



POLICY BOARD MEETING

City of Morgantown
389 Spruce Street
Morgantown, WV
May 15, 2025, 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, Bill Kawecki – City of Morgantown, Mayor Joe AbuGhannam - City of Morgantown, Sean Sikora – Monongalia County, Jeff Arnett - Monongalia County, Brian Carr, WVDOT – DOH, Ron Justice – West Virginia University, Jenny Selin - City of Morgantown, Bob Lucci - Mayor of Westover

Others Present: Jing Zhang, Jackie Peate, Earl Gaskins WVDOH District 4 Manager

MPO Director: Bill Austin, AICP

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 6:01 PM.

2. Public Comment

No Public Comments.

3. Approval of Minutes

Mayor Lucci moved to approve the minutes; seconded by Mr. Justice. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Committee Reports

a. Citizens Advisory Committee

Mr. Austin provided the report. There was a quorum at the last meeting and they CAC was supportive of the recommendations of the Downtown Microsimulation Study and recommendations of the Don Knott's Pedestrian Bridge Study.

b. Finance

Mayor Lewis provided the financial report for the month of March and April. The beginning balance in March was \$19,338.22, there were 3 deposits totaling \$82,231.42, 23 disbursements totaling \$74,858.39, leaving the ending balance at \$26,711.25. This carried over into April with 4 deposits totaling \$81,630.68, 20 disbursements totaling \$54,018.17, leaving the ending balance at \$54,323.76.

Mr. Justice moved to approve the Financial Report; seconded by Ms. Selin. The motion passed unanimously.

c. Executive Director

Mr. Austin provided the board with his report. The Community Garden funds are being spent by the four gardens funded by WVDOH to mediate the Greenbag Rd project. He stated the upcoming newsletter will have pictures and updates about the gardens. Mr. Austin will be in Charleston next week with the State Highway Safety Group and he will be in Denver in late June for WVAMPO. There will not be a June meeting.

5) Introduction WVDOH District 4 Manager

Earl Gaskins, the WVDOH District 4 Manager, introduced himself and discussed some ongoing and upcoming projects. He stated he wants to build a strong line of communication with our MPO and leaders around the county. The Policy Board was very impressed with his introduction, thanking him for having an open line of communication and wanting to work with them.

6) Recommendations of the Downtown Microsimulation Study

Mr. Austin stated that included with the agenda packet is an Executive Summary of the recommendations for the Downtown Microsimulation Study. As noted in the attached document the Study Steering Committee recommended a combination of improvements to the infrastructure in downtown including the closure of Grumbein's Island, improvements to several intersections, improvements to the safety of the Beechurst Corridor, the realignment of Willey Street (US 119), and the optimization of the downtown traffic signals. This information is being provided to the Policy Board prior to including the recommendations in the public involvement process for the ongoing update of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. A member of the Kimley Horn team who prepared the Study is at the meeting to discuss the findings. The Policy Board is not being asked to adopt these recommendations at this time. The TTAC and the CAC recommend that this project be included in the public involvement process for the Transportation Plan update.

Colin Frosch from Kimley Horn discussed the improvements for Downtown Morgantown based on the Downtown Microsimulation Traffic Study:

1. Signal timing optimization and corridor coordination, and bicycle and pedestrian safety and access improvements
2. Grumbein's island closure
3. One-way street conversions
4. Willey Street improvements (capacity, realignment, or both)
5. Intersection improvements and Beechurst corridor improvements from campus to 8th
6. Combined Grumbein's Island, Willey Street, and one-way conversion
7. Combined Grumbein's Island, Willey Street, and Intersection Improvements.

The final recommendations are identified as Scenario 7 in the Downtown Microsimulation study. It is a combination of Scenario 1 (Signal optimization and multimodal improvements), Scenario 2 (Grumbein's Island closure), Scenario 4B (Realignment of US 119 to Snider Street), and Scenario 5 (Intersection Improvements). Scenario 7 can be phased as standalone projects. Scenario 3, the one-way street conversions, was recommend to not be carried forward.

This was an informational item and did not need to be voted on.

7) Recommendations of the Don Knott's Pedestrian Bridge Study

Mr. Austin stated that this project was initiated to provide WVDOH information on the feasibility of building a pedestrian bridge over Don Knott's Boulevard as identified in the MPO's Tier One Project list. A memorandum summarizing the public comments on this project as well as the preliminary design of the pedestrian bridge is included with the agenda packet. A member of the Kimley Horn team is at the meeting to discuss the findings of the Study. It is requested that the Policy Board accept the results of this study as an informational item for use in grant applications to implement the project. The TTAC and the CAC recommend the acceptance of this Study.

Colin Frosch from Kimley Horn discussed how this project was to evaluate the feasibility and cost of a grade separate crossing from the First Ward neighborhood to the Caperton Trail at the Mountaineer Heritage Park. Some constraints included topography, private property, utilities, WVDOH development plans, and ADA/PROWAG design guidelines. Some of the alternatives evaluated were at-grade crossing discarded based on WVDOH coordination, using Meadow Lane/Lawnwood Street, and ramp tie-ins to Park. There were multiple opportunities for the public to comment on this feasibility study. The majority of the comments were in support of the project, with benefits being listed as key connections in the area, it being an alternative transportation, and it being a recreational asset. Some of the concerns stated were community safety, maintained Meadow Lane access, the high cost, noise, traffic, and lighting impacts.

Mr. Justice moved to accept the study; seconded by Commissioner Sikora. The motion passed unanimously.

8) TIP Adjustments

Mr. Austin stated that these items are summarized in the memorandum attached to agenda. The item that may be of most interest to the Policy Board is the addition of funding for the resurfacing of Holland Avenue after the ongoing construction by Westover is completed. Please note that this item does not need to be approved by the Policy Board.

11. Other Business

Mayor Joe AbuGhannam stated Mr. Blinco was injured and wished him well. He also congratulated Mr. Kelly on a successful year. Finally, he congratulated Mr. Kawecky as this is his last MMMPO meeting.

12. Meeting Adjournment

The meeting adjured at 7:45pm.