



Board Meeting Minutes
6th Floor Conference Room, 320 Chestnut Street
Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Members Present

Pat Batleman, Town of Leland
Charlie Rivenbark, City of Wilmington
Jonathan Barfield, Cape Fear Public
Transportation Authority
Noreen Slattery, Town of Belville
John Ellen, Town of Kure Beach
Hank Miller, Town of Wrightsville Beach
Frank Williams, Brunswick County
Eulis Willis, Town of Navassa

Others Present

Mike Kozlosky, Executive Director, WMPO
Matt Nichols, Attorney

1. Call to Order

Ms. Batleman called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.

A moment of silence was observed to honor MPO Board member and Town of Belville Commissioner Donna Schardien, who passed away on July 13th following a lengthy illness.

2. Conflict of Interest Statement

Ms. Batleman 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. Watkins, Mr. Piepmeyer, Mr. Alford and Mr. Anderson have requested to be excused from today's meeting. Mr. Ellen made a motion to excuse the absences of Mr. Watkins, Mr. Piepmeyer, Mr. Alford and Mr. Anderson. Mr. Rivenbark seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

4. Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Kozlosky recommended adding two items to the agenda to discuss the September MPO Board meeting and to brief the Board regarding rail line upgrades.

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

5. Public Comment Period

Mr. Alvin Rogers spoke to the Board regarding the changes to College Road and Oleander Drive proposed by NCDOT. He referred to preliminary project U-4718 from 2005 and expressed concerns that DOT is still ignoring Kerr Avenue.

Ms. Lynn McIntyre spoke to the Board and inquired about the embedding of microchips in roads as mentioned in the book, "Chasing the Dime." Ms. Collette responded that this technology is not being used yet. A brief question/answer and discussion period was held.

In response to an inquiry by Ms. Batleman, Mr. Kozlosky stated that an update on College Road would be given at the Board's September meeting.

6. Presentations

a. Cape Fear Moving Forward 2045 MTP - Michael Madsen, WMPO

Mr. Madsen gave an update on the Cape Fear Moving Forward 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). He reported that 2,259 surveys have been completed to date. He noted that the public input map has received 1,864 hits, almost 550 comments, and more than 4,300 votes on comments. He added that most comments have been in the roadway category, with the majority of votes in the bicycle/pedestrian category. All totaled, 7,200 responses have been received with one week remaining before the input period closes. He noted that staff is currently pulling projects from the 24 adopted plans.

Ms. Lorenzo reminded members that the survey and map, and the adopted plans are two of the three pillars in the process of compiling projects for the MTP.

7. Consent Agenda

a. Approval of Board Meeting Minutes – June 27, 2018

b. Resolution approving 2018-2027 STIP/MPO TIP Administrative Modification #18-6

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

8. Regular Agenda

a. Resolution approving the allocation of FY 19 Direct Attributable funds to the Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority for ADA and Preventative Maintenance

Ms. Kimes reminded members that last month, Wave Transit was awarded funds for its downtown transit center. She noted that this month, Wave requested \$500,000, or \$350,000 in Surface Transportation Block Grant Program-Direct Attributable (STBGP-DA) funds for preventative maintenance and \$150,000 for ADA compliance. She added that with Wave's match, the total amount would be \$625,000.

Ms. Kimes stated that this appropriation would commit the FY'19 funds, leaving a balance of \$280,000 in STBGP funds, excluding the \$900,000 in reserve for requests expected for the additional funding of projects. She added that the TASA (Transportation Alternatives Set Aside) balance and Omnibus funds will be discussed later in the agenda.

Mr. Barfield expressed appreciation to the MPO and made a motion to approve the Resolution allocating the FY'19 Direct Attributable funds to the Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority for ADA and Preventative Maintenance. Mr. Eulis seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

9. Resolution approving the Regional Impact Local Input Point Assignment for Prioritization 5.0

Ms. Lorenzo stated that the most recent draft of the Regional Impact Local Input Point Assignment following discussions by the Board has been included in the agenda packet. She noted that some administrative changes have been made as well by the SPOT Office regarding additional points for a rail project to Fayetteville and changes to the project limits of the NC 133 widening project.

Mr. Kozlosky clarified that the NC 133 project is in Castle Hayne and not Brunswick County.

Mr. Ellen pointed out a typographical error in fifth paragraph of the resolution.

Following further discussion, Mr. Ellen made a motion to approve the Resolution approving the Regional Impact Local Input Point Assignment for Prioritization 5.0. Mr. Williams seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

10. Discussion

a. 2018-2027 STIP/MPO TIP Administrative Modification #18-7

Mr. Kozlosky stated that the proposed STIP modifications are for information purposes only. He noted that the projects to be modified include a Phase I extension of the runway at Wilmington International Airport, and to accelerating the construction of the connection from Military Cutoff Road to Eastwood Road, which is known as the Drysdale Drive Extension. He added that this item will be brought to the Board for consideration at its next meeting.

b. Wilmington Urban Area MPO FY 18 Omnibus Funding

Ms. Kimes stated that in 2018, the Omnibus Spending Bill appropriated supplemental funding, with the MPO to receive \$577,478. She noted that these funds can only be used for the construction of highways, bridges or tunnels including designated routes of the Appalachian Development Highway System and local access roads under Section 14-501 of Title 40 USC. She added that construction authorization needs to be approved by September 30, 2021, which leaves only a short window for a project to be selected, designed and ready for construction.

Ms. Kimes listed the options as follows:

1. Provide a competitive process that would allow all jurisdictions to compete for funding; or
2. Offer the funding to DOT for projects within the MPO boundary.

Ms. Kimes stated that the City of Wilmington was the only member jurisdiction to request funding for a project. This would be to increase the number of pre-emptive signals.

Mr. Kozlosky stated that the TCC expressed an interest in conducting a call for projects. The other options would be for DOT to allow the MPO to program funds on an existing DOT project, and for DOT to allow the MPO to fund some other project without the timeline and restrictions of Omnibus funding. He requested some direction from the Board.

Mr. Barfield requested that any arrangement with DOT be in writing.

A lengthy question/answer and discussion period was held.

Mr. Williams made a motion to proceed with the second option, seconded by Mr. Ellen and the motion carried unanimously.

c. September MPO Board Meeting

Mr. Kozlosky stated that numerous scheduling conflicts exist with staff during the week of September 24th to September 28th, during which time the next MPO Board meeting is scheduled (September 26th). He requested that another date for the meeting be considered. He noted that September 19th would not be an option due to a conflict with a meeting of the North Carolina League of Municipalities.

Following further discussion, Mr. Kozlosky stated that he would poll members to determine the best date for a quorum for the September Board meeting.

9. Updates

Ms. Padgett gave an update on the Wilmington Rail Realignment Project. She stated that members should have received an update via e-mail earlier this month. She offered to add any member to the e-mail list desiring periodic updates. She displayed a map and gave an overview of the purpose of the project and benefits to the four counties surrounding the City of Wilmington, the lead agency of the project.

Ms. Padgett stated that as coordinator of the project, she has given presentations to many community leadership groups. She expressed appreciation for the continued efforts and collaboration of Glenn Harbeck and John Cease. She pointed out that a supplementary rail line from private development in the area of Whiteville to the CSX line would create an efficient run and significant opportunities for both Columbus County and Brunswick County, each of which having developable industrial sites along the route.

Ms. Padgett stated that she, Mr. Harbeck and Mr. Cease have met with the Army Corps of Engineers, which has expressed positive interest and contributed suggestions to lessen the environmental impacts. She noted that the Federal Railroad Administration encouraged her to apply for a grant to proceed with the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) documentation and preliminary engineering. She added that another grant is available with \$300 million, which would fund both.

Ms. Padgett commented that the Surface Transportation Board, which must approve any additional rail, had a positive reaction in favor of the project and expressed an openness to work with the FRA on the environmental documents. She noted that she continues to meet with CSX as an essential partner that has undergone some personnel changes, and will meet with the new regional director and government affairs liaison in the next few weeks. She added that CSX has announced a new intermodal facility in Edgecombe County, which will help the Port of Wilmington. She noted that the next step is for the City to hire someone with engineering and project management experience to manage the project.

Mr. Ellen commented that he knows of someone who would be interested in the position.

Ms. Padgett responded that the City is working on a job description and hopes to have the position filled by October. She commented that the Castle Hayne to Wallace rail line is an important component and should be part of the intermodal facility being built in Edgecombe County. A question/answer and discussion period was held.

Mr. Kozlosky stated that all other updates are included in the agenda packet. He noted that an e-mail was forwarded to the Board on Monday regarding its request for DOT to accelerate rail improvements to the existing line through the City of Wilmington, the short-term fix to the long-term goal of relocating the rail line. He added that DOT responded that the next five years have been over-programmed and it's unable to accelerate the project currently scheduled for right of way in 2025 and construction in 2027. However, it will create a shelf-ready project in the event that more funds become available or a project is delayed due to environmental or some other issues.

Ms. Collette stated that any lane closures [on the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge] are for cleanup. Ms. Batleman stated that the latest sequence of work is included in the agenda packet.

Mr. Kozlosky introduced the MPO's newest staff member, Katie Moore. Ms. Moore expressed appreciation and gave a brief overview of her background.

10. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:54 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.**