

**Morgantown Monongalia MPO
Policy Board
Minutes
November 17, 2011
City Council Chambers**

MEMBERS PRESENT: David Bruffy, Perry Keller, Joe Fisher, Wes Nugent, Patty Lewis, Joe Statler, Asel Kennedy, Mike Kelly, Anthony Giambrone, Perry Keller

MEMBERS ABSENT: Janice Goodwin, Jim Manilla, Eldon Callen, Bill Byrne

MPO DIRECTOR: Bill Austin

OTHERS PRESENT: Todd Dorcas, Danielle Williams, Bill Rice, Alanna Slack

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

2. PUBLIC COMMENT: There was no public comment

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Statler moved for approval of the October minutes; seconded by Mr. Giambrone. The motion unanimously carried.

4. FINANCIAL REPORT:

Mr. Kennedy stated the report did not include check numbers and the WVDOT reimbursement was listed as a payment instead of a deposit but otherwise the report was satisfactory; Mr. Kelly moved for approval of the financial report; seconded by Mr. Bruffy. The motion unanimously carried.

5. DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Austin reported:

A. That the first meeting of the Visioning Group for the combined land use plans and Long Range Transportation Plan had met and that several Policy Board members including Mr. Keller, Mr. Nugent, Mr. Kennedy, Mr. Bruffy and Mr. Giambrone had been in attendance;

B. Mr. Austin also reported that he and Mayor Manilla and Mr. Nugent attended the West Virginians for Better Transportation Conference. The group appears to be gearing up to push for additional funding within the State;

C. Mr. Austin also introduced the draft MPO Committee Meeting Schedule for the upcoming year. He noted that two committee meetings were scheduled to miss election days;

6. TIP AMENDMENT: Mr. Fisher asked Mr. Keller to discuss the proposed amendment to the Transportation Improvement Program. Mr. Keller stated that the proposed amendment is to resurface I-68 from the Sabraton interchange to the Pierpont interchange. The total cost of the Project is \$2.2 million with \$1.67 million in Federal NHS funds. Mr. Keller moved to amend the 2012-2016 Transportation Improvement Program by including the proposed project. The motion was seconded by Mr. Statler. The motion was unanimously approved.

7. GRUMBEINS ISLAND STUDY: Mr. Fisher then called on Bill Austin to discuss the Grumbeins Island Study. Mr. Austin stated that the MPO in conjunction with WVU had funded a study of the feasibility of creating a grade separation at Grumbeins Island as recommended in the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan. Mr. Austin stated that the engineers cost in the report estimates appear to make the project feasible. He noted that the University and the Study Steering Committee would appreciate verification of the cost estimate before moving forward with including the cost estimate in the upcoming update of the LRTP. Mr. Keller noted that the MPO's Technical Advisory Committee had requested that the Division of Highways Design Group review the cost estimates for reliability. Mr. Austin noted that the TTAC and the CAC had both recommended acceptance of the Study Report along with the examination of the cost estimates to the Policy Board. Mr. Kennedy asked what project would not be funded if it were determined to implement this project. Mr. Austin noted that this project is already in the MPO's Priority List and that once the review of the cost estimates is complete the project can come back to the Policy Board for consideration of its place in the Priority List. After a short discussion, Mr. Kelly moved to accept the report and to ask the Division of Highways to review the cost estimates. The motion was seconded by Mr. Giambrone. The Motion was unanimously approved.

8. COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION PLAN: Mr. Fisher then asked Mr. Todd Dorcas of the West Virginia Department of Transportation Public Transit Division to discuss the Coordinated Transportation Plan presented at meeting last month. Mr. Dorcas noted that the Plan being considered was part of a statewide effort to create more effectively coordinated transportation for human service agencies and those who use public transportation. He stated that he appreciated the MPO's interest in moving this type of transportation forward. Mr. Bruffy asked how the planning efforts had been received around the State. Mr. Dorcas stated that the other areas had been fairly enthusiastic about the plan. Mr. Bruffy noted that would mean that other area's would be applying for funding from the programs covered in the Plan. After a brief discussion Mr. Keller moved adoption of the draft Plan, the motion was seconded by Mr. Kelly. The motion was unanimously approved.

DRAFT MPO Budget: Mr. Fisher then called on Mr. Austin to discuss the draft MPO Budget. Mr. Austin stated that the draft budget included in the agenda packet was a “steady state” budget that included only the ongoing update of the Long Range Transportation Plan as a specific project. The Steady State Budget only includes anticipated increase in the rent of office space to \$700 a month and a 2% cost of living increase for the Assistant to the Executive Director. This budget is approximately \$13,000 less than the previous years budget since it does not include the purchase of GIS software. Mr. Austin stated that the Citizens Advisory Committee had asked the MPO to conduct a test on how to collect pedestrian data and data on cyclists and that he anticipated including that project in the upcoming budget. Mr. Austin asked that the Policy Board provide him with direction for work tasks the Board would like to see in the upcoming fiscal year and he will include it in the budget. Mr. Fisher clarified that the budget would be coming up for adoption at the January meeting.

APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES: Mr. Fisher then asked the Policy Board for volunteers to serve on the Officer Nominating Committee. Mr. Fisher noted that he would not be available to serve as an officer next year. Mr. Fisher volunteered to serve on the nominating committee. Mr. Statler and Mr. Kennedy agreed to serve on the nominating committee as well.

Mr. Fisher then noted that there was no clearly established precedent for conducting the Executive Director’s review and he sought the Boards comment on this as well. Mr. Austin noted that Mr. Statler had commented that he would like to see the Executive Directors Review form modified. Mr. Statler stated that he would get the changes to Mr. Austin shortly. Mr. Kennedy stated that he felt the Officers should perform the review. Mr. Fisher stated that he would summarize the results of the Board Performance Review and the Officers would perform the Review. He also noted that the agenda for the January Meeting should include an Executive Session for the Review of the Executive Director’s performance if necessary. Mr. Fisher questioned how any proposed increase for the Executive Director should be handled. Mr. Kennedy stated that a place holder amount for this purpose could be included in the budget.

OTHER BUSINESS: Mr. Fisher then called for other business. Mr. Fisher introduced a petition forwarded by Mr. Frank Gmeindl concerning cyclist access across the existing Ices Ferry Bridge while the new bridge is under construction. Mr. Keller noted that the Department of Transportation is taking this issue very seriously. There has been a great deal of time spent on this topic. He noted that not only is the new bridge under construction but the road bed serving the existing bridge and the new bridge are being reconstructed. These construction areas are dangerous with construction materials being transported overhead and ongoing earthmoving efforts. He explained that allowing cyclists access to the area would be dangerous and would require not only flagmen but the route through the construction would have to be periodically shifted to allow for changes in where the construction is occurring. He stated that there was no realistic cost effective

way to safely allow cyclists through the active construction zone. He stated that the State has examined using the interstate and several other options for transporting cyclists in the area. He said that they would also be willing to look at on demand transit service for this purpose. He noted that the State would want to be certain that any such measures put in place would address the cyclists concerns and that the issue would be put to rest if they were put in place. Upon further discussion, Mr. Statler moved that the MPO write a letter encouraging a continuing dialogue between the State and cyclists on this issue. Mr. Bruffy seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Statler then asked the Policy Board to consider the status of the Mileground. He noted that the DOH had not provided the Board of Education with adequate guidance on the status of the Project and how the new Easton School under construction by the BOE would access whatever alternative is finally implemented. After a short discussion the Policy Board upon motion by Mr. Statler and seconded by Mr. Bruffy unanimously approved directing Mr. Austin to write a letter to the Department of Transportation requesting that the Department provide the Board of Education with adequate guidance. Mr. Statler asked Mr. Austin to confer with School Superintendent Devono on the appropriate language. Mr. Austin agreed to confer with the Superintendent.

Mr. Bruffy noted that the Transit survey is still under way and he encouraged participation in the survey. He also noted that as of October 31st Mountain Line had provided 1 million trips. He anticipates that it will provide 1.2 million trips by the end of the year.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business Mr. Statler moved for adjournment seconded by Mr. Keller. The meeting adjourned at 7:47.