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WMPO Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 27, 2026

525 N 4th Street

Wilmington, NC 28401

Members Present, In person

Chuck Bost, Town of Belville
Lynn Barbee, Town of Carolina Beach
Brenda Bozeman, Town of Leland
Allen Oliver, Town of Kure Beach
Brad George, Pender County
Zeke Partin, Town of Wrightsville Beach
Bill Rivenbark, New Hanover County
Stephanie Walker, Cape Fear Transportation
Authority
Kevin Spears, City of Wilmington
JC Lyle, City of Wilmington
Frank Williams, Brunswick County
Rose Terry, Town of Navassa

Members Present, Remote

Landon Zimmer, NC Board of
Transportation

Others Present, In Person

Mike Kozlosky, WMPO
Abby Lorenzo, WMPO
Krysden Burden, WMPO
Ronda Hogan, WMPO

Caitlin Cerza, WMPO
Amanda Halbert, WMPO
Tessa Jones, WMPO
Luke Hutson, WMPO
Carolyn Caggia, WMPO
Regina Hopkins, WMPO
Natalie English, Greater Wilmington
Chamber
Bijan Saleni, A Caring Heart
Charlene Dail, GFT
Trevor Carroll, NCDOT
Veronica Scott, NCDOT
Hunter Smith, Town of Belville
Michelle Howes, NCDOT
Mark Hairr, WAVE

Others Present, Remote

Greg Laughter, WMPO
Thom Moton, City of Wilmington
Eric Seidel, CFPUA
Mike Forte, Brunswick County
Nazia Sarder, NCDOT IMD

1. Call to Order

Chairman Barbee called the meeting to order at 3:02pm.

2. Roll Call

Mike Kozlosky, WMPO Director, called the roll.

Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

City of Wilmington • Town of Carolina Beach • Town of Kure Beach • Town of Wrightsville Beach
County of New Hanover • Town of Belville • Town of Leland • Town of Navassa • County of Brunswick
County of Pender • Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority • North Carolina Department of Transportation

Present: Chuck Bost, Lynn Barbee, Brenda Bozeman, Allen Oliver, Brad George, Zeke Partin, Bill Rivenbark, Stephanie Walker, Kevin Spears, JC Lyle, Frank Williams, Rose Terry, and Landon Zimmer

3. Conflict of Interest Statement

Chairman Barbee read the conflict-of-interest statement as required by North Carolina General Statute and requested any conflicts of interest be disclosed by the Board. There were no conflicts of interest.

4. Approval of Board Member Excused Absences

There were no requested excused absences.

5. Approval of the Agenda

Brad George made a motion to approve the agenda; Chuck Bost seconded the motion. The agenda passed unanimously.

6. Public Comment

Natalie English, President and CEO of the Greater Wilmington Chamber of Commerce, spoke to the Board about a newly formed Transportation Committee, she stated the committee was developed to help educate, engage, and advocate around the long-term transportation and infrastructure needs of the regional economy. Ms. English stated that the committee was shaped because the Chamber believes transportation decisions made today will directly impact economic competitiveness, workforce mobility, public safety, freight movement, housing accessibility, and overall quality of life for decades to come. Ms. English believes the state may soon experience one of the largest transportation funding reshuffles in recent years and she would like to encourage the WMPO Board to remain thoughtful, disciplined, and focused on the long-term needs of the entire region.

Bijan Salehi, Wilmington resident, spoke about upgrades he would like to see, including bike lanes, sidewalks, drainage systems, pedestrian crossings, planting of trees, widening of roads, and repaving of existing roads.

7. Presentations

a. WMPO Data Hub Update – Greer Templer and Amanda Halbert, WMPO

Amanda Halbert, GIS Analyst for the WMPO, presented the recent updates and improvements to the WMPO's GIS Data Hub beginning with presenting the old look of the data hub and then the new look. Ms. Halbert highlighted the biggest changes of the hub including the new URL, the new site structure tabs, and request forms. Ms. Halbert also explained that the new data hub complies with the WCAG 2.0 AA standards. Ms. Halbert provided a quick glimpse of what the new site looks like and

how to find it on the WMPO website. Ms. Halbert asked if there were any questions. Kevin Spears stated that he did not have a question but wanted to congratulate Ms. Halbert on a great update. JC Lyle asked if there is a section for TIA's and if so, what is the information available. Ms. Halbert explained that the TIA tab will give you an update as to whether the TIA is in scoping or already approved. She explained it also states the parcel number and land use type. Stephanie Walker questioned Ms. Halbert about the drone request form. Ms. Halbert informed the Board that both she and Greer Templer are licensed to fly the WMPO drone, and the request form gives needed information to set up a flight for projects the WMPO are involved with. Trevor Carroll stated that the drone was extremely useful when the NCDOT was replacing the grid deck on the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge a few years back. It helped them understand where the congestion was and if the detour routes were being effective or not. JC Lyle asked if there is a charge for the drone. Mike Kozlosky answered no, it was not a part of the submission to amend the fee schedule. Mr. Kozlosky noted that there is a lot of great data on the updated hub and he recommends everyone take a minute to check it out and possibly share with their respective organizations.

8. Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of Board Regular Meeting Minutes – April 29, 2026
- b. Resolution approving 2026-2035 STIP/MPO Transportation Improvement Programs Administrative Modification #26-5

Brenda Bozeman made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Chuck Bost seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.

9. Regular Agenda

- a. Resolution adopting the Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization's Public Participation Plan

Tessa Jones, WMPO's Public Information Officer, explained that at the March 25th WMPO Board meeting, staff presented the draft Public Participation Plan and opened the 45-day public comment period. During the public comment period, no comments were received. Since no comments were received, staff is requesting adoption of the plan submitted in the agenda packet.

Allen Oliver made a motion to adopt the WMPO's Public Participation Plan. Kevin Spears seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.

- b. Resolution approving Locally Administered Projects Program (LAPP) FY29 and 30 Special Call for Projects Submittal Guide and Scoring Matrix

Krysden Burden, WMPO Grants Coordinator, reminded the committee that at the last meeting she and Luke Hutson reviewed the updates that have been made to the

Special Call for Projects Submittal Guide and Scoring Matrix and the period for comments was opened. Ms. Burden stated that only grammatical comments were submitted so at this point she would like to take the updated submittal guide and scoring matrix to the WMPO board for approval. Ms. Burden reviewed the timeline for the FY29 – FY30 Special Call for Projects.

- June 1st – Call for Projects released
- June 10th – Pre-submittal informational meeting
- July 17th – Pre-application submittal is due
- September 18th – Final application deadline

Ms. Burden opened the floor for questions, there were none.

Stephanie Walker made a motion to approve the LAPP FY29 and 30 Special Call for Projects Submittal Guide and Scoring Matrix. Rose Terry seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.

10. Discussion

a. 2026-2035 STIP/MPO Transportation Improvement Program Administrative Modifications #26-6

Mike Kozlosky explained that this administrative modification is for informational purposes only and will be brought back for action at the next meeting.

b. Independence Boulevard Extension

Mike Kozlosky gave a brief update of the Independence Boulevard Extension project, including a description of the project and the original purpose of the project. Mr. Kozlosky stated that the Independence Boulevard Extension project, (U-4434), is proposed to extend Independence Boulevard from Randall Parkway to the Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway. He stated that the project was added to the Wilmington Thoroughfare Plan in 1972, in the recently adopted Cape Fear Navigating Change 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, and is a priority project in the WMPO's adopted 2022-2026 Strategic Plan. The project is funded in the adopted 2026-2035 State/MPO Transportation Improvement Programs for preliminary engineering only with a cost of \$424,600,000. Mr. Kozlosky stated the project includes Federal funds and for that reason the project was required to complete and publish a Draft Environmental Impact Statement, which was completed last fall. A public hearing was held on December 1, 2025, and public comments were accepted through January 16, 2026. During the public comment period, Wilmington City Council adopted a resolution that outlined their opposition to the Independence Boulevard Extension project. NCDOT recommended that the WMPO consider removing the project from the 2026-2035 State/MPO Transportation Improvement Programs due to the number of comments received in opposition to the project, the City of Wilmington's opposition to the project and the overwhelming cost of the project in the Division needs funding tier. The WMPO staff supports the NCDOT's recommendation to remove the proposed project from the State/MPO Transportation Improvement Programs, however the WMPO staff does not support removing the project from the

Cape Fear Navigating Change 2050 because leaving it in that publication will continue to demonstrate the need for improved north-south connectivity and ensure there is no impact to other projects that are further along in the project development and implementation process.

Bill Rivenbark questioned why the city was opposed to the extension project. JC Lyle explained that supporting the proposed extension would have disrupted approximately 70 households and businesses and ultimately does not align with the city's strategic plan. Ms. Lyle explained that the proposal for the Independence Boulevard Extension was completed before the new Kerr widening was installed and the city would like to see if the Kerr widening helps, as well as find some options that do not cost the community so much. Mr. Rivenbark explained that as a commissioner he continually gets asked when something is going to be done about the traffic issues but whenever a suggestion is made, it is met with resistance. Rose Terry questioned if everyone was familiar with where the project is located, reaffirming that a disruption in the well-developed neighborhood would be detrimental. Kevin Spears stated he understands Mr. Rivenbark's quest for traffic resolution but does not want that to come at the cost of neighbors losing their community. Chairman Lynn Barbee concluded the conversation by reaffirming the north south connection is important for traffic flow but understands the City of Wilmington's position supporting residents.

Frank Williams made a motion to remove the Independence Boulevard Extension project from the STIP but have it remain in the 2050 Cape Fear Navigating Change MTP, Brenda Bozeman seconded the motion. Mr. Williams remarked that he made the motion but also agrees with Bill Rivenbark, that all projects cannot be rejected if there is progress to be made. The motion passed by a 12-1 vote with Bill Rivenbark opposed.

11. Updates

a. Wilmington Urban Area MPO

Updates are in the packet, there is an expected release of Prioritization 8.0 projects by the end of the week. US House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee's Build America 250 transportation reauthorization bill was released last weekend, the committee held a markup with the bill it passed out of committee and is headed to the House floor.

b. Cape Fear Public Transit Authority

Updates are in the packet.

c. NCDOT Division 3

Project updates are in the packet. Paving on Market Street is getting closer to being started. NCDOT has an app which has been "soft-launched" called Projects Near Me, allowing citizens to receive updates on projects in the area.

d. NCDOT Transportation Planning Division

Updates are in the packet. NCDOT is working on a multimodal freight plan, a link to what it is about is included in your packet, a draft plan should be available by the end of 2026.

12. Announcements

- a. WMPO Active Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting – June 9, 2026

13. Next Meeting – June 24, 2026

14. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 3:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Kozlosky

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.