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**Strafford Metropolitan Planning Organization
Policy Committee
March 20, 2015
Rochester Community Center, Conf. Rm. 1A, Rochester, NH
Minutes**

Final Minutes

SMPO Policy Members Present: Tony McManus (Dover), Rick Healey (Rochester), Paul Lockwood (NHDES), Dirk Grotenhuis (Nottingham), Brian Tapscott (Somersworth), Bill Connor (Somersworth), Kenn Ortmann (Rochester), Glenn Davison (NHDOT), Brian Deguzis (Durham), Sandy Keans (Rochester), Steve Pesci (UNH), Tom Crosby (UNH), Victoria Parmele (Northwood), Richard England (Durham)

SMPO Staff Present: Natasha Leuchanka (Regional Planner), Sarah McGraw (Planning Technician), Chris Scheiner (GIS & Technical Analyst), Colin Lentz (Transportation Planner), Tom Brown (Planning Technician), Shayna Sylvia (Communications and Outreach Specialist)

The meeting was opened at 9:04 am on the above date.

1. Introductions: Introductions were made around the room.

2. Staff Communications:

C. Copeland announced that Marilyn Barton, PHR, HR Specialist and Events Coordinator resigned from her position at Strafford Regional Planning Commission.

C. Lentz noted he will be attending the Transport New Hampshire meeting, where they will be discussing the Statewide Transportation Initiative Action Plan. There will be an update to the NHDOT scorecard state-wide study on transit.

3. Action items(s)-motioned required

3.1 Draft MPO Minutes of January 16th 2015

*T. Crosby moved to approve the minutes of January 16th, January 2015, second by T. McManus. **VOTE:** Unanimous*

3.2 Approve UPWP Budget and Scope of Work

C. Copeland stated that the Policy Committee would not be approving the budget at the meeting because of ongoing meetings with NHDOT. C. Copeland said the UPWP will be voted on in April. A document was passed out regarding the Organization of the Unified Planning Work Program. C. Copeland discussed each category and subtask. The UPWP can be found on file at the SRPC offices. Also found in the document is Other Transportation Planning Activities. The planning activities for Coast and Wildcat were add-ons and could be changed. The Dover to Rochester 108 Corridor Study and Newmarket 108 Corridor Study are included.

C. Copeland discussed the budget and explained the budget was reduced by 10% which was retained by NHDOT as an indirect cost. C. Copeland noted an error on page 56 under Funding Source, the SRPC match of FTA should be 10%. C. Copeland noted in relation to indirect cost rate, SRPC has the lowest in the state at \$49 per hour. C. Copeland pointed out the major costs in Non-Personnel Cost on page 57 being the Transportation Model Consultant, Travel, and Meeting & Advertising Expenses (Public Notices). C. Copeland stated that SRPC would like to use the 10% from toll credits. C. Copeland said SRPC has been producing products for the State using their own budget.

K. Ortmann addressed from the previous meeting the request from the Policy Committee for NHDOT to bill non-dues paying communities specifically for UPWP costs.

C. Copeland said from the last TAC meeting a representative from a dues paying community, advised to approach the non-dues paying members differently. By telling members that they can pay half or part of the dues, it creates a disincentive to pay at all.

K. Ortmann said that the non-dues paying make a big impact to the overall budget. K. Ortmann suggested that the Policy Committee could meet with the TAC members about concerns. K. Ortmann said that this was an equity issue that needs to be addressed. T. Crosby agreed with K. Ortmann. S. Keans noted that it is the Policy Committee that sets policy.

G. Davison commented that the UPWP is a contract between NHDOT and SRPC, not between NHDOT and the municipalities .G. Davison added that billing the municipalities is not the responsibility of NHDOT.

K. Ortmann said that the contract is imposed by NHDOT and not acceptable from SRPC perspective. K. Ortmann added, if the contract is harmful to SRPC then they are asking the NHDOT to look at ways the department can work with SRPC.

G. Davison responded that SRPC is responsible for 20%, 10% of which are toll credits from NHDOT. G. Davison also mentioned the \$88 million dollars being cut from the NHDOT budget.

C. Copeland stated that SRPC received 10% cash from NHDOT with the opportunity of up to 20% toll credits. SRPC has two tolls in the region in which they lost the 10% cash option.

G. Davison said that there are financial constraints that come from the top people at the NHDOT and that the NHDOT was not singling out RPCs.

K. Ortmann commented that he understood budgets are tight everywhere and in the end everyone still has to work together despite what happens to the budget at the State level.

C. Copeland discussed the perspective of SRPC and the NHDOT perspective and being able to have a working budget.

S. Keans said that the dues paying communities do not want to subsidize the other communities.

C. Copeland commented that SRPC is presenting a large amount of work and they are doing more if NHDOT can agree on how SRPC can accomplish their goals.

G. Davison said he appreciates all the work that is being done at SRPC.

T. Crosby said that the municipalities are doing more with less and that they need input from everyone. He commented that in order for growth in jobs and industry they need the NHDOT and infrastructure.

4. Discussion Items

4.1 Ten Year Plan Project Solicitation

C. Lentz reported that they finished up the meeting portion of the project solicitation process. Durham, Wakefield, Lee, and Milton are still outstanding. The projects, once they have been ranked will move into the 10 year plan. There is a draft list on the website as well as at the Rochester, Somersworth, Dover and Durham libraries. April 17, 2015 will be the end of the public comment period for projects. The next step will be to score and rank the projects. The projects will be submitted to NHDOT by April 24, 2015. C. Lentz noted this was step one in the larger process for updating the Metropolitan plan and providing the towns a chance to provide their broader goals for the future. C. Scheiner said they have been able to make changes to the process that will make the next round more efficient.

S. Pesci wanted to encourage listing the transit projects. C. Lentz said he added the transit projects. S. Pesci said to be careful with responses from communities and dividing up “wish list” projects from priority projects.

4.2 Citizens Advisory Committee

S. Sylvia showed a draft presentation to potential residents at the Dover Adult Learning Center as a first meeting. The presentation includes changes to population and the region related to transportation.

4.3 Complete Streets Committee

C. Lentz referred to a letter written to community members inviting them to participate in the Committee. He explained complete streets are a focus on mobility and access to transportation options. S. Keans asked if he had considered the state law that requires all sidewalks be maintained and the cost factors that go into that. C. Lentz responded that this one of the issues considered in the committee. C. Lentz gave a brief presentation of complete streets. C. Lentz said the committee is looking for local perspective. April 2, 2015 will be the next rail working group meeting.

5. Project Updates:

5.1 Rail Working Group

S. Sylvia gave an update for Bob Jaffin who was not able to attend the meeting. S. Sylvia said that there have been two meetings of the SRPC Rail Working Group. The next meeting is on April 2, 2015 at 4pm. The group is in its early stages of development where the group has brainstormed ideas for what is happening with rail in the State and region. S. Sylvia attendees have been stakeholders such as Federal Rail Association, Golden Eagle Railway and Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority. The first meeting was a discussion of state wide initiatives including presentation by Golden Eagle. The second meeting focused on tourism features. The group also thought about writing letters of support to legislators about rail in the state. For more information contact Shayna Sylvia at ssylvia@strafford.org.

S. Pesci suggested adding winters debrief to the agenda to look at the past winter and the way rail was impacted. S. Pesci gave an example of power resiliency at crossing gates. An increase of backup power at crossings could prevent longer delays to the schedule.

5.2 Scenic Byways

N. Leuchanka and S. McGraw have organized an informational meeting for the Mills Scenic Byway on April 14, 2015. The Branch River meeting has yet to be scheduled but will be in the coming week. The meetings are open to any interested residents of the Byway or for those want to learn more. Contact Sarah McGraw at smcgraw@strafford.org for more information.

5.3 New Growth Report

T. Brown described the building permit inventory process. The information will eventually feed into transportation demand modeling. The format has been changed for ease of readability and efficiency. The procedures and protocols have also been updated to stay organized and have a standard format.

K. Ortmann noted the OEP collects building permit information. T. Brown said that OEP organizes the data that differs from the way SRPC does.

5.4 Park n Ride Toolkit

C. Copeland said that they were having trouble getting a community interested in the toolkit. SRPC will be following up with communities interested in the program.

5.5. Performance Measures

N. Leuchanka gave an update on the Performance Based Planning work Group. On behalf of the working group SRPC has been conducting interviews and discussing with stakeholders to assess performance based planning in the State. The goal is to find out needs and priorities that stakeholders have regarding transportation and how performance based planning to bring those priorities forward. N. Leuchanka also described the funding that was applied for through Federal Highways that would fund performance measures work. N. Leuchanka mentioned that whether SRPC receives the funds they will be looking for other alternatives to fund the project.

6. Other Business

T. McManus mentioned in the minutes on page four there was mention of TAP program. Dover received funding for work on the Community Trail. T. McManus also asked if the Policy Committee could draft a letter to state legislators about the \$88 million dollar budget cuts to the NHDOT.

T. McManus started to make a motion to notify state representatives in the area that to oppose the proposed reduction in the NHDOT budget.

K. Ortmann suggested phrasing it as opposing reductions and supports the maximization of resources to preserve our aging infrastructure to make it generic.

Motion as modified: T. McManus motioned to draft a letter for State representatives to oppose the proposed reduction in the NHDOT budget and support the maximization of resources to preserve the aging infrastructure.

S. Keans suggested sending the letter to all of the representative's homes.

K. Ortmann said as long as the Policy Committee agrees then T. McManus and SRPC staff will work on the language.

Second by R. Healey VOTE: Unanimous 1 abstention

7. **Citizen's Forum:** There were no members of the public present to speak.

8. **Adjournment:**

S. Keans motioned to adjourn the meeting, second by K. Ortmann. VOTE: Unanimous

The meeting was adjourned at 10:40 am.

Minutes Submitted By,

Sarah McGraw, Planning Technician



Brian Tapscott, Chair

