

MEETING MINUTES

SALISBURY/WICOMICO METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE JANUARY 25, 2006

Attendees:

TAC Members:

John Redden, Chair, Wicomico County Public Works
Paul Weber, City of Salisbury Transportation & Safety Advisory Committee
Ray Birch, City of Salisbury Public Works
Rob Hart, Shore Transit
Mike Nixon, Maryland Department of Transportation
Tracey Gordy, Maryland Department of Planning

Others:

Gary Pusey, S/W MPO Staff, City of Salisbury/Wicomico County Planning
Jeff Downes, Salisbury University
Gregory Oliver, Delaware Department of Transportation
Lenny Howard, Maryland Transit Administration
Jim Magill, Salisbury-Wicomico Planning Commission
Audrey Allen, S/W MPO Recording Secretary

AGENDA ITEM #1: WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:

Chairman John Redden opened the meeting at 1:00 PM, and introductions of everyone attending the meeting were made.

AGENDA ITEM #2: APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

The Minutes for August 17, 2005 were approved as submitted. Motion to approve was made by Mike Nixon with the second by Ray Birch, with all members voting in favor.

AGENDA ITEM #3: FY 2006-08 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) AMENDMENT:

- Gary Pusey passed out packets containing the approved FY 2006-2008 Transportation Improvement Program. Included in the packets was a letter from Mike Nixon dated January 18, 2006 asking for appropriate action to amend pages 4 and 5 of the program by increasing the funding levels as showed on the attached amendment forms. Page 4 was an amendment to the "Safety and Spot Improvements" project, and page 5 was an amendment to the "Resurface and Rehabilitate" project.
- Mike Nixon provided background information on each of these amendments and explained the increased funding levels.

RESOLUTION: After reviewing all data and information presented to the Committee John Redden, Chairman asked for a motion for approval of the Transportation Improvement Program for 2006-2008 to include the amendments to pages 4 and 5. The motion was duly made by Mike Nixon, seconded by Ray Birch and unanimously carried.

Discussion regarding the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) continued as follows:

- Mike Nixon explained there has been a reduction of funds across the board for the State mainly affecting Shore Transit's funding provided by JARC (Job Access and Reverse Commute Program). Therefore, it is necessary to make a third revision in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to the Transit Element, and specifically, to the operating assistance to the "Small Urban Transit System" project.
- Lenny Howard added highlights to the above statement regarding the federal laws and funding. Due to safety laws the State has been forced to make cuts across the State in the federal funding. The exact amount of the funding decrease is uncertain at this time, but these revised figures should be available within the next week.
- Mike Nixon requested that Lenny Howard provide an updated table on the revised amounts before the next MPO Council meeting on February 15, 2006.
- Lenny Howard will revise the totals by subsidizing with other funds. The JARC will stay the same, all others will be shuffled around. He agreed to have the updated information available by Friday, January 27, 2006. The information will be given to Mike Nixon and Gary Pusey for distribution to the Technical Committee members.

RESOLUTION: After reviewing all data and information presented to the Committee Mike Nixon recommended **tabling the third revised revision in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) table regarding amounts until the updated figures are completed. When available, the numbers will be distributed to the Committee members for action.**

AGENDA ITEM #4: FY 2006 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM – AMENDMENT:

- Gary Pusey passed out the current year's approved budget and explained in detail the following:
 - The budget was approved by the MPO Council in June 2005.
 - Since that time, additional Federal money has become available, and other funds in the budget have been freed up due to Mike Nixon being able to provide State funding to cover the costs of developing the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).
 - As a result, the budget needs to be revised and adopted by the Council. Staff is recommending that money previously allocated to the LRTP be re-allocated to the "Corridor and Traffic Management Studies" task in the UPWP.

- The budget will need to be presented to the MPO Council for approval.
- Ray Birch asked a question regarding the procedures with handling funds.
- Mike Nixon explained that Wicomico County has procedures that are appropriate. Soon there will be a master agreement written to be signed by himself, Jack Lenox, Planning Director and Ed Baker, County Attorney, that will formally document funding procedures. Mike Nixon emphasized the importance of documenting everything in order to create the MPO as its own entity.
- Ray Birch mentioned the traffic counters and associated software program for the City of Salisbury, and questioned whether this would be an acceptable use of MPO money.
- Mike Nixon stated traffic counters and the software program would be a good use for MPO funds.

RESOLUTION: After reviewing all data and information presented to the Committee Mike Nixon made a motion for approval of the **FY 2006 Unified Planning Work Program Amendment**. The motion was seconded by Ray Birch and unanimously carried.

AGENDA ITEM #5: PROPOSED CORRIDOR STUDIES – DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION TO THE MPO COUNCIL:

- Gary Pusey noted that a task of “Corridor and Traffic Management Studies” is included in the current year’s UPWP, but no funds were provided for it. Now, with the proposed amendment recommended by the Technical Committee, funding will be available. Mr. Pusey recommended that the Committee identify corridors to be studied, and that the Committee make a recommendation to the MPO Council that consultant(s) be retained to assist in the detailed study of these corridors. The number of corridors to be studied would be dependent on the costs provided by the consultants.
- Ray Birch suggested that College Avenue and the Beaglin Park corridor be included as one such study.
- John Redden agreed, and suggested that the corridor be extended to include South Division Street to Fruitland.
- Gary Pusey suggested that two other corridors frequently mentioned for possible study include Pemberton Drive and the Mill Street/Riverside Drive/Camden Avenue intersection. There was agreement among the Committee members as to the inclusion of these corridors.
- Jeff Downes asked if any studies had been performed for South Division Street near the college. This study would be a valuable tool for the college. The College has been working on a master plan that involves a couple hundred thousand dollars.
- Gary Pusey responded that one study was done that he was aware of and he would provide a copy of this one to Jeff Downes.
- Ray Birch requested a copy of the College’s Master Plan. Jeff Downes agreed to send a copy to the City of Salisbury

- John Redden asked if it would be wise for the committee to be doing several studies at the same time or just one study at a time.
- Paul Weber noted our perspective is now different than before. The problem is getting the manpower. The University has a department with excellent people that can do this type of study. We can have several companies doing the study with one major company pulling all the data together.
- Tracey Gordy recommended that the projects be prioritized to ensure there is enough money.
- Ray Birch agreed with Tracey Gordy, and he believed those with the highest priority would be South Division Street and Pemberton Drive. Mr. Birch also suggested the committee should find out what the cost would be for a study on South Division Street/Beaglin Park Drive/College Avenue; Carroll Street/Riverside Drive/Camden Avenue; and Pemberton Drive.

RESOLUTION: After reviewing all data and information presented John Redden asked that there be a motion to prioritize the proposed corridor studies in the following order:

- (1) South Division Street/Beaglin Park Drive/College Avenue
- (2) Pemberton Drive
- (3) Carroll Street/Riverside Drive/Camden Avenue/Mill Street.

The motion was duly made by Ray Birch, seconded by Tracey Gordy and unanimously carried.

AGENDA ITEM #6: LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN STATUS:

- Gary Pusey stated that the MPO is currently operating under an “Interim Plan” that was adopted by the MPO Council last September. The Interim Plan focuses on projects anticipated for the next five years. Consultants are currently working on the LRTP that will be more detailed and will cover a 25-year period, to the year 2030. This Plan needs to be adopted by October 1, 2006 to meet federal requirements. No action was required for this item.

AGENDA ITEM #7: SHORE TRANSIT FUNDING UPDATE - ROB HART:

- Mr. Hart stated that currently Shore Transit’s budget is in good shape, although some unexpected costs (especially the rising cost of diesel fuel) is creating challenges.
- Next fall there will be major funding changes that may affect the Salisbury area. The performance of Shore Transit is still excellent in comparison with other providers across the state.
- Shore Transit has been working well with UMES and Salisbury University on transit funding. Due to the contributions from the colleges, the general public has benefited as well.
- Jeff Downs noted the relationship between Shore Transit and the College has advanced tremendously; all things are starting to work together. The College is now in the process of buying a bigger bus because of student need.

- A plan has been approved by the College for a parking garage. It is undetermined as to where at this point. The RFP will go out to bid later this year.
- No action was required on this item.

AGENDA #8: OTHER BUSINESS: There was none.

AGENDA #9: NEXT MEETING DATE/ADJOURN:

This is a summary of the proceedings of this meeting. The next scheduled MPO Council meeting is set for February 15, 2006. The next Technical Advisory Committee meeting would be set when needed. Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:20 PM.

John Redden, Chairman

Gary Pusey, SW/MPO Long Range Planner

Audrey Allen, Recording Secretary