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**Strafford Policy Committee Meeting/Public Hearing
June 20, 2014
Rochester Community Center, Conf. Rm. 1A, Rochester, NH
Minutes**

FINAL

SMPO Policy Members Present: Ed Jansen (Rollinsford), Robert Jaffin (Rochester), Tom Crosby (Madbury), Brian Tapscott (Somersworth), Ed Comeau (Brookfield), William Connor (Somersworth), Sandra Keans (Rochester), Paul Lockwood (NHDES), Rick Healey (Rochester), Steve Brown (Wakefield), Richard England (Durham), Wayne Burton (Durham), Victoria Parmele (Northwood), Rad Nichols (COAST), Glenn Davison (NHDOT) and Beverly Cray (UNH)

SMPO Staff Present: Cynthia Copeland (Executive Director), Marilyn Barton (HR Specialist/Events Coordinator) and Chris Scheiner (GIS & Technical Analyst)

1. Introductions

The Chairman opened the meeting at 9:00 AM and introductions were given around the room.

2.1 Open Public Hearing to receive comments on 4.2 only

The Chairman opened the public hearing at 9:02 a.m. C. Copeland noted Amendment #6 has been in a public comment period from May 21, 2014 through June 19, 2014. C. Copeland stated the projects in Amendment #6 had changes in them subject to the full amendment process. She reviewed the local and state projects and noted this was the last amendment before the new TIP. C. Copeland stated at the last TAC meeting there was a discussion regarding the Newmarket Sky Bridge Pedestrian Project on the initial and ongoing concern for pedestrian safety and the lack of progress with the project and change in the scope of work. She noted the goal remains to implement pedestrian safety measures along Route 108. R. Nichols asked if the Lee project listed within the state projects was the Lee Traffic Circle. C. Copeland stated yes. W. Connor stated he had submitted a comment to C. Copeland and was waiting for a response from her.

2.2 Close public hearing

After no other comments, the Chairman closed the public hearing at 9:07 a.m.

3. Staff Communications

C. Scheiner introduced himself as the new GIS & Technical Analyst and gave a brief overview of his background and noted he was looking forward to working with everyone.

4.1 Draft MPO minutes of May 16, 2104

The Chairman asked for a motion to approve the draft minutes of May 16, 2014. R. Healey made a motion and E. Comeau seconded that motion. It was noted there was one abstention and all others were in favor. Motion carried.

4.2 2013-2016 TIP Amendment #6 – Recommended by TAC for approval

The Chairman asked for a motion for approval of the 2013-2016 TIP Amendment #6, as recommended by the Technical Advisory Committee. R. Jaffin made a motion and T. Crosby seconded that motion. All were in favor and motion carried.

5. Discussion Item(s)

C. Copeland noted the MPO received a letter from NH DOT from the Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Advisory Committee regarding a mapping project. She noted they would like to work with the RPCs and MPOs over the next year to complete a process which includes a data collection analysis, meeting with local bike and pedestrian groups, submitting regional bike and pedestrian group data sets, having several coordination meetings, have Southwest Regional Planning Commission edit and merge our regional data sets, have a final coordination meeting and then have Southwest RPC produce an online statewide bike map. C. Copeland noted all the RPCs and MPOs are committed for \$4200 for data collection and mapping efforts. C. Copeland stated this is what SADES was used for.

G. Davison stated NHDOT is working with the bike and pedestrian coordinators at NHDOT to purchase bike data from a company that has an app that can be uploaded to Cloud and the data is impressive. G. Davison noted NHDOT was evaluating this. C. Copeland asked the group for their thoughts and if there was any value in doing this in the upcoming year.

C. Copeland noted the whole purpose of SADES is all the databases and sets going into the same system. W. Burton voiced concerns about bike lanes in Durham and stated he would support participation in the study, as we need to stay engaged and would be interested in seeing the safety data. R. Nichols asked about the \$4200 and was that from local dues? C. Copeland stated it is federal funds and we would use toll credits for match. A discussion ensued about safety issues for bike and pedestrian safety in Durham.

There was a question about the data SRPC collects and who owns that data. C. Copeland stated we own it and then it would go to Southwest RPC to prepare final map sets and then into the statewide system and then it is open to everyone.

R. Jaffin stated the \$4200 would be better used to look at alternatives to bike paths and roadways rather than collecting data and we should think about that before taking action and noted more time was needed before responding. C. Copeland noted the response is due by June 30, 2014. G. Davison noted it's a good idea to know what the needs are in the area and to justify those needs. There was a question regarding how many hours of staff time this would take and C. Copeland stated it would be approximately one hundred hours.

The Chairman asked for a count to see who was in favor and who was not. Eleven were in favor and five were against.

C. Copeland noted the highway trust fund is expected to have a revenue shortfall in July and could potentially be bankrupt by beginning by October of FY 2015. C. Copeland reviewed a letter sent by AMPO and told the group to look it over and do as they wished or felt compelled to do with it.

C. Copeland noted on June 2, 2014 the planning regulations were released in the Federal Register and this is all part of Map-21. C. Copeland stated federal agencies are going through and editing regulations to meet the current Reauthorization Act. C. Copeland noted it is a big change for us; create performance based planning and how we integrate with other MPOs and NH DOT and what it means. C. Copeland stated once formalized we have eighteen months to become compliant with Map 21. She noted there is a lot happening and going on and will give updates, as she receives them.

6. Project Update(s)

R. Nichols noted in late April of this year, Commute Smart Seacoast, was initiated. R. Nichols stated this focuses on alternative commuting in the region and is focused on the Pease Tradeport and Portsmouth and twenty organizations have signed on. R. Nichols noted on June 2, 2014 Route 20 was launched, which goes from Rochester to the Pease Tradeport, to assist workers commuting back and forth. He also noted COAST just reached a new milestone with a twelve millionth passenger. R. Nichols stated he was also appointed to the Transit Rail Advisory Committee by Secretary Fox in May 2014 to sit on the committee for the next two years to provide safety measure recommendations to DOT and FTA. R. Nichols stated he had concerns about the upcoming round of CMAQ, if there is one and how there will be big decisions to be made on how the money will be best spent.

B. Cray stated UNH would be having a public hearing in Durham at the MUB on Wednesday, June 25, 2014 at noon time. She stated the hearing was in regards to cutting service to the 5:40 a.m. and 12:05 p.m. bus runs from Rochester to UNH, as there are only one to four passengers on each of those routes.

W. Burton stated at a recent town council meeting there was a discussion about pressure to expand the number of Amtrak runs from Portland to Boston and that the state does not put money into Amtrak and was that correct. C. Copeland stated the state does not fund Amtrak and the only funding given was with expansion and upgrade to the tracks.

R. Jaffin stated NH is the only state not participating. He noted he would be attending a meeting at NH Rail Transit in the next week and would be happy to share concerns brought up at the Policy Committee meeting. R. Jaffin noted there was an approved Brunswick layover and how that could impact the quality of service.

7. Other Business

There was no other business.

8. Citizen's Forum

There were no members of the public present.

9. Adjournment

The Chairman asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 A.M. R. Jaffin made a motion and T. Crosby seconded that motion. All were in favor and motion carried.

Minutes submitted by,


Marilyn Barton, PHR
Recording Secretary


Brian Tapscott
SMPO Chair

