

**Wilmington Urban Area
Technical Coordinating Committee
Wednesday, August 14, 2019
Meeting Minutes**

Members Present

Mike Kozlosky, Wilmington MPO
Don Bennett, City of Wilmington
Rebekah Roth, New Hanover County
Helen Bunch, Brunswick County
Stephanie Ayers, North Carolina State
Ports Authority
Danielle Villegas, Town of Wrightsville
Beach
Nick Cannon, Wilmington MPO
Jerry Haire, Town of Carolina Beach
Nancy Avery, Town of Kure Beach
Granseur Dick, Wilmington International
Airport

Cheryl Page, Town of Belville
Ashli Barefoot, Town of Leland
Barnes Sutton, Town of Navassa
Travis Henley, Pender County
Allen Serkin, Cape Fear Council of
Governments
Caitlin Marks, NCDOT Division of
Highways
Nazia Sarder, NCDOT Planning
Megan Matheny, Cape Fear Public
Transportation

1) Call to Order

Mr. Kozlosky called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

2) Approval of the Agenda

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

3) Consent Agenda

- a. **Approval of TCC Meeting Minutes – July 17, 2019**
- b. **Resolution approving FY 2019-2020 Unified Planning Work Program Amendment #2 for the Rail Trail Master Plan**
- c. **Resolution approving 2018-2027 STIP/MPO Transportation Improvement Program Administrative Modification #19-3**
- d. **Opening 30-day public comment period for 2018-2027 STIP/MPO Transportation Improvement Program Amendment #19-4**

Mr. Bennett made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, Item 3a through Item 3d, and to forward these items to the MPO Board for consideration. Ms. Bunch seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

4) Discussion

- a. **Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization Board's Draft Rules of Procedure**

Mr. Kozlosky stated that staff has crafted some draft rules of procedure for the Board to review and consider at its next meeting, in September.

- b. **Prioritization 6.0**

Ms. Lorenzo gave a brief update on Prioritization 6.0, which has been delayed several times, most recently last week. She noted that the scoring criteria remains fairly consistent with Prioritization 5.0. The biggest change is the addition of modernization projects under the highway criteria. The window for Prioritization 6.0 will still open to October 1st; and will close May 1, 2020. She noted that staff

plans to meet with planning partners in early 2020 and will be available to answer any questions via e-mail.

c. **2018-2027 STIP/MPO Transportation Improvement Program Administrative Modification #19-4**

Mr. Kozlosky stated that this item is for informational purposes only, and will be brought back for consideration during the next meeting of the TCC.

d. **Revised Draft 2020-2029 State/MPO Transportation Improvement Program**

Mr. Kozlosky stated that NCDOT released the draft 2020-2029 State/MPO Transportation Improvement Program (STIP/MPO TIP) in January and the revised draft last week, which is included in the agenda packet. He noted that the Board of Transportation is anticipated to approve it at its September meeting. Following approval, the WMPO will conduct its approval process including a public hearing.

In response to an inquiry Ms. Ayers, Ms. Marks stated that NCDOT staff is preparing a presentation to the Board at its August 27th meeting regarding changes to the STIP. Ms. Ayers expressed concerns that her Board is meeting before then, on August 22nd.

Mr. Kozlosky pointed out that the *News & Observer* published an article recently regarding impacts to the STIP due to Map Act settlements and storm costs.

Ms. Marks pointed out that her update included in the current agenda packet is out of date. She encouraged members to attend the presentation at the next MPO Board meeting.

e. **Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority's request for FY 20 Surface Transportation Block Grant- Direct Attributable Funding**

Ms. Kimes stated that last month the Board agreed with staff's recommendations for awarding all of the projects as submitted for FY 20 Surface Transportation Block Grant- Direct Attributable Funding (STBGP) with the exception of the Rail-Trail Project, which might be funded through a separate mechanism. She noted that an additional call for STBGP funds will be made, and that projects would be aligned to make better use of the more restrictive Transportation Alternatives Set Aside (TASA) funding first. She added that the remaining balance of STBGP funds is about \$1 million.

Ms. Kimes stated that Wave Transit has requested additional \$100,000 this year, beyond its traditional annual request of \$500,000. Last year, the TCC and the Board agreed that any additional funding would be brought back for consideration.

Ms. Kimes stated that STBGP funding is intended for the construction of projects rather than ADA compliance and maintenance expenses. She noted that staff compared best practices across the state for flexing funding to transit and found that the WMPO's 15% of total allocation exceeds all other communities except Durham (22%), which serves four separate agencies. She expressed concerns regarding increased competition for funding due to unanticipated project costs for at least seven projects (three for the City of Wilmington and four for the Town of Leland), which need to be completed within a 10-year time limit.

In response to an inquiry by Ms. Matheny, Ms. Kimes clarified that \$1 million was earmarked for projects based on the known overages two years ago. She noted

that funds would need to come from the 2020 budget if the projects are bid in the fall; but could come from the 2021 budget if not under construction all at once.

In response to an inquiry by Ms. Bunch, Ms. Kimes stated that three additional projects (two for the Town of Belville, and one for the Town of Navassa) with older estimates from 2015 and 2016 are expected to need more funding as well. She pointed out that design would improve with experience, and that a pre-submission discussion is available to address concerns. She expressed a preference for completing obligated projects.

A question/answer and discussion period was held regarding the challenges.

Mr. Kozlosky summarized that although the WMPO may have enough money this year, moving forward, Wave should not depend on a particular percentage of it on an annual basis as a dedicated funding source. Ms. Matheny responded that Wave does not count on this as a dedicated funding source as Wave does not have dedicated sources of funding.

Ms. Bunch express concerns that this funding would preclude new projects.

In response to an inquiry by Ms. Matheny, Ms. Kimes stated that the timing of this call for projects conflicted with budget preparation. She noted that the next call will not coincide with budget preparation.

Discussion resumed. Mr. Bennett pointed out that many municipalities are stretching capabilities to provide this type of design.

Ms. Kimes stated that federal funding requires adherence to state and federal guidelines, which may translate into setbacks that impact drainage and increase project costs significantly, sometimes by \$500,000 to \$1 million. She pointed out that towns are cautious and that the city is reassigning projects from Parks to Engineering.

Mr. Kozlosky stated that the Board indicated that it prefers to complete committed projects first. He noted that from a percentage standpoint, the WMPO provides the second highest amount to its transit agency, and a number of MPOs flex no DA money to transit. Although the DA program is a highway program, the WMPO chooses to flex some funds because it appreciates the importance of transit. He noted that the WMPO had anticipated flexing \$500,000.

Further discussion continued on project cost estimates.

Ms. Matheny made a motion to approve the request as presented, seconded by Ms. Barefoot.

Mr. Bennett requested a breakdown of the request (operations versus capital expenditures). Ms. Matheny responded that none would go to bus shelters. However, Wave is able to capitalize some preventative maintenance. She noted that the funding will not fund an operational route. She added that she would need more time to provide a breakdown.

Mr. Bennett expressed a preference for one-time, capital expenditures – such as the purchase of buses.

Ms. Kimes stated that funding has been provided each year for the past five or six years in different amounts, as follows:

- FY13 - \$160,000
- FY14 - \$350,000
- FY15 - \$350,000
- FY16 - \$2.4 million for the multimodal center; \$350,000 ADA and preventative maintenance; \$75,000 to help with operations
- FY17 - \$744,000 to purchase 2 buses; \$510,778 preventative maintenance and ADA
- FY18 - \$591,000 preventative maintenance and ADA
- FY19 - \$1.7 million multimodal, and \$500,000 ADA and preventative maintenance

Ms. Bunch reiterated her concerns regarding funding committed projects.

In response to an inquiry by Ms. Barefoot, Mr. Kozlosky stated that the WMPO could continue to provide funding this year. However, Wave should not consider it as an on-going, anticipated commitment without that direction from the Board. He added that the WMPO will ask Wave for a better accounting of how these funds are spent as it does with capital projects.

Ms. Matheny stated that this information is available.

Mr. Bennett spoke in favor of long-term improvements that increase sustainability.

Mr. Kozlosky reminded the committee that a motion is on the floor.

In response to an inquiry by Ms. Barefoot, Ms. Matheny clarified that the motion is to approve the request for \$600,000.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Bennett, Ms. Kimes stated that the WMPO can handle this request based on the estimates that are two to three years old. She anticipated that some of the phasing of the projects would cause them to be funded in FY21.

In response to an inquiry by Ms. Roth, Ms. Matheny stated that these funds would apply to Wave's current FY20 budget that commenced July 1st. She noted that the adopted budget anticipated \$500,000 based on the previous allocation. She added that the additional funding is sought to cover needs that manifested this year.

Mr. Kozlosky inquired if Ms. Matheny would be willing to amend her motion for \$500,000 instead. Mr. Bennett suggested that the additional funding could be requested in March or April.

Ms. Matheny explained that some state funding ended at the end of FY19 as a result of population exceeding 200,000 a few years ago. She noted that the additional funding is requested to cover the deficit until a dedicated funding source can be identified.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Cannon, Ms. Matheny clarified that the population reflects the service region.

Ms. Ayers requested further discussion from the jurisdictions with obligated projects.

Mr. Sutton stated that Navassa's project won't be ready for construction until FY21. Ms. Barefoot was unable to say when Leland's four projects would be ready. Mr. Haire commented that his project have built-in contingencies and he has no concerns.

Mr. Kozlosky expressed concerns regarding the additional amount requested in view of the need for updated information on the status of the projects and a breakdown of the expenditures to be funded.

Ms. Ayers made a substitute motion to table the request one month for additional information. Mr. Bennett seconded the substitute motion and it carried unanimously.

5) Updates

Mr. Kozlosky stated that updates are included in the agenda packet.

In response to an inquiry by Ms. Ayers, Mr. Kozlosky stated that NCDOT has stopped work on the Cape Fear Crossing Project. However, the \$21 million in right-of-way acquisition and utility relocation is still included the draft State Transportation Improvements Program (STIP) in FY28 and FY29.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Bennett, Ms. Marks stated that all questions regarding this project will be answered during the presentation to the MPO Board.

Mr. Kozlosky stated that a number of news articles have been published recently, one yesterday in the *Business Journal* and another today in the *News & Observer*. He commented that NCDOT is in the process of handling numerous factors. He pointed out that the decision to delay or stop the Cape Fear Crossing Project has as much to do with the funding as anything else.

In response to an inquiry by Ms. Ayers, Ms. Marks stated that her update will include changes to the STIP.

Mr. Kozlosky stated that the Board has requested of Ms. Marks provide a project-by-project comparison of the draft released in January 2019 compared to the one released last week.

Ms. Roth expressed appreciation for the chart of contacts provided by Ms. Marks.

6) Announcements

- a. **Bike/Pedestrian Committee Meeting: September 10th**
- b. **Next TCC meeting: September 11th**

7) Adjournment

With no further items, the meeting was adjourned at 11:16 a.m.

**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.**