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**Strafford Policy Committee Meeting/Public Hearing
May 16, 2014
Rochester Community Center, Conf. Rm. 1A, Rochester, NH
Minutes**

FINAL

SMPO Policy Members Present: Tony McManus (Dover), Rick Healey (Rochester), Steve Brown (Wakefield), Tom Clark (Dover), Kenn Ortmann (Rochester), Brian Tapscott (Somersworth), William Connor (Somersworth), Ed Comeau (Brookfield), Glenn Davison (NHDOT), Sandra Keans (Rochester), Wayne Burton (Durham) and Victoria Parmele (Northwood)

SMPO Staff Present: Cynthia Copeland (Executive Director), Marilyn Barton (HR Specialist/Events Coordinator) and Gregory Jones (Regional Planner)

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 9:05 a.m. C. Copeland stated the MPO had received a request from FHWA and NHDOT to look at making a change to the Prospectus regarding flexibility with timeframes for public comment periods regarding TIP amendments or adopting a new TIP. Under section 7.5.1 it is currently thirty days and the change would be a range of ten-thirty days. C. Copeland reviewed comments received from the Technical Advisory Committee and read the minutes from the TAC meeting of their recommendation: "TAC recommends a 10-30 day comment period for amendments to the TIP and a new TIP would still have a 30 day comment period. C. Parker seconded that motion and it was noted there was one opposed. All others were in favor and the motion carried."

E. Comeau noted this was clarified much better than at the TAC meeting. K. Ortmann noted one of the comments received was regarding how the decision was made to determine 10-30 days for a comment period. C. Copeland stated it was determined at the interagency level. C. Copeland noted FHWA, FTA, EPA, NHDOT, NHDES and the MPOs meet monthly to discuss and come to a consensus agreement and there is a process in place to make that determination. W. Connor stated he supported the recommendation from TAC and asked NHDOT what the merits of the change would be. G. Davison explained it streamlines the process and reduces the time projects get delayed. G. Davison noted since it is by consensus and if the group wanted it to be thirty days, there would be that flexibility.

Discussion ensued regarding that ten days didn't seem enough time to solicit public comment; that an amendment should have longer than 10-30 days. G. Davison stated amendments allow obligation of federal dollars and when in a comment period, that money cannot be spent. G. Davison reviewed the STIP process. There was a question whether policies or procedures are in place. C. Copeland explained amendment procedures were worked on by the MPOs back in 2002-2005 and is in the Prospectus and MPOs have this as task as they are charged with to expedite project delivery. K. Ortmann stated flexibility is warranted and as a group if it is decided to change it in the future, that could be done. He noted it would be nice to have some sort of criteria in place so that everyone had the same understanding. C.

Copeland went over sections of the Prospectus that speak to the types of questions addressed at the Policy Committee, such as a flow chart, public involvement and the process of the interagency. She noted if the MPO is the home to the project and there is concern from the community about the project, the group would respect that and the consensus would be 30 days. C. Copeland noted the Prospectus was adopted in 2007, with updates through 2011.

2.2 Close public hearing

The chairman closed the public hearing at 9:30 a.m.

3. Staff Communications

M. Barton reminded everyone the upcoming Commissioners Annual Meeting/Luncheon is being held at the Madbury Town Hall on May 29, 2014 and invitations were sent out.

4.1 Draft MPO minutes of March 21, 2104

The Chairman asked for a motion to approve the draft minutes of March 21, 2014. W. Connor made a motion and E. Comeau seconded that motion. It was noted there were two abstentions and all others were in favor. Motion carried.

4.2 Prospectus update-Recommended by TAC for approval

The Chairman asked for a motion to approve the Prospectus update. K. Ortmann made a motion with a request to the Interagency group to develop internal criteria to help guide the decision making process between 10 and 30 days. V. Parmele seconded that motion. It was noted there was one opposed. All others were in favor and the motion carried.

5. Discussion Item(s)

5.1 Grow America Act

C. Copeland noted the MPO is part of the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) and was she part of the AMPO Technical Committee. C. Copeland stated the AMPO Technical Committee has been busy working on the Highway Reauthorization Act from the perspective of an MPO. C. Copeland noted she attended a Technical Committee meeting in Washington, DC at the end of March, discussing interests of the MPO to ensure better a better job of providing services and getting projects done.

C. Copeland reviewed the first reauthorization act –Grow America, from the Obama Administration, and noted it was focused on fix it first and adding money into transit. She discussed and reviewed a handout from the Senate Committee- MAP-21 Reauthorization Bill. She reviewed the handouts and what the bill focuses on and noted the House is not interested at this time to have it more forward. She stated these were the two options under consideration and would provide updates when received.

6. Project Update(s)

6.1 Mills Scenic Byway

C. Copeland noted Kyle Pimental had worked on this project and gave an overview of the program. She explained the Mills scenic byway was voted for designation in the NH Scenic and Cultural Byway Program. This scenic byway joins two new byways (Upper Lamprey River and Robert Frost/Old Stagecoach Byways) in an existing system of fifteen state and nationally designated scenic and cultural byways in NH. She noted it was twelve miles. There was a question as to why Dover was not included. She noted Dover opted out so they are not part of the byway. She explained there was a comprehensive inventory of resources, which included cultural, scenic, historical and recreation. She explained it is essentially the same as when a corridor study is done. There was a question regarding planning boards being involved and constraints on the community. C. Copeland explained it's about tourism and economic development and there is no constraint to planning boards. It was noted there may be some confusion about scenic roads versus scenic byways. Scenic roads do have constraints and there is a State RSA that explains what those constraints are.

6.2 SADES

G. Jones gave an update to the Statewide Asset Data Exchange System (SADES) project he has been working on formulating the same data collection plan in coordination with NHDES, NHGS and the Technology Transfer Center at UNH. G. Jones noted they were making huge strides in integrating the NHGS culvert inventory program with the SADES culvert program. He noted he has been working with the Technology Transfer System and there would be training on the collection system using tablets on June 6, 2014. He noted this would standardize data collection and have protocols in place. He noted data collection interns have been hired and would begin on May 27, 2014. It was asked if there were any protocols in place if a member of the public is concerned as to what the interns are doing, as there was an incident last year. G. Davison explained that will be part of the training that the Technology Transfer Center would be providing.

7. Other Business

C. Copland reviewed a handout of a letter received from FTA and FHWA regarding a renewed focus on transportation planning brought about by MAP-21, specifically placing emphasis on Planning Emphasis Areas. There was no other business.

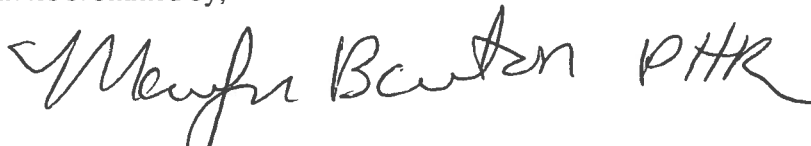
8. Citizen's Forum

There were no members of the public present.

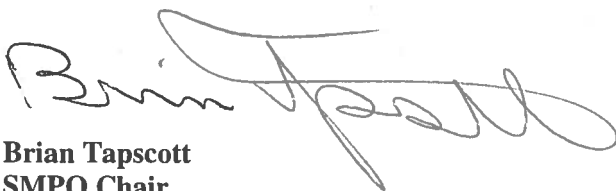
9. Adjournment

The Chairman asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:15 A.M. K. Ortmann made a motion and T. Clark seconded that motion. All were in favor and motion carried.

Minutes submitted by,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marilyn Barton P.H.R.".

Marilyn Barton, P.H.R.
Recording Secretary

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brian Tapscott".

Brian Tapscott
SMPO Chair

