

STRAFFORD

Metropolitan Planning Organization

**Policy Committee
Meeting Minutes
Friday, February 18, 2022
9:00 – 11:00 AM
Strafford Regional Planning Commission
Hybrid Meeting
Rochester, NH**

Chair Dave Landry read the following statement: Under RSA 91-A:2 III (b) The committee chair is waiving the requirement of a quorum at the physical location of the meeting.

Whereas, in order to ensure an uninterrupted flow of federal transportation funding to the region, Strafford MPO must act on Amendment 3 to the Transportation Improvement Program and Safety Performance Targets;

Whereas, the committee chair has decided that immediate action is imperative and the physical presence of a quorum is not reasonably practical within the period of time requiring action due to the ongoing pandemic;

Whereas, the chair has determined that the situation constitutes an “emergency” per RSA 91A: 2 II;

Therefore, the Strafford MPO Policy Committee will invoke this emergency provision and waive requirement for a quorum at the physical location of the meeting.

1. Introductions

Chair David Landry called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. and asked for introductions.

Committee members present: Chair David Landry, Dover; Mike Bobinsky, Somersworth; Tom Crosby, Madbury, Peter Nelson, Newmarket, Katrin Kasper, Lee

Committee Members participating remotely: Barbara Holstein, Rochester, Tim White, DES, Steve Diamond, Barrington. Glen Davison, DOT, Michael Williams, COAST, Steve Pesci, UNH, Bill Fisher, Farmington, Lindsey Williams, Dover, Lisa Henderson,

Staff members present: Jen Czysz,, Colin Lentz, Kyle Pimental

Staff attending remotely: Megan Taylor-Fetter, Rachel Dewey, Nancy OConnor, Shayna Silvia, Stephen Geis, Jackson Rand, Natalie Moles, James Burdin, Blair Haney,

2. Staff Communications

J. Czysz informed the committee that the Governor announced an Invest in Housing Program with funding opportunities of up to 5 million dollars. The funding will support housing initiatives for planning and zoning programs.

K. Pimental stated that DES announced the Critical Flood Risk Infrastructure grant which has 4.5 million dollars for planning and zoning projects. What make this different is that there is no match commitment. The funds are being distributed through ARPA and anyone in our region is eligible. More information is available on the DES website. Kyle suggested reaching out to Ben Sweeny or himself for more information or assistance.

J. Czysz asked that communities participating in the document scanning program please prep their documents in advance of their scheduled date. This will allow staff to scan more documents without having to prep documents and remove staples.

3. Public Hearing – Amendment 3 to the 2021-2024 TIP

T. Crosby MOVED to open the Public Hearing on the Amendment 3 to the 2021-2024 TIP. P. Nelson SECONDED the motion. A roll call vote was taken to open the Public Hearing: T, Crosby, P. Nelson, M. Bobinsky, K. Kasper, P. Nelson, D. Landry, B. Holstein, T. White, G. Davison, M. Williams, B. Fisher, S. Pesci and L. Williams IN FAVOR. None OPPOSED Motion passed.

C. Lentz presented information on the Amendment. Originally there were three projects in the proposed amendments which are out for public comment through to the end of the Public Hearing. Dover has a community trail project funded through the Alternative Transportation Program to complete the community trail and connect it from Bellamy Park over to 155. The change in the program is to move ahead with construction,

Programs MOBRR & CRDR bridge and culvert projects.

UNH requested that the project “Durham 41753” be added to the amendment so it could appear in the STIP individually. It used to appear in the previous STIP (2019-2022) but was removed because of changes to transit funding program management. This is UNH’s project to expand and improve accessibility at the Durham rail station where the Amtrak Downeaster stops. They’re ready to move

forward with the project but Federal Transit Administration requires the project appear in the STIP individually. Project funding has not changed so this is essentially a clerical/logistical fix so UNH can move forward.

C. Lentz opened the meeting to public comment.

S. Pesci stated, UNH is not asking for additional money and would like to proceed with hiring a design engineering firm. UNH hopes to start construction in the fall of 2023. All projects have been put on pause the last two years at UNH. Ridership is back up.

A roll call vote was taken to close the Public Hearing: T, Crosby, P. Nelson, M. Bobinsky, K. Kasper, P. Nelson, D. Landry, B. Holstein, T. White, G. Davison, M. Williams, B. Fisher, S. Pesci and L. Williams IN FAVOR. None OPPOSED Motion passed.

4. Action Items

a. Approve Draft Minutes from January 21, 2022

P, Nelson MOVED to approve SECONDED by M. Bobinsky. A roll call vote was taken: T, Crosby, P. Nelson, M. Bobinsky, K. Kasper, P. Nelson, D. Landry, B. Holstein, T. White, G. Davison, M. Williams, B. Fisher, IN FAVOR. S. Pesci and L. Williams ABSTAIN. None OPPOSED. MOTION PASSED.

b. Approve 2022 Highway Safety Performance Targets

C. Lentz summarized the Federal Safety Performance Measures which includes the number of fatalities, rate of fatalities, number of serious injuries, rate of serious injuries and number of non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries. C. Lentz stated that NH is a vision zero state meaning no number of fatalities is acceptable.

C. Lentz shared information on strategies to support the statewide targets. Strafford RPC is proposing to support statewide targets set by NHDOT but will track the regional proportion of crashes. Like last year, SRPC will be supporting the state targets. This is a perennial focus area for SRPC and we will continue efforts on multiple fronts.

R. Katrin MOVED to approve the 2022 Highway Safety Performance Targets. M. Bobinsky SECOND. A roll call vote was taken: T, Crosby, P. Nelson, M. Bobinsky, K. Kasper, P. Nelson, D. Landry, B. Holstein, T. White, G. Davison, M. Williams, B. Fisher, S. Pesci L. Williams IN FAVOR. None OPPOSED. MOTION PASSED

c. Approve Amendment 3 to the 2021-2024 TIP

K. Kasper MOVED to Approve both the Statewide TIP that was noted, and the Durham Project as presented today. S. Pesci SECOND. A roll call vote was taken: T. Crosby, P. Nelson, M. Bobinsky, K. Kasper, P. Nelson, D. Landry, B. Holstein, T. White, G. Davison, M. Williams, B. Fisher, S. Pesci L. Williams IN FAVOR. None OPPOSED. MOTION PASSED.

5. Discussion items

a. 2022 Legislative updates

C. Lentz updated the committee on transportation related bills that are before the legislature. C. Lentz asked if there any bills the Policy Committee wants to discuss and request staff to take a position or provide testimony?

S. Pesci stated it is exciting to see the progress on the Federal Level on the Build Back Better Bill and that the USDOT is taking a lead on that in coordination with state DOT. He would encourage SRPC staff to be involved in that. UNH is interested in seeing that state plan be developed and funding applications be developed. UNH Campuses have been making progress on developing EV charging locations.

D. Landry asked is there a fresh start for everyone to access funds in each subsequent year. Or, are their actions taking place now to encumber future dollars? C. Lentz answered that is being worked out as part of the plan that is being developed.

T. White stated that all the details are going to be worked out in the state deployment plan.

S. Pesci, stated that with the VW mitigation funds the corridors were very limited. We should think more holistically, not just interstate corridors but other locations more equitably dispersed across the state.

T White responded, if we are not talking about the RFP anymore, the guidance on the federal funding, you see that they are all based on the FHWA corridors that have been in collaboration with the DOT since 2016. He encouraged people to look at the FHWA website look at the corridors already designated might address concerns.

P. Nelson stated that the transition to EV is important to local businesses as well. The current RFP is driven by tourists coming into the state and by Eversource wanting to sell electricity at an exorbitant rate. Local communities should have funding so that every town is guided by SRPC. To have their top ten list of EV charging stations, park and rides. He asked what the criteria are to make those sites highly relevant and highly fundable.

S. Pesci recommended that the MPO consider expressing reservations on HB1431 and encourage we step up our dialogue on this bill.

b. Guidance to TAC for Ten Year Plan project review

C. Lentz stated we're already launching efforts to compile candidate projects for the next Ten-Year Plan round. The next part is looking at those projects and for VHB to get cost engineering estimates and analysis. TAC will look at those projects for initial assessments to make a recommendation to the policy.

J. Czysz explained that to proceed in a smoother fashion, the Policy Committee needs to identify what the top goals are that we want to be pushing forward. Those priorities will be given to TAC.

6. Other Business & Update from Staff

No other business was presented

7. Commissioner Roundtable

No comments

8. Citizens Forum

No Comments

9. Adjournment

M Bobinsky **MOVED** to adjourn **SECONDED** by P. Nelson **SECOND**. A roll call vote was taken: T, Crosby, P. Nelson, M. Bobinsky, K. Kasper, P. Nelson, D. Landry, B. Holstein, T. White, G. Davison, M. Williams, B. Fisher, S. Pesci L. Williams **IN FAVOR**. None **OPPOSED**. **MOTION PASSED**