

**ST. CLOUD AREA PLANNING ORGANIZATION
EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES
March 9, 2017**

The St. Cloud Area Planning Organization's Executive Board was held on Thursday, March 9, 2017, at 5:00 p.m. in the Array Room at the Great River Regional Library. Chair Jeff Goerger presided with the following Members present:

Councilmember Jeff Goerger	City of St. Cloud
Councilmember John Libert	City of St. Cloud
Councilmember Pat Lynch (Alt)	City of Sartell
Councilmember Nick Sauer	City of Sauk Rapids
Mayor Bob Kroll	City of St. Augusta
Commissioner Joe Perske	Stearns County
Commissioner Felix Schmiesing (Alt)	Sherburne County
Township Supervisor Jeff Westerlund	LeSauk Township

Also Present:

Brian Gibson	Exec Director, St. Cloud APO
Joseph Mueller	St. Cloud APO
Dorothy Sweet	St. Cloud APO

Mr. Nick Sauer, Sauk Rapids Councilmember, was introduced to the Board members.

Before the meeting started, the location change of the Executive Board meeting was discussed. All board members had the opportunity to express their opinion about the new location. Mr. Gibson stated that with the approval of the ADA Policy last month, we are required to hold our meetings in locations that are transit-friendly/public transit-accessible since the APO office is not near a fixed-route bus route.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Councilmember Sauer motioned and Commissioner Perske seconded to amend the Agenda to include a Northstar update. Motion carried.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 9, 2017 MEETING.

Councilmember Libert motioned and Mayor Kroll seconded the approval of the February 9, 2017 Executive Board meeting minutes. Motion carried.

CONSIDERATION OF BILLS:

Mayor Kroll motioned and Commissioner Schmiesing seconded the approval of the bills. Motion carried. Mayor Kroll questioned the two \$14.24 Lobbying fees listed and why the Electric bill was listed as an estimate. Because not all March bills have been received at the time of creating the Proposed March Disbursement document, some anticipated bills were listed as estimates. Mr. Gibson responded that he would clarify the two lobbying fee charges and email the board members with a response.

(Follow-Up Note: Mr. Gibson e-mailed members on March 10th that the two \$14.24 charges were due to choosing seats on the flight.)

CONSIDERATION OF TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AMENDMENT:

Mr. Mueller, APO Senior Planner, reviewed the need for the TIP Amendment. After the adoption of the TIP last year, several changes came about and the Amendment will reflect those changes. The changes are summarized below:

1. Metro Bus is requesting the movement of several line items from FY 2016 to FY 2017. This change is necessary because of a delay that prevented the funds from being granted in FY 2016.
2. Wacosa has been awarded Section 5310 funds for the purchase of a bus in FY 2017.
3. MnDOT has an extended the length of a Fiber Optic cable laying project by 1.7 miles. Cost remains unchanged.
4. Construction year and finance changes due to extra funds received from FAST Act.

Mr. Mueller reported that the TAC discussed and reviewed the amendment and agreed with the changes and recommended approval of the TIP to the Executive Board.

Councilmember Libert motioned to approve and Councilmember Sauer seconded the motion. Motion carried.

CONSIDERATION OF REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ASSISTANCE CONTRACT:

Mr. Gibson reported that the approved 2017 UPWP included this study, which has three components:

1. Identification of important freight movement corridors that are not part of the National Highway System, and recommendations for appropriate performance measures to monitor those corridors;
2. Development of population and jobs forecasts by Traffic Analysis Zone for the year 2045; and
3. Development of an annual performance measure/target report template and recommendations for any additional performance measures/targets for the APO region.

Three proposals were received, reviewed and scored. The SRF proposal was ranked #1 and came in at \$85,068.25, which was well under the \$100,000 budget.

Councilmember Libert motioned to approve the contract and Commissioner Perske seconded the motion. Motion carried.

CONSIDERATION OF OVERNIGHT TRAVEL REQUEST:

Mr. Gibson reviewed the current policy pertaining to out-of-state and overnight travel and requested approval for two APO employees to attend the annual gathering of all MPOs in Minnesota, which will be held in Mankato on August 2 through 4th. The estimated travel, hotel, meals and registration costs are \$495 per person. The 2017 UPWP included a travel budget of \$7,210 and at the end of February \$6,900 remains in the travel budget.

Commissioner Schmiesing motioned to approve travel expenses for two APO employees to attend the 2017 Minnesota MPO Conference *Not To Exceed \$1,000*. Councilmember Sauer seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Mayor Kroll asked if both employees could travel to the conference in one car to save on travel expenses. Mr. Gibson replied that money would be saved where possible.

CONSIDERATION OF GRANT FINDER SUBSCRIPTION:

Mr. Gibson said that as part of the APO's job, we manage planning grants, budgets, etc. With tight budgets, we need to seek out additional grant opportunities from both public and private entities. An entity called EfficientGov offers a tool called GrantFinder, which can help organizations find grant opportunities. GrantFinder is a real-time database of federal, state, corporate, and private foundation grant opportunities tailored to municipalities. GrantFinder currently tracks over 7,300 grants and

monitors more than 4,300 grant websites as potential funding possibilities. Mr. Gibson requested permission to try the GrantFinder subscription for a one-year trial at the cost of \$1,495. Each jurisdiction within the APO organization will receive a single seat of GrantFinder at no additional costs. The funds for this one-year grant subscription will come from local funds. Mayor Kroll questioned if all APO jurisdictions would have access to this or only cities over 5,000. Mr. Gibson replied that all APO members would have access to the tool.

Councilmember Libert motioned to approve the one-year trial subscription to GrantFinder, and Commissioner Perske seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Commissioner Schmiesing asked that the city, town, township and county administrators be made aware of this tool. Mr. Gibson replied that he would inform the administrators.

OTHER BUSINESS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Northstar: Mr. Gibson reported that he recently met with MN Lt. Governor, Tina Smith and some of her staff members, Transportation Commissioner Charles Zelle, the Met Council Chair Adam Duininck, Stearns County Commissioner Leigh Lenzmeier, Stearns County Administrator Mike Williams, and MN State Senator Jerry Relph on how to address the Big Lake to St. Cloud Northstar route. Discussion items included doing another study, since current data on potential ridership and costs are from 2009, and a demo project run by Amtrak. Amtrak has certain rights and advantages that Northstar does not. Amtrak has the possibility of negotiating at a different level than Northstar. The state will start a conversation with Amtrak to see what they are willing to do. Some board members saw this as very positive. Mr. Mueller reported that the #1 response so far in a public outreach survey that is currently underway is the Northstar rail extension to St. Cloud from Big Lake.
- Long Range Transportation Plan Public Input Open House events are scheduled for March 16, March 29, April 1 and April 19.
- The Washington DC trip is scheduled for April 3-6. Commissioner Perske announced that he would be joining Mr. Gibson and Mr. Goerger.
- Since the St. Cloud Library is not available to us for the April Executive Board meeting on April 14, it was announced that the April meeting would be held at the APO. Mr. Goerger said that the MetroBus Training Center is another possibility for our meetings.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.