

**Morgantown Monongalia  
Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Board  
Jan 17, 2019 minutes**

**Members Present:**

Chairman Mike Kelly-Board of Education, Vice-chair Jennifer Selin-City of Morgantown, Treasurer Mayor Patricia Lewis-Granville, Commissioner Tom Bloom-Monongalia County, Brian Carr-WV DOH, Dominick Claudio-Star City, Mayor Bill Kawecki-City of Morgantown, , Dave Bruffy-Mountain Line, , Councilperson Janice Goodwin-City of Westover, Commissioner Edward Hawkins-Monongalia County, Delegate Joe Statler-Blacksville, Ron Justice-WVU, Commissioner, Sean Sikora-Monongalia County, Councilperson Ryan Wallace -City of Morgantown

**MPO Director:** Bill Austin

**Members Absent:**

None

**1. Call to Order**

With a quorum present, Chairman Kelly called the Policy Board meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Mr. Statler made a motion to remove the agenda item 9-Transportation Plan Tier One Projects List-from the agenda of this meeting. Mr. Statler noted that the Morgantown Industrial Park has asked the West Virginia University to conduct an economic impact study. The study will provide valuable information for the board to make a decision on this agenda item. The report of this study is currently not available. Councilperson Ryan asked about the the scope of the study. Mr. Statler noted that the study will evaluate the general economic development of the industrial park and the specific impact of the access project. Seconded by Mr. Justice; with no further discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

Chairman Kelly noted that for the convenience of the public, the executive session in the agenda will be removed to the end of the meeting

**2. Election of Officers**

Mr. Kelly noted that Mr. Justice, Mr. Bruffy, and Mr. Statler have served on the nominating committee to select MPO officers of 2019. The committee nominated Councilperson Selin as the Chairperson; Mr. Statler as the Vice-chair, and Mayor Lewis as the Treasurer.

Commissioner Bloom made a motion to accept the nomination; seconded by Mayor Kawecki. The motion passed by acclamation.

Mr. Bruffy on behalf of the nominating committee expressed the appreciation to Mr. Kelly for his service as the Chairman in the past year.

**2. Public Comment Period**

Matt Cross, a resident of 542 Milford St, noted that the projects that currently on the MPO's tier 1 list are critically important to this region. Many of them include bicycles and pedestrians accommodations. Mr.

Cross noted that he requested that the board to give priority to projects that improve pedestrian and bicycle travels.

### **3. Committee Reports**

#### *a. Citizens Advisory Committee*

Bill Rice, Chairman of the Citizens Advisory Committee, noted that the CAC recommended approval of the highway safety performance measure and reviewed the draft 2020 Unified Planning Work Program. Before the CAC meeting, the MPO held a public meeting for the MPO's Tier 1 project Amendment. Chairman Rice encouraged more community participation to the transportation planning process.

Mr. Rice noted that he attended the North-central West Virginia Road Road Caucus meeting. He was pleased to learn that speakers at the venue understand the function of the MPOs in West Virginia. Mr. Rice expects more collaborations among the leadership to improve transportation infrastructure for this region.

#### *b. Finance Report*

Treasurer Mayor Lewis noted the financial report as follows:

-- Beginning balance in November \$25,195.23 with expenditures of \$19,671.88 and two deposits of \$41,739.12, leaving a balance of \$47,262.47 at the beginning of December.

-- Beginning balance in December \$47,262.47 with expenditures of \$18,545.87 and three deposits of \$26,904.54, leaving a balance of \$55,621.14 at the beginning of December.

Mr. Justice moved to accept the Finance Report as presented; seconded by Mayor Kawecki. With no discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

#### *c. Executive Directors Report*

Mr. Austin noted that the DOH is developing the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Federal regulations require that the state adopt the STIP by October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 to be eligible for further federal funding after that date. Mr. Austin noted that he is representing the WV MPO Association to work with the DOH to develop a public involvement plan for STIP. The DOH is expected to hold STIP public meeting in Morgantown in early April. The MPO will have an opportunity to review and comment on the draft STIP in mid-March before it is released to the public.

Mr. Austin noted that the MPO is working with consultants on several Preliminary Investigation Engineering (PIE) studies in the area, including West Run Eastern Section project, Van Voorhis Rd improvement project, Greenbag Rd improvement project, and Beechurst Ave improvement project.

Mayor Kawecki asked about the scope of the study on Beechurst Ave. Mr. Austin noted that the original scope for project is only two blocks from 8<sup>th</sup> St, but the study includes Beechurst Ave from 8th St to the Westover Bridge. Mr. Austin noted that he will be able to comment on the Beechurst St Study at the end of January.

Mr. Austin noted that the consultant for the Pedestrian and Bicycle Study held the first steering committee meet in mid-December, and next meeting will be on February 5<sup>th</sup> at Mountain Liner. The consultant will also meet with the WVU student government association and other stakeholders. Meanwhile, the consultant has been collecting GIS and other data from the MPO and the city.

Commissioner Bloom asked about the status of the working group established in response to a pedestrian facility near WVU campus. He noted that the group has picked high-priority locations for pedestrian safety improvement. Mr. Justice noted that there were some personnel changes for that working group. New staff at WVU and DOH are re-establishing the communication among involved entities. The group is about to meet in the first week of February.

Commissioner Bloom then asked about the status of WV 705 lighting project. He noted that the DOH was committed to complete the lighting project on WV 705 in a timely fashion. Mr. Carr noted that he was informed by the engineering division that the project was about 90% complete. The delay of this project was caused by damaged powerline near some poles on Patteson Dr.

Chairperson Selin expressed her appreciation for what have been accomplished in the project so far, and encourage the DOH complete the project as soon as practical. Mayor Kawecky asked if there is any information about the project that is accessible to the public. Mr. Carr noted that he will inquire about it with the engineering division.

## **6. Audit**

Mr. Austin noted that a copy of the MPO's Audit for last fiscal year is included in the agenda package. There were no findings in the report. Commissioner Sikora pointed out that in the first paragraph on the 2<sup>nd</sup> page of the report, the Monongalia County name is mistakenly written as Greenbrier Country. Mr. Justice moved to accept the audit with the correction; seconded by Commissioner Sikora. With no discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

## **7. Highway Safety Performance Measures**

Mr. Austin noted that a memorandum on the WVDOH Highway Safety Improvement Program Performance Measures is included in the agenda package. The measures developed for 2019 and 2020 used the same methodology and metrics to develop new targets for performance of the West Virginia roadway network as last year. Policy Board adopt the metrics shown on the attached memorandum. Mr. Austin noted that the MPO is expected develop some MPO's own performance measurement next year. The TTAC and CAC unanimously recommended adoption of these metrics. Mr. Austin noted that a key application of performance measures at MPO level is to link the proposed projects to adopted performance goals. The MPO is planning to hire a half-time employee for community outreach, which will free up staff time to perform transportation-oriented tasks, including identifying opportunities to develop local performance measure. Mr. Carr noted that the while MPOs can develop their own performance measure, the state performance measures is of the most importance from the FHWA's perspective.

Mr. Statler asked if the state monitor crashes in real time and studies high accident locations. Mr. Carr noted that traffic engineers of the DOH investigate all crashes that involve fatalities and high crash rate locations.

Mr. Kelly made a motion to adopt the Performance Measures as presented; seconded by Mr. Justice. With no discussion, the motion passed.

Mr. Statler voted against the motion, noting that he would like to see more information on this matter before making a decision. Commissioner Bloom voted against the motion, noting that the state should be more proactive in addressing local issues.

### **Draft 2020 Unified Planning Work Program**

Mr. Austin noted that the draft FY 2019-2020 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is included in the agenda package. He noted that in addition to the MPO's standing work program including traffic counts and MPO operations, the draft UPWP includes continuing the Bicycle and Pedestrian Study which should be completed by the fall of 2020. Staff will perform additional work on performance measures to evaluate the State's performance measures and to develop MPO specific performance measures. Mr. Austin noted that the draft UPWP includes hiring a consultant to update Mountain Lines Plan to recognize the recently implemented service changes. Mr. Austin noted that the draft UPWP includes adding a part-time employee at a cost of \$20,000 with proportional benefits who may be shared with Monongalia County. The initial work anticipated for this employee would be website maintenance, social media outreach, the development of an ongoing newsletter, and data collection. This item is an informational item only. No action is required from the board. It will be presented for adoption at the Policy Board's March meeting.

Mr. Statler noted that the MPO should have a written contact with the county on the position before the hiring take place. Commissioner Bloom agreed, suggesting that the MPO coordinate closely with the county staff on this matter.

### **Executive Session per WV 6-9A-4-2a Personnel matters**

Mr. Kelly made a motion to go to executive session; seconded by Mr. Justice. With no discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

The meeting went to executive session at 6:50 PM.

At 7:35, Commissioner Bloom made a motion to go out of executive session; seconded by Mr. Kelly. With no discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

Mr. Statler read a statement by the Board that Mr. Austin is doing a positive job for this body, and we thank him for his hard work. The past and present chair have been asked to meet with Mr. Austin to share his evaluation. Mr. Statler made a motion to adopt the evaluation; seconded by Mr. Justice. With no discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

Mr. Austin expressed his appreciation to the board for the support and noted that it will be his 10 year anniversary working for the MPO by the June first of this year. Mr. Austin noted that he will out of office in April for an extended vacation.

### **Other Business**

Mr. Justice asked that when a none-tier 1 project get funded, if that project is required to be moved to the tier 1 project list. Mr. Austin noted that there is no such requirement. Tier 1 projects are of regional transportation importance, but projects of other tier can also be funded by federal funds or other resources.

### **11. Meeting Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 8:03 PM.