increase the discussion regarding freight planning, that is a requirement of SAFETEA-LU. The comment provided from the West Virginia DOH was to include a discussion of SAFETEA-LU implementation activities. The TIP was referenced in the document initially as a 2008-2010 document and has been changed to 2008-2011. Discussions relative to completing the Federal review were included; however, planning agreements need to be addressed. Narrative changes that were made include: discussions relative to corridor studies, identification of other studies needed for the region, transportation coordination and bicycle/pedestrian initiatives in the region, and discussion of the coordination and consultation efforts to be implemented for SAFETEA-LU requirements. Other comments from the West Virginia DOT and staffing issues will be included as available.

CLOSED SESSION (2:35 p.m.)

In accordance with Article 6-9A-4(b)(2)(A) of the West Virginia Open Governmental Proceedings Act, Mr. Brubaker made a motion to adjourn to Closed Session to discuss matters of personnel. Seconded by Mr. Corliss. Unanimously approved.

OPEN SESSION (2:55 p.m.)

Chairman Kercheval reconvened open session and requested a motion to approve a 4-percent salary increase for the HEPMPO's Director Robert Gordon beginning July 1, 2007.

Ms. Walker made a motion to approve the 4-percent salary increase. Seconded by Mr. Brubaker. Unanimously approved.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Baldwin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:00 p.m. Seconded by Ms. Walker. So ordered.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert S. Gordon, Director

RSG/dse

