



**Board Meeting Minutes**  
**6<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room, 320 Chestnut Street**  
**Wednesday, May 23, 2018**

**Members Present**

David Piepmeyer, Pender County  
Pat Batleman, Town of Leland  
Neil Anderson, City of Wilmington  
Charlie Rivenbark, City of Wilmington  
Jonathan Barfield, Cape Fear Public  
Transportation Authority  
Steve Shuttleworth, Town of Carolina Beach  
John Ellen, Town of Kure Beach  
Hank Miller, Town of Wrightsville Beach  
Skip Watkins, New Hanover County  
Frank Williams, Brunswick County  
Eulis Willis, Town of Navassa

**Others Present**

Mike Kozlosky, Executive Director, WMPO  
Kerry Morrow, NCDOT  
Kirsten Spirakis, NCDOT

**1. Call to Order**

Mr. Piepmeyer called the meeting to order at 3:03 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 Ms. Slattery has requested to be excused from today's meeting.

Mr. Williams made a motion to excuse the absence of Ms. Slattery. Mr. Rivenbark seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

**4. Approval of the Agenda**

Mr. Rivenbark made a motion to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Mr. Williams, and the motion carried unanimously.

**5. Public Comment Period**

No public comment speakers were present.

**6. Presentations**

**a. NCDOT Corridor Master Plans – Kerry Morrow, NCDOT**

Ms. Morrow gave an overview of the NCDOT Corridor Master Plans. She stated that Strategic Transportation Corridors consist of 25 multimodal corridors that form a critical network of transportation facilities in North Carolina. She added that these corridors move most of the freight and people across different regions and into key markets, both in and out of the state. She noted that the purpose of this data driven effort, which was adopted in 2015, was system connectivity, mobility and economic prosperity.

Ms. Morrow stated that prior to 2015, 55 strategic corridors had been identified and were mainly highway-focused. She noted that the current policy is streamlined to develop a multimodal, collaborative vision with planning partners. She displayed a map with various color-coded types of facilities.

Mr. Tyler Bray, Project Lead, Atkins, gave an overview of the study area, public outreach, plan deliverables and next steps. He noted that the corridor travels through the Wilmington MPO, Cape Fear RPO, Lumber River RPO, Mid-Carolina, Rocky River RPO, Charlotte Regional TPO, Gaston-Cleveland-Lincoln MPO, and Isothermal RPO.

Mr. Bray stated that the process was started at the beginning of 2017 to develop a scope of work and determine corridors that could be bundled together to serve a similar purpose regionally across North Carolina. He noted that he and his team travelled the entire length of the 275-mile corridor including alternate routes, business routes, and parallel roads in order to get an idea of land uses, access, people, concepts, limitations, challenges and opportunities. He added that the focus was on travel experience, wayfinding, major connections, and physical and natural environmental constraints.

Mr. Bray stated that the corridor is a primary freight route from Wilmington to Charlotte, and provides connections to every major highway across the state. It includes varying facility types with a freeway/interstate focus to the east, and provides direct freight movement from the port of Wilmington to the intermodal port in Charlotte. It also connects two major airports (Wilmington and Charlotte-Douglas), and urban and rural centers throughout this entire corridor.

Mr. Piepmeyer expressed concerns regarding the range of speed limits from 55 to 70. Mr. Bray responded that this would be considered.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Anderson, Mr. Bray stated that progress on the Monroe Bypass is fairly advanced. He noted, however, that many TIP projects exist along the corridor in varying stages of completion that will benefit from the master plan.

Mr. Bray stated that his team will review previous studies, STIP projects, environmental layers, local land use plans, travel demand models, different modes and plans, planning organization and transportation plan performance measures, travel markets and freight flows throughout the corridor.

Mr. Bray stated that the Corridor Steering Committee consisting of representatives from MPOs and RPOs, every DOT division and branch, Federal Highway Administration and partners such as freight generators and other stakeholders met in March. He noted that meetings at MPOs and RPOs are planned to discuss master plan objectives, and later to present recommendations. He added that stakeholder engagement will include the Wilmington International Airport, military installations, colleges and universities, large businesses, emergency management, public transit, and chambers of commerce through surveys, workshops, and one-on-one interviews, when necessary. He noted that the process will focus on engaging stakeholders; although the public will have an opportunity to see everything and comment on it.

Mr. Bray stated that the end results include a corridor map and profile to address major items, a problem statement for sub corridors, recommendations for access management along the corridor, a conditions report, and strategies and recommendations report. He noted that other deliverables may include recommendations for facility type, UDO and land use changes, interim strategies, accommodations for different types of facilities, and sub corridors. He suggested that additional studies might be done on specific issues.

Mr. Bray stated that stakeholder surveys and data collection have started and will proceed throughout the summer. He noted that this will be followed by an update with potential recommendations in the winter, and drafts and final plans by next year.

A brief question/answer and discussion period was held. Mr. Williams expressed interest in designating US-74 as a future interstate, and in a Wadesboro Bypass.

**b. Emerging Technologies/Trends for Public Transportation – Jason O'Brien, WMPO**

Mr. O'Brien gave a presentation on public transportation trends, the third in the series on emerging technologies. He reminded members that the expected rapid transformation of technology is expected to have a dramatic impact on transportation during the upcoming planning cycle.

Mr. O'Brien gave an overview of reasons for public transit (mainly to address capacity), and compared each type. He noted that emerging trends include light rail, commuter rail, and Personal Rapid Transit (PRT), and gave a brief overview of the role of each.

Mr. O'Brien stated that the oldest and most extensive PRT system in the U.S. has been operating continuously since 1975 in Morgantown, West Virginia. He added that that PRT offers three different modes of operation. Most experts agree that the future of transit will focus on management and operation to maximize existing investments, rather than on large transit projects. He noted that another example of PRT is the 2½-mile system at Heathrow Airport, London, and displayed videos of cutting edge PRT systems.

Mr. O'Brien gave the following statistics regarding capacity:

- **Traffic jam:** 2,000 vehicles per lane per hour;
- **Four-person PRT line:** 7,200 passengers/hour;
- **Grade separated light rail:** 15,000 passengers/hour;
- **Heavy rail/subway lines:** 50,000 passengers/hour.

Mr. O'Brien stated that Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) systems have a capacity and cost somewhere between those of bus and a rail systems. He noted that BRTs have a dedicated right-of-way, are immune from traffic jams, and often have signal preemption. He pointed out that BRTs are also more attractive to choice riders and spur economic development similar to light rail.

Mr. O'Brien emphasized the importance of feeder systems for transit, especially in areas of lower population density. He pointed out that these systems connect geographic areas around transit stations, and are optimal for last mile connectivity. Feeder systems include park-and-rides, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, fixed route circulators (smaller buses and shuttles), demand response (ride hailing), hybrid systems with fixed route deviation and PRTs.

Mr. O'Brien gave an overview of trends such as the decrease in driving behavior aided by social networking sites and smartphone apps. He commented that according to most experts, transit systems that take advantage of new technologies will remain competitive.

A brief question/answer and discussion period was held.

7. **Consent Agenda**

- a. **Approval of WMPO Board Meeting Minutes – April 18, 2018**
- b. **Resolution approving 2018-2027 STIP/MPO TIP Administrative Modification #18-4**
- c. **Resolution authorizing the Executive Director to enter into a Performance Management Agreement with the North Carolina Department of Transportation, Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority, Brunswick Transit System, Inc. and Pender Adult Services, Inc.**
- d. **Resolution authorizing the Executive Director to enter into an agreement with the Law Office of Matthew A. Nichols for General Legal Representation**
- e. **Opening of the 30-day public comment period for 2018-2027 STIP/MPO TIP Amendments 18-2**

Mr. Barfield made the motion to approve Consent Agenda, seconded by Mr. Ellen, and the motion carried unanimously.

8. **Regular Agenda**

a. **Resolution Supporting the Build NC Initiative**

Mr. Kozlosky stated that NCDOT has proposed legislation to allow the state to sell bonds backed by the Highway Trust to accelerate project delivery on Regional Impact and Division Needs projects. He noted this resolution will support NCDOT's efforts. He added that the General Assembly will decide if it will go on the ballot.

Mr. Williams noted that the Association of County Commissioners is advocating for a statewide school bond and expressed concerns regarding multiple bonds on the ballot.

Mr. Barfield made a motion to approve the Resolution Supporting the Build NC Initiative. Ms. Batleman seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Williams, Mr. Kozlosky stated that he would inform the Board of any referendums on the ballot.

b. **Resolution Supporting the Naming of the Cape Fear River Bridge on the I-140 Bypass in Honor of Louis Bobby Brown**

Mr. Kozlosky stated that both New Hanover County and the Town of Navassa have adopted resolutions that have been included in the agenda packet. He noted that this resolution would signify the MPO Board's support of the bridge naming.

Mr. Barfield made a motion to approve the Resolution supporting the naming of the Cape Fear River Bridge on the I-140 Bypass in honor of Louis Bobby Brown. Mr. Shuttleworth seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

c. **Opening of the 30-day public comment period for the Prioritization 5.0 Draft Regional Impact Projects**

Mr. Kozlosky stated that an updated draft point assignment has been distributed to members.

Ms. Lorenzo explained that some minor changes have been made to the draft point assignment included in the Board's agenda packet. She noted that adjustments have been made to reflect points awarded last Friday by the Cape Fear RPO to a few of the projects that it shares with the MPO, as follows:

- US 74/76 upgrade project in Brunswick County from Maco Road to Mt. Misery Road (11 additional points for 89 points total);
- Two ferry projects (50 additional points each); and
- Wallace to Castle Hayne Rail Corridor Connector (no additional points).

A question/answer and discussion period was held. Mr. Williams and Mr. Rivenbark spoke in favor of assigning points to the Wallace to Castle Hayne Rail Corridor Connector.

Following further discussion, Mr. Watkins made the motion to open of the 30-day public comment period for the Prioritization 5.0 Draft Regional Impact Projects. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

## **9. Discussion**

### **a. Hampstead Bypass Route Designation**

Mr. Kozlosky reminded members that on March 29, 2017 the Board adopted a resolution requesting that the Department of Transportation designate the Hampstead Bypass as US-17 Business and retain US-17 on the existing route. He noted that after consideration, the Department determined that the Military Cutoff Road Extension and the Hampstead Bypass should be designated as NC-417 from Market Street to the northern interchange in Pender County. He added that the existing route through Hampstead would also retain the US-17 designation.

Ms. Spirakis distributed a map to members.

Mr. Piepmeyer stated that residents and businesses along US-17 expressed concerns regarding having to change their addresses. He noted that NC-417 designation was a result of these discussions.

Mr. Watkins pointed out that this will not affect addresses along Market Street in New Hanover County.

Mr. Williams expressed concerns regarding neighborhoods impacted by noise resulting from any elevated facility.

Mr. Watkins requested an electronic version of the map.

### **b. Wilmington Model Base Year Socio-economic Data Projections**

Ms. Sarder gave a brief overview of the methodology for the recently completed 2015 base year socio-economic data (population and employment). She noted that the MPO established a steering committee of TCC members representing all three counties to verify the data.

Ms. Sarder stated that employment data collected from InfoUSA was sent to the MPO for verification. She noted that an intern at the MPO contacted employers with more than 50 employees to verify their data. She added that the steering committee was generally satisfied with the data, questioning only a few of the Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ). She noted that maps with this data have been included in the agenda packet.

Ms. Sarder stated that population data was collected initially from the ACS (American Community Survey), which is an estimate only. She noted that the steering committee was generally satisfied with the data at the county level; but not at the Census block or TAZ level. She added that the committee provided parcel tax data for new housing units from 2010 to 2015, which was added to 2010 Census data with an occupancy rate applied (also

from the Census), and was satisfied with the result at the TAZ level. She noted that the result was also close when compared to the county ACS data. She offered to breakout more specific data upon request.

Ms. Sarder stated that the next step would be to develop the 2045 socio-economic data projections. She noted that the steering committee has started to provide input on areas of low, medium and high growth for the TAZs. She added that model completion is expected by the end of July for the CAC to start testing projects for the 2045 Plan.

A question/answer and discussion period was held.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Rivenbark, Mr. Kozlosky stated that this information is shared with the Cape Fear Public Utility Authority.

**c. 2018 BUILD Transportation Grant**

Mr. Kozlosky stated that Federal Highway Administration has announced the 2018 BUILD Transportation Grant, which replaces the TIGER Grant of the previous administration. He noted that the BUILD Grant provides \$1.5 billion in available funds with a maximum award of \$25 million per transportation project, and requires a 20% local match. He added that a reduced local match is available for local jurisdictions in an effort to distribute more money at the local level.

Mr. Kozlosky stated that applications are due on July 19<sup>th</sup>. He noted that the MPO does not anticipate applying for the grant; although, it will support any jurisdiction interested in this funding opportunity. He added that a resolution will be brought to the Board at its next meeting if the Ports decide to submit an application.

**d. Cape Fear Crossing Project- Direct Attributable Funding**

Mr. Kozlosky reminded members that in February of 2017 the Board discussed five potential options for the expenditure of remaining Direct Attributable (DA) funding. He noted that the Board voted to purchase two Compressed Natural Gas vehicles, allocate \$750,000 to the Cape Fear Crossing Project, and to keep \$1,057,913 in reserve.

Mr. Kozlosky stated that DOT had estimated that to determine the Least Environmental Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA) would range in cost from \$1.5 million to \$1.8 million. He noted that the Department has requested the remaining \$750,000 to identify the LEDPA. He reminded the Board that the state has a policy to discontinue work on projects that are not included the State Transportation Improvements Program. He noted that the state will provide the 20% match if the MPO decides to provide the remaining \$750,000.

In response to an inquiry by Ms. Batleman, Mr. Kozlosky stated that approximately \$10.5 million has been spent on the environmental studies to date.

Ms. Batleman expressed concerns and requested a breakdown of spending.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Anderson, Mr. Kozlosky proposed to split fund the amount over two years. He noted that if all of projects were to go to bid at this time, \$400,000 in funds would remain in the current fiscal year until October 1<sup>st</sup>; and \$3 million is expected in the next fiscal year.

Following for further discussion, Mr. Watkins made a motion to provide up to and no more than \$750,000 over two years, and to ask for an accounting of money spent to date, and

how it will be spent in the future. The motion was seconded by Mr. Miller, and it carried unanimously.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Shuttleworth, Mr. Kozlosky stated that NCDOT anticipates providing a draft environmental impact study in September of 2018; the corridor public hearings in October of 2018; a preferred alternative in January of 2019; a final environmental impact statement in November of 2019; and a Record of Decision in March of 2020.

**e. Bike Share Update**

Ms. Lorenzo stated that in early May, the Bike Share Selection Committee invited three of the four respondents to the Request for Proposals to give presentations. Afterwards, the committee followed up with some questions, which have been answered. She noted that the committee will meet on May 30<sup>th</sup> to determine the final recommendation.

Mr. Anderson expressed concerns regarding the lack of aesthetic control with dock less options. Ms. Lorenzo responded that two of the companies require locked docking. She noted that all three offer a no cost option.

**f. 2018-2027 STIP/MPO TIP Administrative Modifications #18-5**

Mr. Kozlosky stated that the proposed STIP modifications are for information purposes only, and will be brought back for consideration at the next meeting of the Board.

**9. Updates**

**a. MPO Staffing**

Mr. Kozlosky introduced new Transportation Demand Management Planner, Nick Cannon. Mr. Cannon expressed appreciation and gave a brief overview of his professional experience.

Mr. Kozlosky stated that starting on July 9<sup>th</sup> the MPO will be fully staffed with the addition of an Associate Transportation Planner from Santa Cruz, California.

Mr. Kozlosky noted that all other updates are included in the agenda packet.

**10. Announcements**

Mr. Kozlosky stated that the Board of Transportation will meet on June 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> in Wilmington to consider the ferry toll increase that the MPO Board and the Cape Fear RPO have supported on numerous occasions. He proposed that the Board consider some interaction with the Board of Transportation following the MPO meeting of June 27<sup>th</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.**