



**Board Meeting Minutes**  
**6<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room, 320 Chestnut Street**  
**Wednesday, April 18, 2018**

**Members Present**

David Piepmeyer, Pender County  
Pat Batleman, Town of Leland  
Jonathan Barfield, Cape Fear Public  
Transportation Authority  
Noreen Slattery, Town of Belville  
Steve Shuttleworth, Town of Carolina Beach  
Hank Miller, Town of Wrightsville Beach  
Mike Forte, Brunswick County  
Eulis Willis, Town of Navassa

**Others Present**

Mike Kozlosky, Executive Director, WMPO  
Karen Collette, Division Engineer, NCDOT  
Kevin Bowen, Division Construction Engineer,  
NCDOT  
Jim Holtje, Project Manager, PCL Construction

**1. Call to Order**

Mr. Piepmeyer called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

**2. Conflict of Interest Statement**

Mr. Piepmeyer read the conflict of interest statement and asked if any members had a conflict with any item on the meeting agenda. No members reported having a conflict.

**3. Approval of Board Members' Excused Absences**

Mr. Kozlosky stated that Mr. Zimmer, Mr. Rivenbark, Mr. Watkins, and Mr. Anderson have requested to be excused from today's meeting.

Mr. Forte made a motion to excuse the absences of Mr. Zimmer, Mr. Rivenbark, Mr. Watkins, and Mr. Anderson. Mr. Willis seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

**4. Approval of the Agenda**

Ms. Slattery made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Barfield seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**5. Public Comment Period**

No public comment speakers were present.

**6. Presentations**

**a. Cape Fear Memorial Bridge Rehabilitation Project – Kevin Bowen, NCDOT**

Mr. Bowen gave a presentation on the High Value Bridge (HVB) program and goals of the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge Rehabilitation Project.

Mr. Bowen stated that HVB Program has been identified in the last few years. He noted that the program includes about 200 structures that serve as evacuation routes, each with replacement costs in excess of \$20 million. He estimated that the total asset value of these structures is more than \$9 billion.

Mr. Bowen stated that the HVB Program is part of DOT's overall bridge preservation program. He noted that funding for the HVB Program was established in 2017 by the General Assembly – \$80 million for fiscal year 2018 and \$85 million for fiscal year 2019

with the expectation of current funding in future years. He added that many of the structures in eastern North Carolina are higher and longer than others in the state. He estimated that the current backlog of work is \$400 million. He gave an overview of the bridge lifespan and explained that it's necessary to restore them while they are still in fair condition, before replacement becomes necessary.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Forte, Mr. Bowen stated that newer bridges are designed with a 75- to 100-year lifespan.

Mr. Bowen stated that the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge project has contract costs of \$13 million. He noted that the total length of the structure is six-tenths of a mile with 35 spans including the lift span (408 feet in length). He gave an overview of the key rehabilitation and preservation points of the project, photos of the corrosion cycle and current conditions, construction schedule, proposed closures and detour route.

In response to an inquiry by Ms. Batleman, Mr. Bowen stated that the bridge will continue to be operational during closures.

Mr. Bowen stated that the replacement of the counterweights that effect the movement of the lift span is the biggest concern; although not an emergency. He noted that the contract limitations allow night closures between 9:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m. prior to June 22<sup>nd</sup> to address this concern. He added that this portion of the structure will be disassembled for rehabilitation one week in May, and will be restored in June. After Labor Day, a six-week period will be allowed for night closures, which will be followed by a two-week total closure.

Mr. Jim Holtje, Project Manager with PCL Construction, explained that the every effort will be made to minimize disruptions and maximize work during the closures.

Mr. Bowen stated that this is the first bridge under contract. He noted that other bridges in the program include Oak Island, Holden Beach, Ocean Isle, Banks Channel (Wrightsville Beach), Isabel Holmes, and two on I-40 (northeast Cape Fear). He assured members that work on the Isabel Holmes Bridge will not occur until the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge work is complete.

In response to an inquiry by Ms. Batleman, Mr. Bowen stated that a median crossover (turnaround for emergencies) on the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge is not included in the scope of this project.

Ms. Collette expressed concerns regarding controlling traffic outside of emergencies.

Ms. Batleman inquired about clean-up and beautification during the closures. Ms. Collette responded that the Division may be open to a partnership with the jurisdictions. She also suggested the Adopt-A-Highway Program.

**b. Emerging Technologies (Aerial Drones) – Jason O'Brien, WMPO**

Mr. Piepmeyer expressed appreciation to Mr. O'Brien for his presentation to the Pender County Board of Commissioners on Monday evening regarding the Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

Mr. Miller also commended Mr. O'Brien for his presentation to Wrightsville Beach.

Mr. O'Brien stated that today's presentation on aerial drones is the second in a series on emerging technologies. He reminded members about the expected rapid advancement of transportation through emerging technologies during the upcoming 25-year planning period. Although autonomous vehicles are not apparent yet due to the incomplete nature of the technology, drone technology is ready but banned by federal regulations over populated areas in the United States. He displayed short videos on the drone delivery services planned by Amazon, Walmart and UPS.

Mr. O'Brien stated that 2,000 new drones (excluding recreational toys) are registered by the Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) daily -- currently twice the number of manned aircraft in the U.S. He added that the FAA expects 1.3 million licensed drone pilots by the year 2020. He noted that drone technology includes swarms, in-air refueling and repair, nested systems with larger drones deploying smaller ones, and support for eco-systems such as beaming high-speed 5G internet to other crafts in the area.

Mr. O'Brien stated that drone technology is expected to surpass truck delivery especially for lighter packages over shorter distances in rural areas, and to fill the first and last mile gaps where truck delivery is inefficient. He noted that drones are expected to work together with trucks in the near term before replacing some truck delivery in the future. He added that 44% of people polled are in favor drone delivery in the future. Concerns focus mainly around safety related to malfunctions. He gave a brief overview of emergency management and humanitarian applications.

Mr. O'Brien stated that the first approved drone delivery occurred on July 17, 2015. He gave an overview of current regulations and noted that a list of individual exemptions granted by the FAA on a case-by-case basis can be found online. He added that drones and helicopters are limited to airspace below an altitude of 400 feet, and fixed-wing, manned aircraft, to 500 feet and above.

Mr. O'Brien displayed some videos featuring passenger transport in Dubai with drones that cost between \$200,000 and \$300,000. He noted that these drones tend to be safe due to multiple, redundant power systems. However, no regulatory pathway exists to bring these systems to market in the United States yet.

Mr. O'Brien gave a comparison of drones and autonomous vehicles. He pointed out that drones are more cost effective and less complicated to operate, and are expected to outpace autonomous vehicles. He noted that Dubai is expected to have drone air taxis before autonomous surface taxis. He pointed out that drone technology is a hotbed of cross platform collaboration with low barriers to entry compared to autonomous vehicles. He displayed some examples of novel concepts of personal drones.

Mr. O'Brien stated that the emergence of drones will be dependent on the evolution of regulations and gave a rough timeline. He recommended developing a vision, engaging in policy making, consideration during long-range planning, re-evaluating long-term investments in truck freight, incorporating drones into emergency management plans, developing long-term traffic projections in rural area, and maintaining awareness of advancements in drone use over populated areas in other countries.

**c. NCDOT's Public Transportation Strategic Plan Video**

Ms. Kozlosky stated that staff attended the North Carolina Department of Transportation's Public Transportation Strategic Plan meeting on March 21<sup>st</sup>. He displayed a video promoting public transportation that was featured at that meeting.

Mr. Barfield expressed the desire for light rail similar to Charlotte's in the WMPO region.

**7. Consent Agenda**

**a. Approval of WMPO Board Meeting Minutes – March 28, 2018**

Ms. Batleman made the motion to approve the WMPO Board Meeting Minutes of March 28, 2018, seconded by Mr. Forte, and the motion and it carried unanimously.

**8. Regular Agenda**

**a. Resolution Approving Administrative Modification #18-3 to the 2018-2027 State/MPO Transportation Improvement Programs for Performance Management**

Mr. Kozlosky stated that the MPO is required by federal statute to meet certain performance measurements and include language in the State/MPO Transportation Improvement Programs (STIP/MPO TIP) to ensure compliance. He noted that staff proposes an administrative modification to add additional language to the STIP/MPO TIP to meet the federal requirement.

Mr. O'Brien pointed out that this is a routine modification.

Mr. Barfield made the motion to approve Administrative Modification #18-3 to the 2018-2027 State/MPO Transportation Improvement Programs for Performance Management. Mr. Shuttleworth seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**b. Resolution Approving the Allocation of Additional Direct Attributable Funding for the Shipyard Boulevard Bus Pull-out and Sidewalk Project**

Mr. Kozlosky stated that this Item is a request from the City of Wilmington for an additional \$80,000 in Direct Attributable funds for the Shipyard Boulevard bus pull-out and sidewalk project. He noted that the original request was for \$300,000 and the revised cost estimate is \$400,000 based on the design. He added that the City has adopted a Resolution committing the 20% local match. He stated that this item is consistent with the Board's guidance to fund existing projects.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Barfield, Mr. Kozlosky stated that the project is on Shipyard Boulevard between Rutledge Drive and Vance Street.

Mr. Barfield made the motion to approve the Allocation of Additional Direct Attributable Funding for the Shipyard Boulevard Bus Pull-out and Sidewalk Project. Mr. Shuttleworth seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**c. Resolution Supporting the Naming of the I-140 Bridge over US 74/76 in Brunswick County in Honor of William M. Sue**

Mr. Kozlosky stated that much discussion has been held over the past few months regarding the naming of the I-140 bridge over the Cape Fear River. He noted that the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners has adopted a Resolution requesting that the naming of the interchange and bridge over US 74/76 be named for William Sue. He added that this Resolution is included in the agenda packet.

Mr. Piepmeyer stated that several Board members met and agreed to a strategy to be implemented over time. He noted that the Board is awaiting adoption of a Resolution by the New Hanover County Board of Commissioners for the naming of the Navassa portion of the bridge on I-140 over the Cape Fear River for a former Navassa Mayor.

Mr. Forte reminded members that a Resolution regarding naming must be adopted unanimously.

Following further discussion, Mr. Forte made the motion to approve the Resolution Supporting the Naming of the I-140 Bridge over US 74/76 in Brunswick County in Honor of William M. Sue. Ms. Batleman seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

## 9. Discussion

### a. Draft Prioritization 5.0 Programmed Statewide Mobility Projects

Mr. Kozlosky reminded members that NCDOT recently released the Statewide Mobility scores for Prioritization 5.0 Programming. Of the 77 projects released, ten are in the WMPO Planning Area. One would upgrade the rail line within the City of Wilmington with safety improvements to allow trains to operate at a 25 mph speed through the City. Nine projects were funded at Wilmington International Airport.

Mr. Kozlosky stated that the next step in the process will be for the MPO and DOT to assign Local Input points. He noted that a draft proposal for Local Input point assignment consistent with the Board's approved methodology will be brought to the Board at its May meeting. He added that the MPO will be required to submit the Regional Impact point assignments to DOT by July 27<sup>th</sup>. Beginning in September, Division Needs points will be assigned, with the anticipation of the release of a draft 2020-2029 State and MPO Transportation Improvement Programs in January of 2019.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Barfield, Mr. Kozlosky stated that a list of projects that weren't funded at the Statewide Mobility Tier, and those that qualify for the Regional Impact Tier will be brought to the Board with the draft point assignment.

### b. 2018-2027 STIP/MPO TIP Modification #18-4

Mr. Kozlosky stated that this item is for informational purposes only. He noted that it is a statewide modification for the construction improvements on federal lands. He added that it will be brought to the Board for consideration at its next meeting.

## 9. Updates

### a. MPO Staffing

Mr. Kozlosky announced that a new TDM Planner will begin on May 14<sup>th</sup>. He noted that interviews are scheduled for the week of May 30<sup>th</sup> for the last remaining position, an Associate Transportation Planner. He expressed the desire to reach maximum staffing by the end of the current fiscal year.

### d. Cape Fear Moving Forward 2045 Transportation Plan

Ms. Lorenzo gave a brief update on the MTP public outreach and engagement process. She stated that about 35 people attended the kick-off event for the Cape Fear Moving Forward 2045 Plan on April 3<sup>rd</sup>. She noted that the website [www.capefearmovingforward2045.org](http://www.capefearmovingforward2045.org) and the transportation survey went live on that

day as well. She added that over the course of this month, staff has made presentations to member jurisdictions regarding opportunities for involvement in the process. She gave dates and locations for five public open houses that will be held in May throughout the MPO region.

Mr. Kozlosky stated that the dates and locations of the open houses will be sent in a press release to members later this week.

#### **10. Announcements**

Mr. Kozlosky reminded members that the state ethics forms were due April 16<sup>th</sup>. He also announced the following events and dates:

- NCPTA Conference, April 23<sup>rd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>
- May is Bike Month:
  - River to the Sea Bike Ride, May 5<sup>th</sup>
  - Bike to School Day, May 9<sup>th</sup>
  - Bike to Work Week, May 14<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>
- Next MPO Board Meeting, May 23<sup>rd</sup>

#### **11. Adjournment**

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:32 p.m.

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.**