

MPO Board Meeting Minutes
6th Floor Conference Room, 320 Chestnut Street
Wednesday, November 20, 2019

Members Present

David Piepmeyer, Pender County
Pat Batleman, Town of Leland
Mike Allen, Town of Belville
Steve Shuttleworth, Town of Carolina Beach
John Ellen, Town of Kure Beach
Hank Miller, Town of Wrightsville Beach

Patricia Kusek, New Hanover County
Frank Williams, Brunswick County

Others Present

Mike Kozlosky, Executive Director, WMPO
Karen Collette, NCDOT Highway Division 3

1. Call to Order

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

2. Conflict of Interest Statement

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

3. Approval of Board Members' Excused Absences

Mr. Kozlosky stated that Charlie Rivenbark, Jonathan Barfield, Mike Alford, and Neil Anderson have requested to be excused from the meeting.

Ms. Kusek made a motion to excuse the absences of Mr. Rivenbark, Mr. Barfield, Mr. Alford and Mr. Anderson. Mr. Miller seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

4. Approval of the Agenda

Ms. Kusek made a motion to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Mr. Miller, and the motion carried unanimously.

5. Public Comment Period

Ricky Meeks spoke to the MPO Board briefly. He expressed appreciation to Ms. Collette for her years of service. In addition, he commented that he supports Wave Transit and expressed appreciation to all of the jurisdictions participating in Wave Transit.

6. Presentation

a. Recognition of retiring NCDOT Division Engineer Karen Collette - Chairman David Piepmeyer, WMPO

Chairman Piepmeyer acknowledged the presence of Ms. Collette. He presented her with a plaque of appreciation in recognition of her many years of service to the region and her support of the MPO.

Ms. Collette expressed appreciation and made a few brief comments.

7. Consent Agenda

a. Approval of Board Meeting Minutes of October 30, 2019

b. Resolution supporting the endorsement of the 2020 Targets for Safety Performance Measures established by the North Carolina Department of Transportation

- c. **Resolution adopting the 2020 Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting Schedule**
- d. **Opening of the 30-day Public Comment Period for 2018-2027 and 2020-2029 STIP/MPO Transportation Improvement Program Amendment #19-6**

Mr. Kozlosky stated that staff requested that Item 7c be pulled for further consideration regarding the MPO Board's meeting schedule for the next calendar year.

Mr. Miller made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, Items 7a through 7d, excluding Item 7c. Ms. Kusek seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

Mr. Kozlosky requested that the first meeting of the new calendar year be held on January 22nd, one week earlier than proposed, in order to accommodate the North Carolina Department of Transportation's budget submission timeline and the public comment period requirements.

Mr. Williams made a motion to approve the meeting schedule as amended. Ms. Kusek seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

8. **Regular Agenda**

- a. **Resolution approving amendments to the Wilmington Urban Area MPO's Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee Bylaws**

Mr. Kozlosky stated that three changes to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee Bylaws include the following:

- i. Adding a representative from Division 3 to the Committee,
- ii. Updating the name of the governing board (from TAC to MPO Board), and
- iii. Changing the meeting frequency to bi-monthly.

Ms. Kusek made a motion to approve the amendments to the Wilmington MPO's Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee Bylaws as presented. Mr. Williams seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

- b. **Resolution approving additional Direct Attributable funding to the Town of Leland for the Old Fayetteville Road Multi-use Path Project**
- c. **Resolution approving additional Direct Attributable funding to the Town of Leland for the Village Road Multi-use Path Project**
- d. **Resolution approving additional Direct Attributable funding to the Town of Leland for the Town Hall Drive/Village Road/Old Fayetteville Road Pedestrian Loop**

Ms. Kimes gave an overview of the requests from the Town of Leland for fiscal year 2021 STBGP-DA (Surface Transportation Block Grant Program-Direct Attributable) funds for projects I, J and D. She noted that the requests were \$34,000 less than anticipated at the time of the original award a couple of months ago.

Ms. Kimes stated that the Old Fayetteville Project, which started with a 50-50 match, encountered multiple issues with utilities, right-of-way, and meeting standards and specifications that increased to a total cost to \$2.9 million, with the Town of Leland providing \$581,000. She noted that all of the projects have had time extensions.

Ms. Kimes stated that projects I and J have requested additional funds. She noted that the total project costs are \$159,000 and \$116,000. She recommended that the additional funds be granted. She noted that all three of the projects are ready to go to

bid once the additional funding is approved. Additionally, Project D has temporary easements that might expire. She estimated that the award of additional funds would leave approximately \$1 million in reserve.

Vice Chair Batleman commented that the increased cost is a result of changes made by NCDOT since the last supplemental agreement was approved, additional engineering costs in the form of subsurface utility engineering services, relocation of newly identified utilities, and escalated labor and material costs. She clarified that the town will pay all costs associated with easement acquisition.

Ms. Kimes stated that when the plans were reviewed by an outside source, multiple utility conflicts were found, which necessitated an underground survey.

Mr. Williams made a motion to approve the Regular Agenda Items 8b, 8c, and 8d. Mr. Shuttleworth seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

e. **Resolution supporting the installation of an additional Southbound Exit Lane on US 17 onto Market Street in Porters Neck**

Mr. Kozlosky stated that the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has identified this project with an estimated cost of approximately \$400,000. He noted that the project qualifies for the high-impact, low-cost program. He added that NCDOT is currently assembling the paperwork to submit this project for consideration. In addition, New Hanover County endorsed a resolution supporting this effort at its last meeting.

Chairman Piepmeyer pointed out that a need exists for this project. He commented that this is a safety enhancement that will help traffic in that area. He expressed concerns regarding traffic in the opposite direction.

Ms. Collette responded that designs to improve traffic in the other direction exist for future consideration.

Vice Chair Batleman made a motion to approve the resolution supporting the installation of an additional Southbound Exit Lane on US 17 onto Market Street in Porters Neck. Ms. Kusek seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

9. **Discussion**

a. **Resolution approving the Alternative Funding Sources for inclusion in Cape Fear Moving Forward 2045**

Mr. Kozlosky stated that staff is requesting direction on alternative funding sources for Cape Fear Moving Forward 2045.

Ms. Lorenzo stated that staff has completed presentations to member jurisdictions. Based on feedback from those meetings, staff proposes that the MPO Board might support one of the following options:

1. None of the alternative funding sources;
2. All of the alternative funding sources, which would provide an additional \$1.35 billion over the life of the 25-year plan;
 - a. New Hanover County: \$514 million for roadway, \$575 for public transportation, \$6 million for bicycle and pedestrian.

- b. Brunswick County: \$72 million for roadway, \$76 million public transportation, \$1 million for bicycle and pedestrian.
 - c. Pender County: \$51 million for roadway, \$55 million for public transportation, \$1 million for bicycle and pedestrian.
 3. Or municipal bonds and tolling. Revenue would occur on a 10-year cycle generating \$35 million for roadway, and \$20 million for bicycle and pedestrian projects. Toll revenues for the Cape Fear Crossing (Alternative MA) are estimated at approximately \$158,670,000, which would allow a portion to be considered fiscally constrained within the plan.

Chairman Piepmeyer commented that Pender County is still recuperating from Hurricane Florence and the Board of Commissioners will not be looking to add any additional taxes or revenue-generating burden on the taxpayers.

Mr. Ellen stated that the Town of Kure Beach would support fees on driver's licenses, vehicle registrations, and vehicle rentals.

Vice Chair Batleman stated that the Town of Leland's Transportation Oversight Committee met specifically to discuss the alternative funding sources. She noted that the Committee expressed concerns regarding management of revenue generated by alternative funding, and was in opposition to the bicycle registration fee. She added that the Town Council concurred with the Committee's stance.

Ms. Kusek inquired if New Hanover County provided any feedback. Ms. Lorenzo responded that Mr. Barfield inquired if the Cape Fear Crossing was still a priority.

Mr. Williams stated that Brunswick County did not come to a consensus on alternative funding sources. He speculated that the Commissioners would probably take a stance similar to the Council of the Town of Leland. Although the Brunswick County Commissioners might not be in favor of the alternative funding sources for Brunswick County, they would probably not want to prevent other jurisdictions from choosing them.

Mr. Shuttleworth stated that the Town of Carolina Beach was opposed to a bicycle registration fee. He also expressed concerns regarding the potential sales taxes and how they would be disbursed, since municipalities defer to the county that collects them.

Mr. Allen stated that the Town of Belville did not have a quorum at its last meeting and nearly the entire board will change in one month.

Mr. Miller stated that the Town of Wrightsville Beach did not show any interest in the alternative funding sources.

Vice Chair Batleman expressed concern regarding the removal of the road usage fee from the alternative funding sources, which the State of New Hampshire will implement soon. Mr. Kozlosky responded that he forwarded this information to Burt Tasaico at NCDOT.

Ms. Kusek pointed out that debt service on bonds is funded by tax increases.

Mr. Ellen proposed a motion to approve the three options. However, he anticipated that the motion would fail for lack of a second.

A question/answer and discussion period was held regarding the tolling option for the Cape Fear Crossing Project, and regarding the impact of the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge Replacement Project.

Vice Chair Batleman made a motion to approve the tolling option for the Cape Fear Crossing Project in the long-range plan. Mr. Ellen seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

Ms. Batleman expressed a desire to pursue the road usage fee. Mr. Kozlosky responded that this information could be presented at a future meeting. Ms. Lorenzo reminded the MPO Board that the Cape Fear Moving Forward 2045 plan must be adopted by next fall.

Mr. Williams pointed out that the bonds would apply to interested jurisdictions only.

Mr. Kozlosky summarized that other than Kure Beach, no support exists for the alternative funding sources other than the tolling option for the Cape Fear Crossing.

b. 2018-2027 and 2020-2029 STIP/MPO Transportation Improvement Program Administrative Modification #19-5

Mr. Kozlosky stated that this item is for information purposes and will return for consideration at the next MPO Board meeting.

10. Updates

a. Wilmington Urban Area MPO

Mr. Kozlosky acknowledged that as of Friday, Amy Kimes will no longer be on staff at the MPO. He noted that Ms. Kimes has accepted a position with the Town of Surf City, which will reduce her commute from 50 minutes to seven minutes. He noted that this is the second vacancy on the engineering side of the MPO and that the responsibilities will be absorbed internally until the vacancies are filled.

11. The next WMPO Board meeting – January 22, 2020

Mr. Ellen stated that Nancy Avery will be retiring in a few days. He noted that her replacement on the Technical Coordinating Committee will be Mandy Saunders.

Ms. Collette expressed appreciation to the MPO Board.

Chairman Piepmeyer expressed appreciation to Ms. Collette.

12. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:49 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.**