

Citizens Advisory Committee
6th Floor Conference Room, 320 Chestnut Street
Wednesday, March 6, 2019
Meeting Minutes

Members Present:

Laura Padgett, City of Wilmington
John Cawthorne, Town of Kure Beach
Neal Andrew, North Carolina Board of
Transportation
Patrick Boykin, Town of Carolina Beach
Harold King, Town of Wrightsville Beach
Vanessa Lacer, Cape Fear Public
Transportation Authority
Sallie Rochelle, Pender County
Stuart Smith, Town of Belville
Brayton Willis, Town of Leland
Jason Windham, City of Wilmington

Members Absent:

Web Bostic, New Hanover County
Valorie Hatten, Town of Navassa
David Hollis, Brunswick County

Staff Present:

Katie Moore, Associate Transportation Planner
Zach Manfredi, Associate Transportation Planner
Michael Madsen, GIS Analyst
Mike Kozlosky, Executive Director

Others Present:

Leta Huntsinger, WSP
Nazia Sarder, NCDOT

1. Call to Order

Vice Chairman Cawthorne called the meeting to order at 2:06 p.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

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

3. Approval of Minutes – February 6, 2019

Mr. Boykin requested that a typographical error (Technical Coordinating Committee acronym) be corrected on the second page of the minutes.

Mr. Smith requested that the base year of the Travel Demand Model (TDM) be specified.

Mr. Andrew made a motion to approve as amended the minutes of February 6th, seconded by Mr. King.

Mr. Willis requested that additional details regarding Compass Pointe be included in the minutes. Mr. Kozlosky responded that the changes would be made and the revised minutes would be brought to the April meeting for approval.

Mr. Andrew withdrew his motion to approve the minutes of February 6th.

4. Cape Fear Moving Forward 2045 Financial Forecast and Potential Funding Presentation – Leta Huntsinger, WSP

Leta Huntsinger, Project Manager, WSP, gave an overview of the financial forecasting process. She pointed out that Wilmington is somewhat unique in that it includes all modes of transportation. She stated that this forecast is based on historic data sources to fund infrastructure improvements. She noted that the data was entered into a model to generate

a new forecast for the region. In comparison to the last transportation plan, most funding increased, except for aviation that remained flat and rail capital funding that decreased.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Smith, Ms. Huntsinger stated that some transit funds became unavailable due to growth or urbanization of the region.

Mr. Kozlosky stated that the decrease in funding further demonstrates the need for a dedicated funding source for WAVE Transit.

Ms. Huntsinger stated that the largest increase was in highway funding. She attributed the increase to successful programming of projects into the Transportation Improvements Program (TIP) since SPOT changed the way highway funds were allocated, which benefited the MPO region. In addition, the region recently was awarded a grant for rail safety improvements, grants are not traditionally included the financial forecast.

Ms. Huntsinger stated that following the needs assessment and system analysis, the selected projects have been provided to WSP with details. She noted that this data is entered into costing models to provide the forecast, which is anticipated to be complete by the middle of this month. She added that a gap between the funding forecast and the cost of projects is to be expected, especially for a growing region. Some projects may be left out of the plan. Alternative funding sources may help bridge the gap for critical projects. Others with identified alternative funding may be placed on an illustrative list for study.

Ms. Huntsinger stated that alternative funding sources from the last MTP were reviewed (none of which were implemented), and new ones were sought and vetted by subject matter experts at WSP and UNC School of Government to narrow the list down to those that could be reasonably implemented.

Ms. Huntsinger stated that the most common types of taxes for transportation improvements include a quarter-cent local option sales tax or a specific one for transit, both of which would require voter approval. Vehicle registration fees for transportation improvements require support by county commissioners and are capped at \$7 per vehicle. Municipalities can levy a total motor vehicle license tax of \$30, which can be used for multiple purposes including municipal streets.

Mr. Kozlosky stated that the city used its 2014 Transportation Bond to fund improvements to city streets that were identified in the MPO's long-range plan. One example is the Pine Grove Road Roundabouts at Holly Tree Road and Greenville Loop Road. He added that the city is currently discussing the motor vehicle license tax.

Ms. Huntsinger pointed out that many of the funding sources require political will as well as public support.

Ms. Huntsinger stated that other funding options include vehicle rental tax. Tolling is also an option, but must be project specific. She gave an overview of several grant and loan programs, as well as bonds and financing mechanisms that could be used to advance projects.

A lengthy question/answer and discussion period was held regarding funding sources.

Mr. Smith suggested reprioritizing funding of non-transportation items to minimize waste at the state and federal levels and to improve transportation funding.

Ms. Huntsinger pointed out that the state is currently researching Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), which may be the future of transportation funding along with user fees.

Mr. Cawthorne inquired about public-private partnerships. Ms. Huntsinger responded that projects which would utilize these sources are not far enough along to be included in the funding plan. However, partnerships have been utilized within North Carolina for roadway projects, such as the I-77 managed lanes in Charlotte. She commented that the Wilmington region presents fewer opportunities for this option to be feasible.

Ms. Padgett pointed out that public-private partnerships would be appropriate for freight/rail.

Ms. Huntsinger recapped that the additions to the alternative funding sources to include public-private partnerships and research on impact fees on the sale of property. She noted that specific grants have not been included, which should be sought for key projects. She recommended the alternative funding sources that were recommended for the last plan. She added that although New Hanover County has exercised a sales tax option, it might not be maximized yet.

Mr. Kozlosky commented that the vehicle license tax has not been maximized either. He requested that the transportation bond be included.

Mr. King expressed concerns regarding capturing tourism dollars. Mr. Andrew and Ms. Padgett concurred.

A lengthy question/answer and discussion period was held regarding bridging the gap and potential funding sources.

Mr. Cawthorne commented that new development causes impacts as well as tourism.

Mr. Smith pointed out that those who live in mid to lower Brunswick County might have some concerns about increased taxes for remote transportation improvements.

Ms. Lacer pointed out that transit is in all three counties and provided assistance and emergency services during the hurricane.

Mr. Smith responded that this has not been publicized adequately.

Mr. Andrew made a motion to recommend all of the above recommendations.

Mr. Cawthorne summarized that this would include all five recommendations from the 2040 MTP (WSP Recommendations) plus P3, transportation bonds, real estate and new development impact fees, Room Occupancy Tax specifically for transportation, tolling, grants, and VMT.

Ms. Huntsinger clarified that MPOs have no control over VMT. She suggested instead research regarding a mechanism that could be applied on a local level. She reminded members that tolling only applies to new facilities.

Mr. Andrew requested to add tolling and grants.

Ms. Rochelle requested that marina taxes be researched.

Mr. Andrew requested research on best practices for capturing dollars for non-resident impacts.

Ms. Padgett seconded the motion to recommend the alternate funding sources, and the motion carried unanimously.

5. Cape Fear Moving Forward 2045 Draft Aviation Ranked Projects and Policies

Mr. Manfredi stated that the aviation projects are ranked in order, and are accompanied by policies and methodology. He commented that the representatives from both the state and Wilmington International Airport were satisfied with the policies and the projects.

Ms. Moore reminded the Committee that this list is a starting point and would be further refined with pending cost estimates.

Mr. King made a motion to approve the Cape Fear Moving Forward 2045 Draft Aviation Ranked Projects and Policies. Mr. Andrew seconded the motion to approve the list, and it carried unanimously.

6. Next Meeting – Discussion to move to April 10th, 2019

Ms. Moore stated that a conflict exists for the next meeting of the CAC, and proposed to reschedule it to April 10th. It was the consensus of the group to accept that change in date.

7. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Katie Moore
Associate Transportation Planner
Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

PLEASE NOTE: THE NEXT MEETING OF THE CAC WILL BE HELD ON APRIL 10TH.

**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.**