

**Policy Board
Regular Meeting Minutes
August 2, 2017, 10:00 a.m.**

Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission
112 MacTanly Place, Staunton Virginia

Present (19):

Voting Members		Non-Voting Members		Others	
	City of Staunton		Va DRPT	✓	Josh Dunlap, VDOT
✓	James Harrington, Chairperson	✓	Nick Britton	✓	Bridget Donaldson, VDOT
✓	Steve Rosenberg		VRT	✓	Bill Bushman, Hurt & Proffitt
	Steve Owen (Alt)		Bruce Simms		Staff (CSPDC)
	Augusta County	✓	Susan Newbrough	✓	Bonnie Riedesel
✓	Wendell Coleman		FHWA		Elizabeth McCarty
✓	Tim Fitzgerald		Mack Frost	✓	Ann Cundy
	Gerald Garber (Alt)		FTA	✓	Nancy Gourley
	City of Waynesboro		Michele DeAngelis	✓	Scott Philips
✓	Bruce Allen, Vice Chair		Va DOA	✓	Kimberly Miller
✓	Jim Shaw		Rusty Harrington	✓	Jonathan Howard
	Michael Hamp (Alt)		CTB		
	VDOT		F. Dixon Whitworth		
	Randy Kiser				
✓	Adam Campbell (Alt)				
✓	Don Komara (Alt)				
	Terry Jackson (Alt)				

Call to Order

The meeting of the Policy Board of the Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (SAWMPO) was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Mr. James Harrington, Chairperson.

Public Comment

Chairperson Harrington opened the floor for public comment. There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes

Chairperson Harrington presented the minutes from the June 7, 2017, Policy Board meeting.

Mr. Rosenberg moved, seconded by Mr. Fitzgerald, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).

Update: I-64 Corridor Study (Board Memo #17-4)

Chairperson Harrington presented the update on the I-64 Corridor Study. Mr. Philips stated that on July 26th, the working group met and discussed freight planning and movement and rail freight. He stated that presentations were made by Erik Johnson, VDOT Freight Planning Office and Brian Freeman, Buckingham Branch Railroad. Mr. Philips stated that an interactive website is available and includes information about the study and data related to the study. He stated that if there are comments, to provide them to Mr. Wood Hudson or himself. Mr. Philips stated that the final report and MOU will be presented at the joint MPO meeting on September 27th.

Update: WWRC Small Area Study

Chairperson Harrington presented the update on the WWRC Small Area Study. Ms. Cundy stated that a successful public open house was held in June; attendees included residents, business owners and school district staff, developers from Meyer's Corner, as well as, members of the MPO and locality staff. She stated that there were suggestions such as a dedicated right turn lane to keep traffic flowing from the Wilson facility onto US 250 westbound, an advanced warning system near the crest of the hill approaching WWRC from the east (near the Village Garden Center), and that many in attendance supported a secondary entrance onto US 250 rather than on a rural road. She stated that Chairperson Harrington received a written comment by email. Ms. Cundy stated that she and Chairperson Harrington toured the site and the comment will be included in the record of public comment.

Ms. Cundy stated that the CSPDC is awaiting a pre-award audit by VDOT in order to give Timmons Group the Notice to Proceed. She stated that MPO and local staff have provided all the data necessary for Timmons so they are ready once they received the Notice to Proceed. Ms. Cundy stated that data includes arrival time for the schools, signal data, etc.

Mr. Coleman asked if access onto a road other than US 250, such as Barren Ridge Road, would still be considered in the study in spite of the feedback from the public meeting. Ms. Cundy stated that Timmons will evaluate all possible alternatives. Chairperson Harrington asked who would make the ultimate decision about which option to pursue. Mr. Campbell stated that the recommendation section of the study report will evaluate the recommendations based on performance, cost and how it is projected to score in the SMART SCALE process. Mr. Komara stated that VDOT will help the locality and MPO review the options and discuss the factors that affect the decision. Ms. Riedesel stated that all involved parties will work together to evaluate options.

Mr. Fitzgerald asked about the pre-award audit and the reason for the delay. Ms. Riedesel stated that the information was sent to VDOT Central Office in January for all six of the On-Call Consultants. She stated that they have received approval on four of the six; Timmons being one that has not yet been completed. Ms. Riedesel stated that VDOT Central Office has implemented a different and more rigorous review policy that is taking more time. She stated that they hope that the pre-award audit will be completed on the two remaining On-Call Consultants soon.

Presentation – Ms. Bridget Donaldson, Senior Research Scientist VDOT/VTRC, “I-64 Animal-Vehicle Collision Research and Mitigation”

Chairperson Harrington presented the VDOT presentation. Mr. Scott Philips introduced Ms. Bridget Donaldson, Senior Environmental Research Scientist with Virginia Transportation Research Council, the research arm of VDOT. He stated that her research has focused on reducing the environmental impact of road projects, mitigation of vehicle/animal collisions, GIS habitat assessments, road-kill composting and water-quality implications of culvert repair technologies.

Ms. Donaldson provided background on deer and vehicle collisions and showed how high Virginia ranks nationwide with such collisions. She stated that VDOT contacted the Virginia Transportation Research Council to study the incidents and provide potential mitigation of deer/vehicle collisions in the region of I-64 from Ivy to Afton. Ms. Donaldson presented the research process and findings and the mitigation solutions that were implemented and the results. She stated that fencing and culverts were used in key areas to funnel wildlife from one feeding area to another. She stated that warning messages were posted on electronic signs during peak migration periods. Ms. Donaldson stated that early results show a dramatic decrease in animal/vehicle collisions, with significant cost savings to drivers, insurance companies, and carcass removal. She stated that mitigation requires effort and a will to pursue. She thanked the group for allowing her the opportunity to present. (Presentation attached to file minutes.)

Ms. Riedesel stated that Ms. Donaldson made a presentation to the I-64 Corridor Study Working Group and the information will be included in the final study report.

Agency Updates

VDOT

Mr. Campbell gave the following update: The Fall Transportation Meeting for the Staunton District will be held on October 10th at Blue Ridge Community College. The meeting will begin with an open house format from 4-5 p.m. with displays of projects completed with last year’s funding and proposed changes to SMART SCALE Round 3. From 5-6 p.m. there will be informal town hall format discussion. Also on October 10th, from 1:00 to 3:30 p.m. in the auditorium at BRCC, VDOT will hold Smart Portal and SMART SCALE training for district and locality staff. VDOT is using the Fall meetings as public outreach to get comments and feedback on proposed changes to SMART SCALE Round 3. The public comment period will be open until October 20th; it is anticipated that the CTB will adopt the Technical Guides for SMART SCALE Round 3 at their October 24th meeting.

Mr. Campbell stated that the Smart Portal website opened yesterday for Revenue-Sharing and the various safety programs, and will open on September 1st for TA program applications for the following year. He reminded the group that this is the last year prior to these grant funds going on bi-annual cycles. VDOT Local Assistance will provide a TA workshop on Thursday, August 17th at 10:00 a.m. at the Culpepper VDOT Office. Ms. Cundy stated that she, Mr. Philips and Mr. Howard are planning to attend the workshop in Lynchburg on Thursday, August 3rd. The closing date for these programs is November 1st, 2017. Ms. Cundy requested localities to let staff know if they plan to apply for any of these programs so SAWMPO resolutions of support can be prepared and approved for those projects that fall within the MPO boundary.

Mr. Campbell stated that VDOT's Local Assistance website has been updated to include all of the Revenue-Sharing changes. Some highlights: the overall amount of money has been reduced; the maximum allowable per locality is \$5 million/year and a project life-time cap is \$10 million.

Mr. Komara stated that the revenue-sharing is going to a 2-year cycle and will take additional forethought. The connection at Rt. 612 (near the Razor Plant) is completed; the bridge in Waynesboro is complete and looks great. The bridge at Whiskey Creek in Churchville is complete; Route 608 project should be completed in the fall; Rt. 610 was awarded to A.R. Coffey; the contractor will hold a "Pardon Our Dust" public meeting with residents in the affected area. Exit 213 acceleration/deceleration ramps will be started in the fall; a public hearing was held regarding the bridge project at Bell Creek (near Jake's Store) that was well-attended and the project is moving forward. A six-year secondary plan meeting was held recently that went well.

DRPT

Mr. Britton stated in response to a question in regard to the inter-city bus system from Blacksburg to Washington D.C., that there were three bidders on the service that were narrowed down to two, but no decision has been made yet; a decision is anticipated in late summer. He stated that no stop locations along the route have been determined yet.

Transit

Ms. Gourley gave an update on the BRITE Transit System, noting that the bus stop sign project is now complete. Ownership of the Fishersville transit facility was transferred to the CSPDC on June 30th and a ribbon-cutting ceremony was held on July 27th. New buses were put in service on July 1st and there has been lots of good feedback on them. FTA has awarded CSPDC an additional \$25,000 to operate the BRITE system; the TIP has been updated. A new website is going to be developed for BRITE Transit; a RFP is open and proposals are due by the end of the month. A study will be completed this fall to look at technology to help BRITE gather data and to help riders, such as smartphone apps. This study will be funded by SAWMPO Transit funds.

Other Business

Ms. Riedesel stated that the inter-regional bus study, led by KFH Group, has been underway for over a year. Many stakeholders have been involved. A final report has been completed and the recommendation is that there is a demand for this service and it is feasible. The final service concept is a system that would operate Monday through Friday, from 5:50 a.m. to 8:45 p.m.; 6 east-bound trips and 7 west-bound trips per weekday; the fares would be approximately \$5 for the whole length and lesser amounts for parts of the route. A total of four 28-passenger buses would be required (3 in service and 1 spare). The recommendation is that they be leased or contractor-owned. The system will be an express system and the buses will need to get on and off the highway quickly at the designated stops. This will require Park and Ride lots; one at Exit 245 in Harrisonburg, one at Weyers Cave, one at Staunton at the intersection of I-81 and Rt. 250. The existing lot in Waynesboro would need some improvements to ensure the buses can get in and out quickly. The total cost of the system is estimated to be \$500,000/year. Costs will be offset by fares and by state and federal assistance. Applications for funding are due December 15th for service start-up in January 2019. There will be a local match that will be approximately \$140,000/year and would be shared by 10 potential funding partners (jurisdictions and institutions) that are along the route for approximately

\$14,000/year. The next step is to hold a meeting with the decision-makers of the funding partners to get commitments required to submit the application. A fact sheet was provided to meeting attendees (copy attached to file minutes). Ms. Riedesel asked each Board member to discuss this project with their City Councils and Board of Supervisors. A final presentation will be made at the Joint MPO meeting in September.

Ms. Riedesel provided information about the upcoming third annual Joint Charlottesville-Albemarle MPO and SAWMPO meeting that will be held on Wednesday, September 27th, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the King Family Vineyard in Crozet.

Ms. Cundy stated that the annual Governor's Transportation Conference will be held on October 24-27, at the Homestead in Hot Springs.

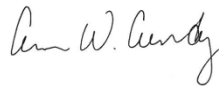
Meeting Schedule

Chairperson Harrington presented the upcoming meeting schedules. The TAC meeting is scheduled for August 16th, at 2:00 p.m. at CSPDC Office. The September 6th Policy Board Meeting will be cancelled, and the Policy Board will meet jointly with the CA-MPO Board on September 27th at King Family Vineyards, in Crozet.

Meeting Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Policy Board, Chairperson Harrington adjourned the meeting at 11:23 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Ann W. Cundy
Transportation Program Manager