

**Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization  
EXECUTIVE BOARD COMMITTEE MINUTES  
January 18, 2018**

A regular meeting of the Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization's (APO) Executive Board Meeting was held on Thursday, January 18, 2018 in the Array Room of the Great River Regional Library in Saint Cloud. In the absence of the APO Chair, Vice-Chair Jeff Westerlund presided with the following members present:

|                                     |                 |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Mayor Dave Kleis                    | Saint Cloud     |
| Councilmember John Libert           | Saint Cloud     |
| Councilmember Bob Loso (alt)        | Saint Joseph    |
| Mayor Rick Miller                   | Waite Park      |
| Township Supervisor Jeff Westerlund | LeSauk Township |
| Commissioner Joe Perske             | Stearns County  |
| Commissioner Spencer Buerkle (alt)  | Benton County   |

Also Present:

|                |                            |
|----------------|----------------------------|
| Brian Gibson   | Executive Director, APO    |
| Stacy Morse    | Congressman Emmer's Office |
| Vicki Ikeogu   | APO                        |
| Alex McKenzie  | APO                        |
| Joseph Mueller | APO                        |
| Dorothy Sweet  | APO                        |

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Mr. Gibson noted one change to the agenda. Item 3. h. (Approval of Transportation Improvement Program Modification) should be removed from the agenda.

***Mayor Miller motioned to approve the agenda with the removal of 3 h., and Commissioner Perske seconded the motion. Motion carried.***

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:**

Ms. Morse from Congressman's Emmer Office briefly spoke about the possible shutdown of the Federal Government.

**CONSIDERATION OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:**

(Minutes of Sept 14, 2017; Bills List; Annual Resolutions; Acceptance of Saint Joseph CSAH 75 Pedestrian Crossing Study; Approval of Wacosa Services Agreement for 2018; Approval Highway 23 Coalition Letter of Support and Resolution; Approve Hosting Minnesota MPO Summer Conference; Accept Information regarding BNSF Rail Abandonment in St. Cloud; Declaration of Gift).

***Councilmember Libert motioned to approve all Consent agenda items and Mayor Miller seconded the motion. Motion carried.***

### **CONSIDERATION OF PRIORITIES FOR 2018:**

Mr. Gibson reviewed the priorities booklet from last year. The priorities list is used for the APO's annual trip to Washington to meet with congressional staff and/or elected officials, as well as for similar meetings within our state. Last year we included some smaller projects for \$1, \$2 and \$3 million, and those inclusions were particularly well received. Congressional staff seemed to like the range of projects from large to small.

- Sartell's 50<sup>th</sup> Avenue project will be pulled from the priorities list, as also recommended by TAC.
- After much discussion, it was decided to keep Northstar on the priorities list.
- The Highway 23 South project, though not in our planning area, was discussed for inclusion on the priorities list. The pros and cons of adding this were discussed. The economic impact of this project to the Saint Cloud area was acknowledged. One member felt that sending the letter of support for this project was sufficient, while another member felt that the very least we could do is send the letter of support.
- Councilmember Loso, who was representing Mayor Schultz from Saint Joseph, requested the addition of two projects to the priorities list, i.e., \$3 million project for an overpass on 75 and a \$7 million project for the extension of Field Street.
- Widening I-94 from Saint Michael to Saint Cloud was discussed.
- The funding inequity issue for Central Minnesota was considered again. Some expressed their ambivalence about keeping this on the list, since in meetings with the Washington congressional staff, this was felt to be a state issue.
- Airport: It was acknowledged that the Airport is always in need of money. They are trying to expand hangars. While the Airport received some funding, they continue to need more for growth. Mr. Buerkle said Benton County is not planning on taking over ownership of the Airport. Discussions of privatization of the tower are underway according to Mayor Kleis. Removing the Airport from the Priorities List for one year was raised, but was generally felt that should not be done. One million dollars comes out of aviation taxes to the Saint Cloud Airport. It was decided to keep the Saint Cloud Regional Airport on the list and that Mr. Gibson should contact Bill Towle about rewriting/rewording the Airport project.
- It was decided that projects do not need to be prioritized.
- ***The Priorities List will be presented to the Policy Board for discussion and final determination on what should be included.***

### **CONSIDERATION OF 2018 UPWP AMENDMENT:**

Mr. Gibson explained that when the 2018 UPWP (our annual operating budget) was developed, it was based on the assumption that unspent Federal funds from previous years would be available to us, as has been the case in the past. However, that policy has changed and unspent funds now go to a general fund for any MPO to use. Additionally, for administration of our planning grant, MnDOT is now following FHWA rules instead of FTA rules. FTA will not release past unspent funding until after an audit is complete. When FTA releases funds after the audit, there will be additional funds available, but we have no timeline for the release of those funds from the FTA. The recommended changes to the 2018 UPWP are as follows:

1. Delaying the APO website update until 2019;
2. Reducing the Federal match and the total budget for the Travel Demand Model Support; the scope of the project will also change to remove improvements to the model and focus instead on model calibration and modeling activities for the Long-Range Transportation Plan update;
3. Removing the Federal funds from the Saint Cloud CSAH 75 Corridor Study Refresh and instead using \$20,000 from the City of Saint Cloud and \$80,000 in APO local funds (from APO's Savings Account) to complete the project;
4. Removing the Federal funds from the Benton County ADA Transition Plan and instead using \$36,000 from Benton County and \$24,000 in APO local funds (APO's Saving Account) to complete the project.

This proposed amendment was presented to the Technical Advisory Committee on January 4<sup>th</sup>, and they unanimously recommended approval.

Mr. Gibson reviewed the details of the Benton County ADA Transition Plan at the request of Commissioner Buerkle.

***Mayor Kleis motioned to approve the 2018 UPWP Amendment, and Councilmember Libert seconded the motion. Motion carried.***

### **CONSIDERATION OF REGIONAL SAFETY PERFORMANCE TARGETS:**

Mr. Gibson noted that we are moving towards Performance Based Measures. For each federally required performance measure, the State must set a performance target. Each MPO has to then decide whether to follow the state's performance target or to set their own. Mr. McKenzie, the APO's

Transportation Planning Technician, reported that the five roadway safety performance measures, using a 5-year rolling average are:

- Number of fatalities;
- Rate of fatalities (Per 100 Million VMT);
- Number of serious injuries;
- Rate of serious injuries (Per 100 Million VMT); and,
- Number of non-motorized fatalities and non-motorized serious injuries.

MnDOT's safety targets were reviewed; however, the APO staff is proposing setting our own targets for 2018 using the following:

- Traffic Fatalities – 7.8
- Fatality Rate – 0.598/100MVMT
- Serious Injuries – 13.9
- Serious Injury Rate - 1.070/100MVMT
- Non-motorized Fatalities and Serious Injuries - 7

It was generally felt that setting and using our own targets, rather than MnDOT's, was more meaningful to us and would be a better guide. The TAC recommended on December 7 that the APO adopt the APO targets as presented.

***Mayor Kleis motioned to accept the TAC's recommendation to use the APO's suggested performance measures, and Mayor Miller seconded the motion. Motion carried.***

#### **CONSIDERATION OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN (SEP):**

Mr. Gibson announced that we are required to have a Public Participation Plan, which basically states how the APO will engage the public as we do studies, plans, etc., and when and how we reach out to the public. Our previous Public Participation Plan was created in 2012. We also have a Title VI Plan, which was last updated in 2015. The draft presented for consideration combines the two documents into one. A social media policy, for APO employees, was also added to the draft document. Ms. Ikeogu stated that after input is received from the Executive Board members, and those changes incorporated into the document, it will be going out for a 45-day public review. Ms. Ikeogu said the document is still being drafted and she is still working with MnDOT. The projected public release date is January 29. Ms. Ikeogu reviewed some of the topics and information included in the plan. She asked that any feedback be sent to her or Mr. Gibson by January 19.

#### **DISCUSSION ON RING ROAD CONCEPT:**

Mr. Gibson said that as the APO staff went out to the public for the Long Range Transportation Plan, one comment heard quite frequently was the need for higher speed corridors to get from one side of Saint Cloud to the other such as a ring road or something similar to 494/694 around the Twin Cities. In the past, Stearns County did a portion of a ring road concept. However, no overall concrete plan exists. Some members recalled this discussion about ten years ago and wanted to know what happened to that plan. The members discussed development in the surrounding cities and the need for another river crossing to improve economic development and especially with the location of the new Tech High School. Mayor Kleis recalled discussion about a ring road concept to help push another river crossing. It was thought that this was discontinued by MnDOT when their focus was changed to preservation. Mayor Kleis also recalled a committee being formed and thought an environmental study was completed at that time. Commissioner Perske felt all local cities should be in agreement and be involved with this to avoid development in areas where the ring road would be created. Mayor Miller voiced his concern because land is being sold off in Waite Park because a final decision was never made on the location of the ring road in Waite Park. Mr. Loso said Saint Joseph does not approve development in designated areas. Several members gave their perspective on the beltway/ring road discussion from several years ago as well as commenting on some roads in their jurisdictions. Questions were raised about how we move forward with this discussion, how to get the river crossing and beltway on MnDOT's focus again, and what do the local communities think about this. Mr. Gibson said while it appears to have been a general agreement on the concept of a ring road, no final decision on placement of the ring road was done at that time. If we do resurrect and continue this discussion, this should probably have a work element included in the annual UPWP to finalize a location in all jurisdictions and a new environmental study would need to be done since the previous document, if it was done, would be ten years old.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS & ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Mr. Buerkle announced that Chris Byrd received the Benton County 2017 Project of the Year Award for CSAH 3 "Up The Hill" from the Minnesota County Engineers Association.

Mayor Kleis responded to an inquiry from Mr. Westerlund that 33<sup>rd</sup> will be widened to 4 lanes from 75 to just past Stride academy. This will be done in three phases over the next three years.

#### **ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:12 p.m.