POLICY BOARD MEETING

City of Morgantown
389 Spruce Street
Morgantown, WV
May 21, 2026, 6 PM

Members Present:
Chairman Russ Rogerson - Morgantown Area Partnership, Board Vice-Chairman Maria Smith- Mountain Line Transit Authority, Mike Kelly – Board of Education, Mayor Patricia Lewis - Town of Granville, Jeff Arnett – Monongalia County, Brian Carr, WVDOT – DOH, Ron Justice – West Virginia University, Jenny Selin - City of Morgantown City Council, Joe Abu-Ghannam, City of Morgantown City Council, Bob Lucci - Mayor of Westover, Steve Blinco - Recorder, Star City

Others Present: Jing Zhang, Jackie Peate, Christiaan Abildso

MPO Director: Bill Austin

1. Call to Order

With a quorum present, Chairman Rogerson called the meeting of the Morgantown Monongalia Metropolitan Planning Organization (MMMPO) Policy Board to order at 6:00 PM.

2. Public Comment

None.

3. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Kelly moved to approve the minutes; seconded by Mr. Abu-Ghannam. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Committee Reports

a. Citizens Advisory Committee

Mr. Abildso stated the CAC had quorum. They recommended approval of all the action items on the agenda. The CAC had a motion for an Official Expression of Gratitude for Bill Ausitn.

b. Finance

Mayor Lewis provided the financial report for the months of March and April. The beginning balance in March was $59,467.60, there were 2 deposits totaling $29,514.21, with 22 disbursements totaling $29,244.33, leaving the ending balance at $59,737.48. This carried over into April with 3 deposits totaling $78,941.10, and 22 disbursements totaling $103,116.63, leaving the ending balance at $35,561.95.

Mr. Justice moved to approve the Financial Report; seconded by Mr. Abu-Ghannam. The motion passed unanimously.

c. Executive Director

Mr. Austin stated the deposits mentioned by Mayor Lewis included $50K from the MPO's line of credit. The MPO is having to pay consultants for the Complete Streets projects. This project is 100% reimbursable. The MPO is doing this to wrap up the project before the end of the fiscal year.

Mr. Austin stated there are many projects being wrapped up. He hopes his successor has a clean slate to begin.

Mr. Ausitn also stated the MPO is hosting the state wide planning conference June 2nd – 4th. MPO staff will be presenting on the internal 2055 MTP update. Right after, he will be going to Tulsa to do a presentation on maintaining funding for MPOs. He will retire June 30th.

Mr. Austin thanked the Policy Board for the opportunity to serve the community.

5. TIP Amendments

The West Virginia Department of Transportation, Division of Highways, has requested the following amendments and administrative adjustments to the MPO's TIP:

TIP Amendment:

I-79 CHAPLIN HILL GATEWAY (PHASE 2) (CONVERT AC). Federal ID: NHPP0079156D. FFY: 2027. Type of Work: RECONSTRUCT I/C. Phase: Construction. Funding Source: MEGA GRANT. Federal Funding: $31,000,000. Total Funding: $135,000,000. Location Description: I-79 Exist 155.

POINT MARION ROAD INTERSECTION. Federal ID: CARB0119605D. FFY: 2026. Type of Work: DESIGN STUDY. Phase: Engineering. Funding Source: CRP 50-200K POP. Federal Funding: $960,000. Total Funding: $1,200,000. Location Description: Intersection of Point Marion Rd and Stewartstown Rd/Canyon Rd.

The TTAC and CAC unanimously recommended approval of these amendments. It is respectfully requested that the Policy Board approve these TIP Amendments.

Mr. Kelly moved to approve the TIP Amendments; seconded by Mr. Abu-Ghannam. The motion passed unanimously.

6. On Call Consultant Selection

Contract-The MPO's existing on call consultant contract is expiring. The Policy Board approved the reissuance of an RFQ for On Call consultants at the last meeting. With the assistance of TTAC members from Westover, Mountain Line, the City of Morgantown and Monongalia County Planning, staff evaluated the four responses received. The Selection Committee recommended the selection of three firms for the contract as allowed for in the RFQ. The firms recommended were AECOM, HDR and Kimley Horn. AECOM and Kimley Horn were the firms previously on the contract. More information on

the selection process may be found on the Memorandum attached to the agenda. The TTAC and the CAC unanimously recommended the selection of the three firms noted above.

Mr. Abu-Ghannam moved to approve the On Call Consultant Selection; seconded by Ms. Smith. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Evaluation of Downtown Microsimulation Study Projects

MPO staff has completed the attached report reviewing the Downtown Microsimulation Study projects assigned to Tier 3 by the Policy Board for the impact they have on mitigating the potential closure of Grumbien's Island. Staff assumed that the Tier One Projects-Willey Street relocation to Snider Street and the optimization of the area's traffic signal system will be accomplished prior to the implementation of the Tier 3 projects. The report finds that of the three projects reviewed two of them (8th Street/Beechurst Roundabout, Beechurst access management) are necessary if Grumbein's Island is to be closed. The proposed Protzman Street roundabout is not necessary for the closure of Grumbein's Island but it is an important safety project. The report also looked at a previously existing Tier 3 Project the Willey Street Connector, which connects Willey Street to Stewartstown Road, to evaluate its impact on the downtown network. The report finds that the construction of this connector has a positive impact on the traffic volumes downtown if Grumbein's Island is closed. Staff is requesting that the MPO Policy Board accept this report. The TTAC and CAC unanimously recommend that the Policy Board accept the report.

Chair Rogerson mentioned how this study is not just a 'one-time' study and the model created with the project can be continued to be used.

Ms. Smith asked if the two projects that need to occur before the closure of Grumbein's Island are funded. Mr. Austin stated the MPO will be seeking funding.

Ms. Selin asked at what point does the decision on Grumbein's Island happen. Mr. Austin stated it will have to be a community consensus. The state and WVU will have to coordinate as that is a state-owned road. Mr. Carr reiterated that community consensus is very important. The board agreed.

Mr. Justice moved to approve the Evaluation of Downtown Microsimulation Study Projects; seconded by Ms. Selin. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Community Garden Program Closing

Mr. Austin informed the Policy Board of the financial standings of the Community Garden Grant. The Community Garden Grant Program has come to an end. WVDOH originally provided **$14,588.51** in Federal funding for the establishment and support of area community gardens to mitigate the loss of a community garden on Greenbag Road. There is **$138.40** remaining.

Four Community Gardens were funded- Chris White Community Garden, Scott's Run Community Garden, Mutal Aid Freedom Farmer's Community Garden, and Greenmont Community Garden. The work accomplished by these projects has been documented in the MPO's newsletter to the public as well as with updates to the MPO's Policy Board. Staff has contacted the community gardens selected for the program to determine if they could use the funds remaining for the project. None of them have identified uses for the remaining funds.

The MPO is asking the Policy Board to approve allocating the remaining **$138.40** to the MPO's general checking account to compensate for the administrative expenses including advertising incurred by the program.

Staff will prepare a memorandum summarizing the programs accomplishments for acceptance by the Policy Board at the August meeting. This memorandum will be sent to WVDOH and FHWA.

Mr. Austin stated this money has already been given to the MPO by the state.

Mr. Abu-Ghannam moved to approve the Community Garden Program Closing; seconded by Mayor Lewis. The motion passed unanimously.

9. TIP Presentation – Brian Carr

Mr. Carr presented on the STIP for FY 2027- 2032. He introduced the STIP, went over the IIJA v. FAST ACT, talked about the 2023 – 2026 STIP Analysis, reviewed Federal Funding Categories, and talked about the Consideration of the 2027 – 2032 STIP.

This Presentation can be found on the MPO's website.

10. Other Business

Chair Rodgerson entertained a motion to go into Executive Session. Ms. Smith moved to go into Executive Session; seconded by Mr. Kelly.

The Board expressed gratitude for Bill Austin and wished him well in retirement.

11. Meeting Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm.