



MINUTES

Policy Board Meeting

City Council Chambers 389 Spruce St.

By Phone Call

March 19, 2019

6:00 PM

Member Present

Chairman Joe Statler, Vice-Chair Commissioner Tom Bloom-Monongalia County, Treasurer Mayor Patricia Lewis-Granville, Commissioner Edward Hawkins-Monongalia County, Commissioner Sean Sikora-Monongalia County, Councilperson David Harshbarger-City of Morgantown, Councilperson Janice Goodwin-City of Westover, Councilperson Steven Blinco, Star City, Ron Justice-West Virginia University, Brian Carr-WV DOH, Dave Bruffy-Mountain Line, Mayor Bill Kawecki-City of Morgantown, Councilperson Jenifer Selin-City of Morgantown.

Member Absent: Mike Kelly-Board of Education

1. Call to Order

With quorum present, Chairman Statler called the meeting to order.

Chairman Statler noted that due to the COVID 19 pandemic, this Policy Board meeting is being held as a teleconference.

Mr. Austin noted that because of the changed circumstance, it is recommended that the agenda of policy board meeting be revised as the following: 2. Public Comment Period; 3. Citizens Advisory Report; 4. Transportation Improvement Program; 5. Draft Unified Planning Work Program; 6. Bylaws amendment; and 7. Meeting adjourn.

Councilperson Goodwin made a motion to adopt the revised meeting agenda as proposed; seconded by Councilperson Blinco. Without discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

2. Public Comment Period

No public comment.

Mr. Austin noted that his email address is being posted on the live video screen. The public can send their comment to the email address. He will check his email periodically and report to the policy board if he received any comments during the meeting.

3. Citizens Advisory Committee Report

Mr. Rice, the Chairman of the Citizens Advisory Committee, noted that the committee recommended approval of draft TIP and UPWP to the Policy Board. He noted that the TIP now has two tables for the same projects. One table is sorted by project names and the other table is sorted by the date of amendment or obligation date. Mr. Rice noted that the new format will help the public better track the development of listed projects.

Mr. Rice noted that he will be moving to the State of New York to join his family and he is resigning as the Chairman of the CAC. Chairman Statler on behalf of the MPO's Policy Board expressed gratitude to Mr. Rice for his service and leadership in the community.

4. Transportation Improvement Program

Mr. Austin noted that the draft TIP for FY's 2020-2023 was included in the agenda package. He noted that the MPO needs to adopt a new TIP at this meeting to be fully coordinated with the newly adopted State Transportation Improvement Program. The revised TIP does not reflect significant changes to the existing projects. However, several completed projects were removed from the tables. The most significant change to the TIP is that it includes two tables identifying the same projects. The first table identifies the projects by project names. The second table shows the projects by the date that they were included in the TIP and the date (if any) funds have been obligated to projects.

Mr. Austin noted that the MPO made the revised TIP available to the public in mid-January to meet the requirements of the MPO's Public Involvement Policy. To date the draft TIP has received no public comments. The TTAC and the CAC respectfully unanimously recommended approval of the TIP to the Policy Board

Councilperson Selin moved to adopt the TIP as presented, seconded by Mr. Justice. Without discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

5. Draft Unified Planning Work Program

Mr. Austin noted that the draft FY 2020-2021 Unified Planning Work Program was included in the agenda package. The primary new initiative in the UPWP is the beginning of the update of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan to develop an updated regional travel demand model, a new effort to identify the community's goals and objectives and to incorporate the results of the ongoing transit study and the recently adopted Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan into the Highway element of the MTP. The UPWP include 2% salary increase of the MPO's employees to keep up with the inflation of cost of living.

Commissioner Bloom moved to adopt the UPWP as presented; seconded by Mayor Kawecki. Without discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

6. Bylaws Amendment

Mr. Statler noted that he was recusing himself from consideration of this item since it directly affected his status. Mr. Austin noted that the bylaws amendment recommended by the Bylaws Committee is included in the agenda package. The committee consisted of Chairman Statler, Commissioner Bloom, Councilperson Selin, and Board Member Kelly. It includes a change in the Executive Directors title to Executive Director/Secretary as well as in his duties to act as spokesperson for the MPO. It is also proposed to remove the provision that an un-elected member appointed by a municipality cannot vote making an appointed member a voting member. It also provides for a two-year term for an appointed member who may be reappointed at the expiration of his term. The proposed changes also clarify that meeting notices and agenda's may be provided electronically.

Mr. Austin noted that given the current pandemic emergency, it is proposed to add a clarification to the bylaws, specifying that the MPO's Chairman and Executive Director could take necessary actions to ensure the financial security of the MPO's employees.

Mayor Kawecki moved to approve the recommended bylaws amendment; seconded by Commissioner Sikora. Mayor Kawecki noted that areas outside the City of Morgantown often do not have formally established neighborhood associations. He asked how the notion of neighborhood association on page 7 could be applied to those areas. Mr. Austin noted that some other forms of neighborhood organizations, such homeowner associations and community advocacy groups, could be recognized as neighborhood associations under Section 5 in the bylaws.

Councilperson Selin asked how the usage of the executive director's position title can be distinguished from that of the secretary. Mr. Austin noted that during daily MPO's operation, the position functions as the MPO's executive director. During board meetings, the position function as the secretary to the board.

Without further discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

7. Other Business

Mayor Kawecki asked about the COVID19 impacts on ongoing projects. Mr. Carr noted that he does not have any specific information regarding projects in the Morgantown area. Mr. Carr noted that he will keep the board informed of any delays or changes to local ongoing projects caused by the pandemic.

Mr. Bruffy noted that the Mountain Line Transit is publicizing a survey for the transit study. The survey is accessible on the Mountain Line's website at www.busrider.org. The public can also call the Mountain Line number 304-291-7433 to request a hard copy via mail.

Mr. Austin noted that several ongoing roadway projects in the area are moving into the construction phase, including the WV 7-Greenbag Rd intersection project, the Mileground project, and the Collins Ferry Rd-University Ave intersection project.

Mr. Austin noted that the WV DOH and WVU are working together on the emergency landslide repair project on Mon Blvd. Chairman Statler noted that the landslide hazard has been a continuing issue in the community and he is pleased to see the collaboration between WVU and WV DOH on this issue.

Councilperson Selin noted that the landslide issue is of high concern in this area and that the temporary fix of the issue should lead to a long-last solution that will permanently solve the landslide issue on Mon Blvd.

Mr. Carr noted that there is a minor map error in the UPWP. Mr. Austin noted that the error will be corrected.

Mayor Kawecki asked how the University is promoting the census to students. Mr. Justice noted that the WVU is using all communication tools available to reach out to students for the census survey. The school is actively looking at alternative ways to communicate with students in face of the pandemic.

Mayor Kawecki asked what platform the University is using to communicate with students and staff. Mr. Justice noted that his department is using the Zoom. He does not know what tools other departments of the University is using.

Mr. Austin expressed his personal appreciation to Mr. Rice for his leadership in the CAC over the last decade.

8. Adjustment

The meeting adjourned at 6:44 PM.