Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Policy Committee

MINUTES

Friday May 11, 2018 (10:00 AM)
NLCOG, 1st Floor Seminar Room
625 Texas Street
Shreveport, LA 71101

Members Present
Mayor Ollie Tyler – City of Shreveport
Mayor Lo Walker – City of Bossier City
Dr. Woody Wilson – Caddo Parish
Mr. William Altimus – Bossier Parish
Mr. Steve Brown – DeSoto Parish
Mr. Mark Sweeney – MPC City of Shreveport
Mr. David North – LaDOTD District 04
Mr. Mark Sweeney – MPC City of Shreveport
Mr. Eric England – Port of Shreveport-Bossier
Mr. Sam Marsiglia – MPC City of Bossier City
Mr. Dinero’ Washington – SporTran

Members Absent
Ms. Laura Phillips – FHWA
Ms. Ronisha Hodge – FTA
Mr. Mark Sweeney – MPC City of Shreveport (Stephen Jean present)

Others Present
Joshua S. Chevallier - Bradley Murchison Kelly & Shea
Mr. Chris Petro – NLCOG
Dr. Shelly Barrett – NLCOG

Call to Order

Mr. Altimus called the meeting to order and asked Mr. Petro to call the roll. A quorum was present.

Public Comments

Mr. Altimus called for public comments and reminded those in attendance to limit their comments to three (3) minutes. Mr. Petro stated no cards had been received. With no comments Mr. Altimus proceeded with the agenda.

Business
1. Approval of Minutes

The next item on the agenda was for approval of the minutes of the February 16, 2018 meeting and the April 27, 2018 meeting. Mayor Walker motioned and Dr. Wilson second to approve the minutes as provided. Mr. Altimus called for questions or comments having none asked for a vote the motion passed.

2. FY 2018 Transportation Improvement Program Amendments

The next item on the agenda was a series of Transportation Improvement Program Amendments. Mr. Altimus called for a motion. Mayor Walker motioned to approve the Transportation Improvement Program Amendments as presented. Mayor Tyler second the motion. Mr. Altimus stated that these projects had been introduced at a previous meeting. Mr. Petro stated that was correct and that the projects were then submitted for public comment and no comments were received on any of the four projects. Mr. Petro stated that the first project on the list is the BAFB I-220 interchange project. He stated that previously the MPO had amended the Long Range Plan to move the project into the Current Projects Program and not this completed amending the TIP to add the engineering phase to move forward. Mr. Petro stated the next two projects dealt with maintenance along I-20 and the final project is the rehabilitation of the US 80 Texas Street bridge here in downtown. Mr. Altimus stated that Congress has appropriated the funding for the base side portion of the BAFB/I-220 project in the MILCON bill. He further stated that all sides have now stepped up to the table are moving forward with the funding for this project. Mr. Altimus asked if there is any further discussion or comments on this agenda item. Having none the chair called for a vote, the motion passed.

3. Fiscal Year 2019 Unified Planning Work Program

Mr. Altimus stated the next item for discussion is the Introduction of the Fiscal Year 2019 Unified Planning Work Program for public comment. The Chair called for a motion. Mayor Walker motioned and Mr. England seconded to introduce the Fiscal Year 2019 Unified Planning Work Program for public comment and outreach. The chair opened the floor for discussion. Mr. Petro noted that at the previous meeting we had provided a work program task summary as an outline of the major task to be performed by the MPO in fiscal year 2019. He stated that the full work program provides details on each of those tasks. Mr. Petro called the committee's attention to the map on Page 7. He stated that the map has been amended from previous years to account for some changes. The map details the various planning areas for the region including the Transportation Plan Area, the Regional Planning Area, the DOTD District 04 area, along with the safety coalition and human services transportation planning areas. He then call the committees attention to page 16 which provides a matrix of how the UPWP Task relates to the FHWA Planning Factors. Mr. Petro noted that within the details of each task there are benchmarks and performance measures that relate to the planning factors. He also noted the addition of two new task, the Freight Planning and the Local Road Safety Program task. Each of these are necessary to address the FHWA performance measure requirements.

Mayor Tyler asked why on page 16 in the matrix was the intermodal box not checked under the Stage 0 and Stage 1 Project development task. Mr. Petro stated he was not sure and would review that with Mr. Rogers and get back on that. Mayor Tyler stated she had some further questions on the budget portion but would address those at the Board of Directors meetings.
Mayor Walker stated he had a question that he was not sure would need to be addressed within this document. He asked Mr. North that with the completion of the I-49 interchange at I-220 are there any stub-outs to continue the roadway further south to connect to the inner-city connector. Mr. North stated that the connector project would tie into the mainline I-49 north of the I-220 interchange and that the existing project did not include the bridge/flyover of I-220. He further stated that portion is included in the study for the Inner-City Connector. Mayor Tyler asked what the priority listing of this project. Mr. North stated that the I-49 Inner City is the Number 2 high priority project just behind the BAFB I-220 project. Mayor Tyler stated that is good and that we need to get some cooperation in Baton Rouge and at the federal level to move the project forward. Mr. Altimus stated that he understood we would be getting an update on the project soon and have something at the next meeting on it.

The Chair asked if there were any further comments? Mr. Petro stated that it would go out for public comment following today’s action. Mr. Washington asked if we needed to address Mayor Tyler’s comments on the matrix prior to distribution. Mr. Altimus stated that since this is only introduction and not adoption those comments can be addressed along with any public comments received prior to adoption. Mr. Washington stated that would be fine.

Mr. Chair asked if there was any further discussion. Having none he called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously.

Presentations and Project Updates

4. Brief Updates

Mr. Petro stated that the first project update was for the Regional Thoroughfare Plan. He stated that staff had received an initial draft from AECOM and made some comments back to them. They will have updated draft to us early next week and Cog will distribute those to the technical committee members for their reviews and comments. Mr. Petro stated that Mr. Chisholm with AECOM would attend the June meeting to present the plan and we would introduce it for public comments at that time. Mr. Chisholm will also be presenting information to the Board of Director’s at that time on the implementation plan. The first stages of that would be MPO adoption then adoption by the MPC’s and then by the appropriate city and parish bodies. Mr. Altimus asked that we be sure to get those documents to the technical members as early as possible. Mr. Marsiglia stated that they had been reviewing and following the project through the process.

The next project is the LA 3132 Inner Loop Extension. Mr. Petro stated that the project is in the regulatory review phase with DOTD and FHWA. Mr. Comeaux with BKI stated that all the technical reports have been submitted as well as an initial draft of the EA to both DOTD and FHWA. Comments have been received on those and are being addressed. He further stated that he expects to receive the final noise and cultural reports early next week and will be incorporating appropriate portions of those into the final draft EA for distribution to DOTD and FHWA for final comments. This distribution will include all the technical documents along with the Final Draft EA. Comments should be received on those sometime this summer and then we address those comments as appropriate and ask for approval to move forward with public comments and public hearing.
Mr. Petro stated that staff had a conference call with Providence Engineering, the firm handling the I-49 ICC project. He stated that Providence will be in attendance at the June meeting to provide an update on the project, its status, and a time line of where the project stands and what it will take to get it completed. Mr. Petro stated that he understands they are in much the same boat as was the Inner Loop project with regards to the SHPO’s reviews and comments. He stated that as he understands it there are varying data sets and conflicting data sets that they require within the process. Mr. Comeaux noted that it took them more than two months of talks with them just to get an agreement on how and what data sources they would agree upon and then there were multiple rounds of reviews on each section of the report. He further stated that it is a very cumbersome process to work through that portion of the study. Mr. Petro stated that was all he had on that project.

Mr. Washington asked if we could have an update on I-69. Mayor Walker stated that the President of the I-69 Coalition recently passed away and a new president has not been appointed. He further stated that approximately 5 names have been floated to the state coalition directors for their review but that no one has been appointed as of yet. Mayor Walker stated that the biggest obstacle in the process is the state of Texas and their unwillingness to move forward with the environmental process on the section from Stonewall to Tenaha. The mayor stated that he has again contacted Secretary Wilson and Dr. Kalivoda at DOTD urging them to contact their counterparts in Texas to move forward. Mr. Washington expressed his concern that it seems we are in the same position as we were a year ago. Mr. Brown stated that this is going on a 30-year process and that we need to do something soon in the state of Louisiana. Mr. Brown stated that DeSoto parish stands ready to do whatever necessary to move the project forward.

The Chair asked if there was any further business. Mayor Walker stated he was amazed at the work being completed at the I-49 / I-220 interchange. Mr. North stated that they have been averaging 106 workers each day on the project for the last few weeks. Dr. Wilson asked when could we expect the project to be completed. Mr. North stated that the west bound ramps, that being South Bound I-49 to West Bound I-220 and West Bound I-220 to North Bound I-49 should be open to traffic by the end of the month or early next. The current full project completion is scheduled for late August. Dr. Wilson stated he thinks its an engineering marvel how they are constructing the interchange. Mr. North stated each section of the fly-overs are cast in place and the attached to the previous section and measurements are taken on the spot for the next section. He also stated that there will be artwork incorporated into the structure and it will truly be a wonder.

Adjourn

With no remaining agenda items, The Chair entertained a motion to adjourn, Dr. Wilson moved to adjourn, Mayor Walker seconded, the meeting was adjourned.

J. Kent Rogers, Secretary