



MPO Board Regular Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 27, 2023

6th Floor Training Conference Room, 320 Chestnut Street, Wilmington, North Carolina

Members Present in Person

Lynn Barbee, Town of Carolina Beach
Eulis Willis, Town of Navassa
Mike Allen, Town of Belville
Neil Anderson, City of Wilmington
Jonathan Barfield, New Hanover County
Brenda Bozeman, Town of Leland
Mike Forte, Brunswick County
Dane Scalise, Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority
Luke Waddell, City of Wilmington

Members Present Remotely

Landon Zimmer, NC Board of Transportation

Others Present in Person

Carolyn Caggia, WMPO
Tera Cline, WMPO
Mark Hairr, WAVE Transit Authority
Michelle Howes, NCDOT
Ben Johnson, STIP Manager
Chad Kimes, NCDOT
Vanessa Lacer, WMPO
Abby Lorenzo, WMPO
Tracy Manning, WMPO
Rebecca Roth, New Hanover County
Emma Stogner, WMPO
David Wasserman, STIP Manager

Others Present Remotely

Stephanie Ayers
Veronica Carter, Town of Leland
Katie Hite, NCDOT
Regina Hopkins, WMPO
Scott James, WMPO
Bill Marley, FHWA
Kim Nguyen, NCDOT
Amy Passaretti, Port City Daily
Nazia Sarder, NCDOT

1) Call to Order

Vice Chairman Luke Waddell called the meeting to order at 3:01 PM. MPO Executive Director Mike Kozlosky called the roll, and a quorum was present as follows:

Present: Lynn Barbee, Brenda Bozeman, Jonathan Barfield, Jr., Dane Scalise, Luke Waddell, Mike Forte, Eulis Willis. **Late:** Neil Anderson, Mike Allen Landon Zimmer. **Absent:** Wendy Fletcher-Hardee, John Ellen, Chairman Hank Miller

2) Conflict of Interest statement and recusals

Vice Chairman Waddell read the conflict-of-interest statement for the board.

3) Approval of Board Member Excused Absences

Mr. Kozlosky requested a motion to excuse Commissioner Wendy Fletcher-Hardee, Commissioner John

Ellen, and Chairman Hank Miller from the meeting.

Mr. Barbee made a motion to excuse Commissioner Wendy Fletcher-Hardee, Chairman Hank Miller and John Ellen from the meeting and Ms. Bozeman seconded.

Motion passes unanimously.

4) Approval of the Agenda

Mike Forte made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Barfield seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Public Comment Period

No public sign ups.

6) Presentations

a. FHWA Federal Funds and August Redistribution, David Wasserman, and Ben Johnson, NCDOT STIP Unit

Ben Johnson, P.E., and David Wasserman, P.E., North Carolina Department of Transportation's (NCDOT) State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) unit gave an overview of federal funding and fund swaps and the benefits and challenges involved. He stated that one of the challenges is in mid 1990s, NCDOT agreed to allow Transportation Management Areas (TMA) to direct how Surface Transportation Block Grant Program-Direct Attributable (STBG-DA) should be spent. Mr. Johnson said this gave local jurisdictions more options with local projects but slowed down the delivery of federally funded projects due to complex federal rules. In turn, this has led to delays with NCDOT being able to obligate STBG-DA funds each year which leads to large unobligated balances and limits the amount to be requested going forward. Mr. Johnson noted different ways NCDOT can lose federal funds. He noted the first was with a lapse. He explained that funds must be obligated by the end of the 4th year. He stated that the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) modified transfer rules for Transportation Alternative Programs (TPA), making it difficult to transfer. Mr. Johnson also stated that rescissions enacted by Congress can impact on the loss of funds as well. He gave a brief breakdown of how and where federal funding is dispersed and the obligation authority as well. He explained what August redistribution is and the process for receiving funds. He noted that high awards over the last several years overdue to high unobligated balances and the numerous STBG-DA swaps performed. Mr. Johnson discussed preparing for the redistribution and fund swaps and how they work. He explained the proposal for future August redistributions and examples of the plan to disburse funds and from what sources. Mr. Wasserman then gave an overview of the state's STIP unit DA funding moving forward proposal. He noted that NCDOT is proposing the following for TMAs to receive direct attributable funding. He stated that each year (or upon request) the NCDOT will provide each MPO how much federal funds could possibly be available. Then the MPO will notify NCDOT of a list of projects to fund with desired schedules. At that time NCDOT will review each project for funding eligibility and use the most appropriate/restrictive fund source first. NCDOT will then work collaboratively with the MPO to manage project funding and may switch funding sources as needed for August Redistribution. Mr. Wasserman also stated that NCDOT strongly encourages MPO's to

have a single call for all types of projects as this provides the funding flexibility needed. He explained this approach allows NCDOT to maximize best funding practices.

Mike Koslosky stated that he asked Mr. Johnson and Mr. Wasserman to come present to the board to help with understanding fund swaps and highlight the 265 million dollars for this year and to explain the proposal that will be brought back before the Board at a later date for consideration.

Neil Anderson asked if the 265 million has been allocated already or what is it going to be spent on.

David Wasserman explained that essentially that money goes towards projects already under construction that potentially next year's funds were going towards. It is dispersed across the state.

Lynn Barbee stated that his understanding of the presentation was that the real benefit and real objective is not to lose federal funding. Mr. Wasserman stated that yes that is right, but it is also to maximize the amount of funds.

Mike Forte asked if money is distributed based on future growth of population? Mr. Wasserman stated that federal dollars are prescribed in federal law, so it's basically based on percentages. Each state gets a certain percentage then the state allocates that money to each of the MPO's with over 200,000 in population then it is subdivided between remaining MPO's across the state.

b. Get There Greener, Carolyn Caggia, WMPO

Carolyn Caggia, WMPO presented the Get There Greener commuter challenge that will start in October. She gave a brief history of the commuter challenges through 2022 and previous prizes associated with the challenges. She explained some changes that have been made include a branding change that incorporates feedback about commuting versus daily transportation needs for various populations including retirees, stay-at-home parents, and others. It also returns to the sustainability roots of the challenge by tracking greenhouse gas savings calculated from miles traveled by mode and in addition the challenge is now a month long. Ms. Caggia gave an overview of how to participate and the website link. She then reviewed with the group the next steps which includes gathering prizes and promoting the challenge.

7) Consent Agenda

- a) Approval of Board Meeting Minutes- August 30, 2023**
- b) Resolution approving 2020-2029 STIP/MPO Administrative Modifications #23-6**
- c) Resolution including the statewide transportation improvement projects in the Wilmington Urban Area MPO's 2024-2033 Transportation Improvement Program**
- d) Opening of the 30-day Public Comment Period for 2024-2033 STIP/MPO Transportation Improvement Programs Amendment #23-1**

Dane Scalise made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, seconded by Mr. Barbee, and the motion carried unanimously.

8) Regular Agenda

a. **Resolution approving amendments to the Go Coast Bylaws.**

Carolyn Caggia, WMPO gave a brief overview of the changes made to the bylaws.

Brenda Bozeman made a motion to approve Go Coast bylaws. Lynn Barbee seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

9) **Discussion**

a. **2020-2029 STIP/MPO Transportation Improvement Program Administrative Modifications #23-1**

Mr. Kozlosky said that this item is for information purposes only and will be brought back for consideration at the Board's next meeting.

10) **Updates**

a. **Wilmington Urban Area MPO**

Mr. Kozlosky presented the annual reports to the Board for their review and stated that staff will be presenting the reports to each jurisdiction.

b. **Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority**

Mark Hairr, Cape Fear Wave Transit, introduced himself to the Board and gave a brief background on his experience. He said that workshops have started to work on a formal short-range plan for the system and would welcome any input that the Board would like to provide.

c. **NCDOT Division**

Chad Kimes, NCDOT spoke about the ribbon cutting for Military Cutoff Road extension. He gave the Board instructions on how to get to the ribbon cutting and just how happy and excited the DOT and this area is that this project is complete.

d. **NCDOT Transportation Planning Division**

Nadia Sader, NCDOT, stated they will be starting the Pender County Comprehensive Transportation plan this fall, otherwise the Wilmington Travel demand model and the Brunswick County CIP are ongoing and on track.

11) **Announcements**

a. **Brunswick County Heritage Ride**

Mr. Kozlosky announced that the Brunswick County Heritage Ride is this weekend and that it had reached capacity but there will be some day sign ups available.

b. **2050 MTP Outreach**

Mr. Kozlosky played the Outreach video for the Board which was very well received. He thanked staff for all their work on the video as well. He then introduced Ms. Lacer to give a brief update on the outreach. Ms. Lacer stated that they had a fruitful first month, phase one public outreach period for the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. They conducted five public meetings and launched a survey which is hovering around 1,508 responses. She stated the last time this planning process was done

they had a total of 2,000 responses so they are on their way to the first month of public participation. This will continue through November and the survey will be open. She concluded by stating that outreach will continue through September and November and throughout the year at festivals and pop-up events as well.

Next meeting – October 25th, 2023

There being no further business, Mike Forte made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Brenda Bozeman, and the motion was carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 3:57 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 DIGITALLY AS PART OF THIS RECORD.