

Meeting Minutes
Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning
Organization Board Meeting
Date: September 28, 2016

Members Present:

Gary Doetsch, Town of Carolina Beach
Pat Sykes, Brunswick County
Pat Batleman, Town of Leland
Neil Anderson, City of Wilmington
David Piepmeyer, Pender County
Skip Watkins, New Hanover County
Eulis Willis, Town of Navassa
Charlie Rivenbark, City of Wilmington
Pat O'Bryant, Town of Belville

Staff Present:

Mike Kozlosky, Executive Director

1. Call to Order

Mr. Doetsch called the meeting to order at 3:00pm.

2. Conflict of Interest Reminder

Mr. Doetsch asked if any members had a conflict of interest with any items on the meeting agenda. No members reported having a conflict of interest.

3. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Doetsch said there are 3 items to be added to the meeting agenda under the Discussion section of the agenda. The items include information regarding the upcoming Commuter Challenge, the reading of a letter requesting intersection improvements at the entrance at Compass Point and a discussion on holding a joint TCC/WMPO Board coming up in November.

Mr. O'Bryant made the motion to approve the agenda with the 3 additions for today's meeting. Mr. Rivenbark seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

4. Approval of Minutes

The minutes for the August 31, 2016 meeting were approved unanimously.

5. Public Comment Period

Ms. Melissa Juhan addressed members regarding the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge and the need for a new bridge. She told members that a new bridge would benefit the community by providing dependable access to the City of Wilmington. She stated that a new bridge will be good for Leland and help to contribute to growth in the Town. She noted that this project needs to be "shovel-ready" as soon as possible in order to obtain any funding that might come available. Ms. Juhan encouraged members to do whatever needs to be done in order to move the project forward.

6. Presentation

a. Bike Share Programs, Katie Sargeant and Erick Simms, Gotcha Bikes

Ms. Sargeant told members that Gotcha Bikes has just completed the contract phase with UNCW and are moving on to bike production for the university. They anticipate the system will go live in early

November which will start with 7 stations and 70 bikes on their campus. She talked about the pricing structure and options available if others are interested in establishing a bike share system.

Mr. Sims reviewed the Gotcha bike features and the technology offered with their bike share system. He explained how users access the bikes through Gotcha system's hubs on the UNCW campus. He discussed how the bikes are tracked using GPS technology and how data can be gathered and used to determine the program's success.

A brief question/answer period followed the presentation. Board members from the City of Wilmington and New Hanover County expressed interest in receiving more information on establishing a bike share program.

b. NC Rail Update, Paul Worley, NCDOT Rail Division

Mr. Paul Worley, Director of NCDOT's Rail Division gave a presentation to update Board members on the rail initiatives. He told members that on July 19th, Governor McCrory's announced that Rocky Mount was selected as the location for the Carolina Connector Intermodal Terminal. Mr. Worley said the \$270 million state-of-art terminal and freight rail infrastructure will offer convenient and easy rail/freight connections. Mr. Worley also spoke about how the Department is working closely with the North Carolina Ports on the Queen City Express and the potential for future expansion for Wilmington's intermodal traffic in and out of Charlotte. He also provided an update on the progress thus far on the Wilmington Multi-modal Station site.

A question/answer and discussion period followed the presentation.

7. Consent Agenda

- a. Opening of the 30-day public comment period for STIP/MTIP Amendments (September)**
- b. Opening of the 14-day public comment period for Prioritization 4.0 Division Needs Local Input Point Assignment**
- c. Resolution approving STIP/MTIP Modification (August)**

Mr. Kozlosky asked to pull item 7. b. from the consent agenda for information purposes.

Mr. Watkins made the motion to approve item 7. a. and c. on the consent agenda. Mr. Piepmeyer seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Mr. Kozlosky told members that staff wanted to make the Board aware that there may be interest in the sharing of local input points from the RPO to the MPO for a Ferry Project (# F-13001 a statewide support vessel). He said they will be taking action on this item at their October meeting. He noted that if the RPO endorses point sharing with the MPO, staff will bring it to the Board for consideration.

Mr. Piepmeyer asked if the point sharing with the RPO will have a negative impact on any projects that are already above the project in the prioritization process. Mr. Kozlosky said staff has not yet analyzed the possible impacts. If the RPO approves the point sharing, staff will bring that information back to the Board for review and consideration at the October meeting.

Ms. Batleman made the motion to open the 14-day public comment period for the Prioritization 4.0 Division Needs Local Input Point Assignment. Mr. Rivenbark seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

8. Regular Agenda

a. Resolution approving an Amendment to the Wilmington Urban Area MPO Bylaws

Mr. Kozlosky said at the last meeting, members directed staff to draft amendments to the bylaws for consideration addressing excused/unexcused absences and Alternate member attendance at the meetings. Mr. Kozlosky noted that the amendment includes language stating that Board members shall notify the MPO Executive Direct at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting in order to meet the requirement for an excused absence. That information will be brought to the Board at the beginning of the meeting for the purpose of excusing the absence.

Ms. Batleman made the motion to approve the amendments to the Wilmington Urban Area MPO Bylaws. Mr. Piepmeyer seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

b. Resolution requesting the North Carolina Department of Transportation provide notifications and implement restrictions for work on the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge

Mr. Kozlosky told members that at the last meeting staff presented one resolution that included two items. The first was a request for NCDOT to provide advance notification and implement restrictions for work on the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge. The resolution also included a request for the Department to begin preparation and planning for the replacement of the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge. Following a lengthy discussion regarding the resolution at that meeting, staff was directed to come back with two separate resolutions.

Ms. Collette, NCDOT Division 3 Engineer distributed information to the members regarding the types of inspections that are required on the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge and the required frequency for those inspections. Ms. Collette noted that routine inspections will no longer take place between April 1st and October 1st. She reassured the Board members that if the Department determines that the bridge is unsafe, they will close it.

Ms. Collette told members that the Department will also be exploring the possibility for installing an emergency turn-around for prolonged emergency closures, such as accidents or mechanical issues on the bridge. She noted that it will involve Federal regulations and requirements and the assessment process will take time.

Mr. Ron Van Cleef, NCDOT Bridge Engineer discussed the process and procedures involved with upkeep and maintenance for the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge. He noted that right now their main concern is the deck on the bridge. Once I-140 is completed in about 3 years, the Department will schedule the replacement work for the bridge decking. He stated that the work will take from 3 to 6 months to complete.

Following a question/answer period, Mr. Watkins made the motion to request that the North Carolina Department of Transportation provide notifications and implement restrictions for work on the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge. Ms. Batleman seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

c. Resolution requesting the North Carolina Department of Transportation begin Planning and Preparations for the Replacement of the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge and also Continue the Development of the Cape Fear Crossing Project as quickly as possible

Mr. Kozlosky told members that the resolution regarding the planning and preparation for the replacement of the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge and to continue the development of the Cape Fear crossing project as quickly as possible were discussed at the last meeting. He noted that the two projects may or may not be linked because the Environmental Document for the Cape Fear Crossing is examining 12 different alternatives and is currently under study. The findings from that report are expected in 2017 and the final document in 2018. Mr. Kozlosky said the resolution concerning the replacement of the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge will get the request before the Department for consideration.

Ms. Batleman noted that the 2040 Transportation Plan included the need to start making plans for the replacement of the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge. She stated that the efficiency rating for the bridge is 44.56%. In order to qualify for Federal funding, it just needs to be less the 50%.

Mr. Watkins made the motion to approve the resolution requesting the North Carolina Department of Transportation begin planning and preparations for the replacement of the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge and also continue the development of the Cape Fear Crossing Project as quickly as possible. Mr. O'Bryant seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

9. Discussion

a. STIP/MTIP Modifications (September)

Mr. Kozlosky told members that this is for information purposes and staff will be bringing STIP/MTIP Modifications back to the next meeting for consideration.

b. 2017 STBGP-DA and TASA-DA Call for Projects

Mr. Lowe told members that staff wanted to bring it to the member's attention that the call for projects has been posted on the WMPO website. He noted that the Project Manager mandatory meeting was held September 13th. Mr. Lowe said the project review meetings will be held on October 19th. He reminded members that all applications are due on November 30th.

c. Resolution from Town of Wrightsville Beach

Mr. Kozlosky told members that the Town of Wrightsville Beach is interested in looking at long-term plans for replacing the Heidi Trask drawbridge and are requesting that the MPO or NCDOT complete a feasibility study. He said staff suggested that the Town submit the request in the 2018 UPWP call for projects.

d. 2018 UPWP Call for Projects

Mr. Kozlosky told members that staff will be issuing a call for planning studies on September 29th. The submittals are due on November 15th.

Mr. Kozlosky told members that one of the TCC members requested that criteria be established for evaluation of the projects. He said it's very difficult to establish criteria for planning studies because of the range of studies that are submitted for consideration. Staff is requesting that they be allowed to retain the flexibility necessary to provide recommendations and information to the Board that will allow the Board to make the final selection of projects for approval.

e. MPO Strategic Business Plan

Mr. Kozlosky distributed copies of the draft MPO 2017-2021 Strategic Business Plan targets, objectives and strategies for member review. He noted that this is a follow-up to the workshops held earlier this year. He said staff is requesting comments from the Board regarding the strategies and objectives. Staff will bring the comments/information to the October meeting for discussion.

f. Letter to the Board (added to the agenda)

Ms. Batleman read a letter from Mr. and Mrs. Benton, parents of the young woman who was a victim of a fatal car accident at the entrance to Compass Point. In that letter, they are asking the Board and NCDOT to address the safety issues at that intersection on US 74.

Ms. Collette told members the Department is in the process of trying to contact the developer of Compass Point to discuss options available to address the safety concerns. She said the Department is hopeful that the developer will speed up the TIA phasing for the traffic improvements in light of the accident and loss of life.

g. Cape Fear Commuter Challenge 2016 (added to the agenda)

Ms. Harrington told members that the Cape Fear Commuter Challenge 2016 will be held between October 17th and October 30th. She explained how the challenge will help promote alternative modes of transportation. My Open Road app will allow participants to track their trips and help members qualify for prizes being awarded during the challenge.

h. Joint TCC/WMPO Board Meeting (added to the agenda)

Mr. Doetsch told members that a suggestion was made to hold a joint meeting in October or November between the Technical Coordinating Committee and the WMPO Board. After a brief discussion, consensus of the Board was to schedule the joint meeting for November 30th.

10. Updates

Project updates for the Crossing over the Cape Fear River Work Group, Wilmington MPO, CFPTA. NCDOT Division and NCDOT Planning Branch are included in the agenda packet.

Mr. Watkins requested to share a concern regarding a level of confusion involving I-140 vs. I-40. He said there have been some civic leaders requesting that it be renamed. Mr. Kozlosky said staff had conversations with Kevin Lacy, NCDOT State Traffic Engineer and they are going to prepare a map because there has been some discussion about how to name or assign names to the bypasses in the future. Mr. Kozlosky told members that Mr. Lacy will be attending the MPO's January meeting to present information for discussion.

11. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:56pm

Respectfully submitted

Mike Kozlosky

Executive Director

Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

**THE ABOVE MINUTES ARE NOT A VERBATIM RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS.
THE ENTIRE PROCEEDINGS ARE RECORDED ON A COMPACT DISC AS PART OF THIS RECORD.**