

GREATER MORGANTOWN MPO
August 18, 2011 Minutes City Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT: Joe Fisher, Asel Kennedy, Eldon Callen, Bill Byrne, Perry Keller, Wes Nugent, Jim Manilla, Mike Kelly, Anthony Giambrone

MEMBERS ABSENT: Patty Lewis, Janice Goodwin, Joe Statler, David Bruffy

MPO DIRECTOR: Bill Austin

I. CALL to ORDER: Joe Fisher called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

II. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

III. APPROVAL of MINUTES: Mr. Byrne moved to approve the minutes of May 2011 as submitted; seconded by Mr. Kelly. The motion unanimously passed.

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

1. Financial report for the end this fiscal year included for review, although it is not an agenda item. Due to the absence of the Treasurer, approval cannot be given;
2. Mr. Austin reported that the priority list compiled by the MPO in 2004 and submitted to the DOH had twelve projects nine of which projects have been completed. The LRTP will identify more projects of this type that may be passed onto the DOH;
3. Correspondence was received from a local cyclist regarding the closing of the Ice's Ferry Bridge asking if the DOH could provide any other accommodations for cyclists;
4. Grumbein's Island Feasibility Study status report – the MPO has partnered with WVU for a feasibility study on a grade separation at this location. WVU is concerned that the public will not understand that this is a feasibility study so rather than have a public meeting on the project they prefer for the report to be run through the MPO's committee process. A report should be forthcoming shortly.
5. Downtown Operation Study – A meeting has been scheduled on October 6th with Main Street Morgantown to solicit comments on what issues should be studied and to present the origin and destination information gathered.
6. Mr. Austin discussed corridor preservation initiative. A legislative initiative may provide DOH with corridor preservation authority.
7. Airport office lease expires in May. Staff Met with the City Manager and advised the MPO is interested in continuing to lease the space;

8. Mr. Austin and his assistant Ms. Williams, will be out of the office September 18 and 19 for legislative briefing session regarding transportation funding.

V. UPDATE SCOPE of WORK for LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN:

Mr. Austin reported concerns of the TTAC regarding the scope of work.

1. Contractual arrangement in agreement with all concerned;
2. Clarification of the public involvement process. Suggested a flow chart be completed to show how that process would work;

Mr. Austin then advised the original consultant's contract cost was between \$260,000 - \$275,000. That cost has increased to \$311,000. Mr. Austin asked if the Policy Board would give him approval to sign the contract, which will begin in October, 2011.

Mr. Byrne asked Mr. Austin to explain the coordination of planning endeavors. Mr. Austin stated the key factors in planning are origin and destination. It is important to coordinate transportation planning with land use planning. There will not be many funds available for future transportation projects so coordinating the development of the area with the transportation plan is very important; the MPO can work with the DOH to make a land use plan work and to make sure the transportation network is not overburdened. Mr. Austin stated that something on the order \$226 million may be available over the next 30 years for transportation projects and programming those funds wisely will be important to the economic vitality of the community. Mr. Keller noted that not all those funds may be spent in Morgantown. The state will review project priorities to determine the proper use of funds for the area. The DOH's priority may not fall in line with the desires of Morgantown. Many rural areas do not have a sounding board for needed projects like the MPO.

Mr. Austin also advised MountainLine is looking at some expansion work and the consultants may also assist in this effort. MountainLine has allocated funds to pay for them to accomplish this task. Under the LRTP contract the consultants will create two transportation scenarios for the future based on information gathered from the Regional Visioning process being conducted with Morgantown and Star City. Mr. Bruffy had asked if the consultants could create a public transportation oriented scenario as part of this exercise. Mr. Austin explained to Mr. Bruffy that the number of scenarios had been reduced to two to contain costs and that he did not want to further reduce the number of scenarios by predetermining that one of them would be a transit oriented scenario. He said he advised MountainLine that they could fund a transit oriented scenario with the consultants if they wished. This is written into the Scope of Work for the project if it is authorized by the Project Manager.

Mr. Kennedy questioned the cost increase to the consultants to \$311,000, which is about a 25% increase. He suggested the Policy Board may need to take a closer look at this. If consultants are looking for public input, many public meetings/hearings historically have a low attendance. Those who do attend are not representative of the public. Any information should come from the Advisory Committees; that information should then be fed back to the MPO. Mr. Keller noted that the DOH may be responsible for the increase since they have begun the environmental process during the planning process. Mr. Kennedy stated the city/county match is being spent without making anyone aware of it.

Mr. Austin stated that the MPO is not suggesting obligating any additional match this fiscal year. The additional work would be performed next year and it is proposed that the MPO would request the same match as this year next fiscal year.

Mr. Austin also noted that he was aware of concerns with the cost of the project and that six public meetings have been cut from the proposed work. Public involvement will be in two stages, the first being creative. The Regional Visioning Group will create a land use vision and the Transportation Advisory Group will create the transportation vision using the land uses proposed in the regional vision. The second stage of the public involvement process will be bringing all interested parties (developers, cyclists, etc.) together to evaluate the resulting transportation plan scenarios.

Mr. Nugent asked for a timeline from the consultants. Mr. Austin stated the transportation plan will hopefully be ready November 2012. The last plan was done in 2007 and it is updated every 5 years. Mr. Keller stated if an area is non-attainment, it is every four years; Morgantown is on a 5 year cycle. The other MPO's in non-attainment areas are on a four year cycle.

Mr. Fisher questioned if there would be any problems with state funding for next year. Mr. Keller stated the only uncertainty would be if there was no Transportation Bill.

Mr. Keller moved that the Policy Board authorize Mr. Austin to sign the contract with the consultant in the amount of \$311,000; seconded by Mr. Byrne. The motion unanimously passed.

VI. VAN POOL UPDATE.

Danielle Williams reported the funds from CMAQ in the amount of \$50,000 have been received; \$42,000 is being used to subsidize the van pool. The anticipated subsidy to each van is \$465 per month. She is presently working with Mylan, NIOSH, WVU, WVU Hospitals and Mon General to implement the program. Riders are being recruited thru the TDM Committee and the ride matching program. Tentative launch date is September 5, 2011. Ms. Williams explained how the program would work. Employees living more than twelve miles from their jobs would find it more feasible to vanpool. Employees would be matched up with people wanting to van pool in their area. One person will be responsible for the van and

would take it home. Insurance is taken care of by VPSI. Presently there are at least 30 people interested in the program.

VII. TRAFFIC COUNTS. Ms. Williams then presented a summary of recent traffic counts which were conducted at 46 locations in the spring. In addition to the Average Daily Traffic Counts presented in the handout she is working on peak hour percentages and peak hour directional counts. Once calculations are completed a final report will be compiled. At their last meeting the TTAC requested additional count locations. Since this is an ongoing program, these count locations will be added to the locations for next years counts. Two areas where the counts failed are being redone by the consultants at no cost to the MPO. In the future off peak counts when the students are out of town will also be done that will create seasonal adjustment factors specific to our area.

VIII. TRAINING/PERSONNEL ISSUE. Mr. Austin emailed the Policy Board a personnel issue that needed to be addressed. Rather than go into Executive Session, Mr. Keller moved that the Policy Board allow Mr. Austin to proceed with his recommendation as outlined in his email; seconded by Mr. Callen. The motion unanimously passed.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS – None

X. ADJOURNMENT. Mr. Callen moved to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Keller. The motion unanimously passed.