

MINUTES

Metropolitan Policy Committee
Bascom-Tykeson Room—Eugene Public Library

December 10, 2009
11:30 a.m.

PRESENT: Pete Sorenson, Chair; Rob Handy (Lane County), Hillary Wylie (City of Eugene), Mike Eyster (Lane Transit District), Kitty Piercy, Alan Zelenka (City of Eugene), John Thiel (City of Coburg), David Warren (Oregon Department of Transportation), members; Gino Grimaldi (City of Springfield), Mark Pangborn (Lane Transit District), Jeff Spartz (Lane County), Jon Ruiz (City of Eugene), *ex officio* members.

George Kloeppe, Kathi Wiederhold, Andrea Riner, Paul Thompson (Lane Council of Governments); Dave Jacobson, Sarah Strand (Metropolitan Policy Committee Citizen Advisory Committee); Celia Barry (Lane County); Tom Boyatt (City of Springfield); Rob Inerfeld, Kurt Yeiter (City of Eugene); Tom Schwetz, Connie Bloom Williams (Lane Transit District); Savannah Crawford, Mac Linde (Oregon Department of Transportation); Rob Zako, guest.

CALL TO ORDER/APPROVE MINUTES

Mr. Sorenson called the meeting of the Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC) to order. Consideration of the minutes was postponed to a future meeting.

ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

Mr. Sorenson adjusted the agenda to ensure the MPC had a quorum for action items 5d and 5j.

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION ISSUES

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Project Funding Adjustment #1

Mr. Thompson provided a brief overview of the proposed funding adjustment, reporting that the United States Department of Transportation recently indicated to the Lane Council of Governments that the \$500,000 in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 moneys previously allocated by the MPC for a land use and transportation computer modeling, while permitted, was not a preferred use of the funding. Because of the tight time lines associated with the ARRA funding, staff proposed to redirect the funds to the Pioneer Parkway/Hayden-Harlow preservation project and reprogram \$500,000 in Surface Transportation Program-Urban (STP-U) from that project to fund the modeling project. Mr. Thompson asked the MPC to direct TPC to make that administrative adjustment.

Mayor Piercy, seconded by Mr. Eyster, moved to direct the Transportation Planning Committee to administratively complete the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Plan (MTIP) amendments necessary to: 1) program \$500,000 of ARRA funds for the Pioneer Parkway/Hayden-Harlow preservation project; 2) deprogram \$500,000 of STP-U funds

from the Pioneer Parkway/Hayden-Harlow preservation project; and 3) program \$500,000 of STP-U funds for the MPO Modeling System Project, and indicate the MPO in-kind match as required. The motion passed unanimously.

ARRA Project Funding Adjustment #2

Mr. Eyster, seconded by Mayor Piercy, moved to direct the Transportation Planning Committee to administratively complete the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Plan (MTIP) amendments necessary to: 1) program \$200,000 of Lane County ARRA funds for the River Road Area, 23rd Street, and Coburg Area Overlay project; and 2) deprogram \$200,000 of Lane County local funds from the River Road Area, 23rd Street, and Coburg Area Overlay project. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Wylie left the meeting.

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

David Wilcox, Director of the Bike Lane Coalition, discussed the social research conducted when gas prices were high, which indicated that the most important detriment to vehicle miles traveled (VMT) was fuel cost. He shared a chart and called attention to the growth rate in time in VMT and the decline demonstrated when gas prices were high. He said that people had been able to find alternative means to reach their destinations with the assistance of such organizations as *point2point Solutions*, but high gas prices had affected the Lane Transit District's ability to provide services at the same time. He called for increased gas taxes to discourage people from driving, and advocated for the use of those taxes to improve public transit. He linked the use of cars to obesity and advocated for government to aggressively encourage walking and bicycling, which required improved bicycle facilities better integrated into public transportation. He said that the 60 participants at the June 2009 Bike Lane Public Transportation Town Hall identified efficient, safe multi-modal transportation options that integrated walking, biking, and buses as a goal. Mr. Wilcox called on the MPC to support that goal.

Mr. Sorenson thanked Mr. Wilcox for riding a bike.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Members, staff, and those in the audience introduced themselves.

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION ISSUES

Report from the Citizen Advisory Committee

Mr. Jacobson reported that at their November meeting the Metropolitan Planning Organization Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) discussed nominations of officers, heard updates on member recruitment and greenhouse gas planning, and recommendations on the STP-U. He was nominated to serve as chair again and Sarah Strand was nominated as vice chair. He indicated that the committee would hold elections next week. He introduced Ms. Strand.

Mr. Jacobson spoke to the issue of recruitment, saying a subcommittee composed of CAC members and Mr. Handy met to review the 16 applications that were submitted.

Mr. Jacobson said the CAC was very interested in greenhouse gas reduction planning and legislation and members had a wide range of concerns. The CAC agreed that much needed to be done to minimize greenhouse gases and Mr. Jacobson cited that their recommendation regarding STP-U funding in part expressed this concern. He invited questions.

Referring to a statement in the CAC's report, related to the need to present both sides of the global warming issue and be clear about where the data came from, Mr. Zelenka cautioned the CAC against falling into the "Fox News/Karl Rove phenomenon" and to not believe that things were true simply because they were repeated often and loudly. He termed "Climate-Gate" a "media fiction" and averred that there was little dissent in the scientific community about global warming. Mr. Jacobson assured Mr. Zelenka that he shared his concerns.

Mr. Sorenson asked what the CAC thought the MPC should do regarding global warming. Mr. Handy referred to the CAC report included in the meeting packet, which noted the CAC's discussion on the issue and the concerns expressed about the appropriate allocation of STP-U funds and the needs of transit. Mr. Jacobson noted the CAC's interest in securing more public involvement regarding the issue, and suggested a joint meeting between the CAC and MPC that included presentations by scientists and professors and an open question time. He thought people should know that local government was working on the issue.

MPO Planning Calendars

Ms. Riner reviewed the calendars.

The committee briefly discussed a suggestion from Mr. Sorenson that the committee did not need to meet so frequently given that its votes were usually unanimous. Mr. Eyster did not want anyone to draw any conclusions from the fact there had been unanimous votes. He believed the MPC had healthy discussions and he did not want people to think it was rubber-stamping proposals. He was inclined to continue to meet monthly to ensure active conversation continued. Mayor Piercy agreed with Mr. Eyster. She thought the tenor of discussions had improved and the MPC needed to "step up" to address issues such as climate change and greenhouse gases. Mr. Zelenka felt the committee had too much work to do to meet less often.

Mr. Sorenson suggested that the calendar be revised to include a presentation on transportation from local health care providers.

Mr. Handy requested an update on the Regional Transportation Plan/Transportation System Plan. Ms. Riner indicated that staff could provide something similar to the update provided to the Department of Land Conservation and Development in November. Mr. Handy requested that time be allowed for discussion as well.

2010-2013 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

Mac Linde, ODOT, Region 2 STIP Coordinator, provided a PowerPoint presentation on the proposed 2010-13 STIP. He invited questions.

Mayor Piercy referred to the potential of the \$30 million federal earmark and said she had e-mailed Representative Terry Beyer asking about what back-up funding sources existed. She suggested to the MPC that it send a letter to Representative Beyer asking what the plan was if the \$30 million earmark was not realized.

Mr. Handy supported Mayor Piercy's idea and recommended it be placed on the next agenda and a letter drafted by staff. There was no objection.

Mr. Handy highlighted some issues of concern to those present at the recent super Area Commission on Transportation meeting, which included that House Bill 2001 essentially mandated the nature of the projects that should be done in the various regions. He said that most ACTS had identified their own priority projects, and were concerned that while the projects preferred by the legislature were important, ACTS were losing their flexibility. The potential loss of the federal earmarks was problematic because it put the local ACTS "on the hook" for the cost of the big projects. He suggested there were unintended consequences to the bill, and perhaps those could be addressed through the special session if the issues were appropriately highlighted. He said that while the Super ACT agreed not to spend STIP money, he questioned how the legislature would view that; i.e., would it take the money now in reserve and use it.

Responding to a question from Mr. Handy about the status of transportation demand management (TDM) funding in Region 2, Mr. Linde said that that Region 2 agreed to make not cuts to the program due to the high priority the region's constituents placed it. Programs such as signalization and rock-fall facing took bigger reductions. Statewide, the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) had recommended across-the-board cuts.

Mayor Piercy said she understood that the OTC planned to discuss flexible funding for alternative modes at a future meeting and asked for more information. Mr. Lind confirmed that the OTC would hear a presentation about flexible transportation funds at its December 16 meeting. He recalled that in May 2009 the OTC approved a temporary administrative rule on how to deal with those funds and would consider a more permanent change at its upcoming meeting. There were many options for the OTC to consider regarding the use of those funds, and the OTC would consider the nature of the process through which funds were provided with the goal of having a revised process and schedule by March 2010.

Mayor Piercy identified two goals for the MPC in the State process: how to influence the allocation of funds and how to secure some of the funding.

Mr. Kloeppel suggested that the projects identified in House Bill 2001 were a new paradigm in regard to activity by the State legislature. He believed that occurred because there was new money involved in the overall package. He asked if it was likely that the legislature was likely to continue to do such earmarking. Mr. Linde acknowledged that the earmarking was a new thing for the legislature. He agreed that it was challenging and a step in a new direction. He was unsure where the legislature would go in that regard in the future. Mr. Linde said the ACTS wondered what their role was if the legislature was to decide project-specific allocations.

Mayor Piercy suggested that the legislature's approach was based on its concerns about the scarcity of resources, which had consequences all the way down the line. She suggested that the MPC needed to "paint a picture" of what that approach meant to the community at the local level.

Mr. Handy asked that staff draft a letter reflecting the MPC's concerns. Ms. Riner agreed.

LTD West Eugene EmX Extension

Mr. Schwetz provided a PowerPoint presentation updating the MPC on the project.

Mr. Schwetz reviewed a proposal for MPC representation on a joint advisory committee formed by LTD

to advise it on the project. He recommended that two Lane County MPC members and one ODOT MPC members be appointed to serve.

Mr. Handy volunteered to serve on the advisory committee. He suggested that only one Lane County commissioner serve on the committee. Mr. Warren did not object to ODOT's participation.

Responding to a question from Mr. Handy, Mr. Schwetz indicated that Beltline was proposed as a route for EmX and that LTD was involved in the project at the staff level. He said that because Beltline was a freeway, the nature of the service would be slightly different. LTD was currently examining freeway-based bus-rapid transit in other communities.

Lane County Area on Transportation

Ms. Riner provided background on the formation of a new ACT, and called attention to the staff recommendation for representation on the ACT Development Task Force.

Mr. Eyster left the meeting.

Mr. Zako recommended a staff person familiar with the federal regulations be appointed to serve on the task force. He also recommended the inclusion of a CAC member given all the work the CAC was doing in regard to public involvement. Mayor Piercy supported the staff recommendation and suggested that Ms. Riner be asked to serve. She also supported the recommendation for inclusion of a CAC representative.

There was no objection to the recommendation.

Greenhouse Gas Task Force

Mr. Zelenka provided an update on the work of the Greenhouse Gas Task Force, reporting that the group met the previous week and developed consensus on all the recommendations that were moving forward. He briefly described how the input of the MPC was incorporated into the recommendations were possible. Mr. Zelenka indicated he would e-mail MPC members the revised recommendations before they were finalized.

FFY 2011-2013 STP-U Funding Framework Recommendation

Mr. Thompson reminded the MPC of the subcommittee appointed to review the framework and make a recommendation to the MPC. He reviewed the subcommittee recommendation, which called for:

- Supporting an annual STP-U contribution to Lane Transit District of \$500,000 for FFY 2011, 2012 and 2013, as needed to maintain existing service levels
- Maintaining the existing Framework structure at 10 percent TDM, 25 percent Planning, and 65 percent for Project Development, Preservation, and Modernization (to include Transit funding)
- Defining key priority outcomes for the STP-U funding cycle – including preserving existing assets, reducing Greenhouse Gases, and promoting use of alternative transportation modes – and directing staff to prepare project funding applications for the FFY2011-13 funding cycle that address these priorities

- Establishing a process for measuring outcomes

Mr. Thompson also noted the CAC's recommendations, reached at the November meeting:

- Recommend the MPC maintain the current 10/25/65 STP-U Framework, using the flexibility provided to put dollars where they are most needed; and
- Recommend the MPC program \$500,000 of STP-U funds (per year) for Lane Transit District to maintain operational capacity.

Mayor Piercy, a member of the subcommittee, reminded the MPC that the allocation of STP-U funds for LTD had been previously agreed to.

Mr. Handy expressed appreciation for the work of the subcommittee. He thought the MPC was getting close to resolution. He asked staff to return with the actual process for measuring outcomes as well as the criteria for VMT reduction, greenhouse gas reductions, and Title VI issues related to affordability.

Mr. Sorenson also wanted the outcomes to address safety and the impact on travel time from different modes as well.

Mr. Zelenka left the meeting.

Follow-up and Next Steps

Mr. Warren provided a brief update on the implementation of Connect Oregon Three.

Mr. Thompson summarized the follow-up items.

The next meeting was scheduled for January 14, 2010.

Mr. Sorenson adjourned the meeting at 1:35 p.m.

(Recorded by Kimberly Young)