

Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro Metropolitan Planning Organization

Policy Board Meeting Minutes

March 19, 2025, 10:00 a.m.

Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission
112 MacTanly Place, Staunton, Virginia

Attendance

Voting Members		Non-Voting Members		Other Attendees	
City of Staunton		VDOT		Staff (CSPDC)	
✓	Amanda Kaufman		Shane McCabe (Alt)	✓	Ann Cundy
✓	Brad Arrowood (Chair)			✓	Zach Beard
✓	Rodney Rhodes (Alt)	DRPT		✓	Paula Melester
Augusta County		✓*	Grace Stankus	✓	Garreth Bartholomew
✓	Tim Fitzgerald	Virginia Regional Transit		✓*	Devon Thompson
	Carolyn Bragg	✓*	Steve Wilson		
	Pam Carter (Alt)		Phil Thompson (Alt)		
City of Waynesboro		Department of Aviation			
✓	Jim Wood (Vice Chair)		Rusty Harrington	Others	
✓	Todd Wood	FHWA and FTA		✓	John Good, CTB
	Michael Hamp (Alt)		Chelsea Beytas	✓	Randy Laird, CTB
VDOT			Kevin Jones		
✓	Todd Stevens				
✓	Brad Reed (Alt)				
✓	Don Komara (Alt)				
✓	Cody Huffman				

*Virtual Attendance

Call to Order

The Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (SAWMPO) Policy Board meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m. by Chair Brad Arrowood. Pursuant to §2.2-3708.2 of the Code of Virginia, SAWMPO Policy Board members may participate in meetings of the SAWMPO or its committees through electronic communication means. Those who attended virtually are indicated by an asterisk; all others attended in-person.

Approval of Minutes

Vice Chair Arrowood presented the minutes from the February 19, 2025, Policy Board meeting.

Mr. Jim Wood moved to approve the minutes; seconded by Mr. Tim Fitzgerald. The Board approved the motion by unanimous vote.

Public Comment

Vice Chair Arrowood opened the meeting for public comment. There were no public comments.

Presentation and Discussion: SAWMPO Overview with Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) Member Mr. John Good

Ms. Ann Cundy welcomed Staunton District CTB member Mr. Good. Ms. Cundy presented an overview of the SAWMPO, noting that the MPO was established in 2012 after the region surpassed the 50,000 population threshold for establishing MPOs following the 2010 Census. Ms. Cundy explained that the CSPDC is unique because the agency administers two MPOs and a transit system.

Mr. Zach Beard provided an overview of the SAWMPO transportation network, the SAWMPO functions, and reviewed several aspects of SAWMPO work through Long Range Planning and Short Range Planning. Mr. Beard reviewed the SAWMPO's transportation planning priorities and goals and noted that the region has historically prioritized safety, maintenance, and multimodal connectivity over congestion-specific projects due to relatively limited systemic congestion issues.

Augusta County Transportation Priorities

Mr. Tim Fitzgerald presented Augusta County's transportation priorities, which were the I-81 Exit 213 Greenville interchange improvements to address truck traffic issues, particularly related to the problematic A/B exit configuration southbound, northbound auxiliary lane between I-81 exits 220 and 221, and the Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Complex second entrance to alleviate traffic congestion from the co-located elementary, middle, high school, and vocational school.

Mr. Fitzgerald noted that the County had secured a federal grant for the Exit 213 study through Congressional Directed Spending funding, but learned recently that the funding is no longer available. Mr. Fitzgerald expressed appreciation for recently funded projects including the Weyers Cave truck climbing lanes and the I-81 bridge widening at Weyers Cave I-81 Exit 235.

City of Staunton Transportation Priorities

Ms. Amanda Kaufman presented Staunton's transportation priorities. The first priority was accounting for a funding shortfall with the Richmond and Greenville Avenue Roundabout and Richmond Avenue Road Diet project, which was awarded \$2.25 million in Smart Scale but is now estimated to cost \$15.8 million. Ms. Kaufman explained that the City revised the project scope to a single-lane roundabout and eliminated the road diet component.

Ms. Kaufman also noted that the Frontier Drive widening project is a future need with regional impact due to significant residential and economic development underway along Frontier Drive, including 400 multifamily units, 267 townhomes, and 78 single-family units in Augusta County, plus 308 multifamily units and Staunton Crossing, which is a 300-acre economic development park that could employ 4,000 people. Chair Arrowood added that the roundabout would provide significant safety improvements at one of the primary entrances to the city and would enhance the gateway to Staunton.

City of Waynesboro Transportation Priorities

Mr. Jim Wood presented Waynesboro's transportation priorities and highlighted Waynesboro's growth, including new businesses bringing 500 jobs and nearly 1,300 new homes under development. Mr. Wood expressed concern about the process timing between Smart Scale award and project completion, which often results in significant cost increases, with the Southern Connector project increasing in cost from an estimated \$12.6 million to \$16 million.

Additionally, Mr. Wood explained that the East Main Streetscape project increased from \$2.25 million to \$7.5 million, with the City is contemplating revenue sharing to address the budget shortfall. These significant cost increases create budget challenges for a city of Waynesboro's size. Mr. Wood then noted that the City's new industrial park with rail access, combined with housing developments on the opposite side of I-64, is creating increased traffic throughout the city

CTB Member Comments

Mr. Good provided feedback and insights on transportation funding and priorities. Mr. Good acknowledged the challenge of inflation in transportation projects, with costs regularly increasing. Mr. Good explained that while costs are growing, there was not enough funding to cover all projects even at the original estimates, and some projects will not be able to move forward.

Mr. Good emphasized that maintenance comes first in transportation funding, which further limits what funding is available for new construction. Mr. Good noted that recent weather events, including hurricane damage in Southwest Virginia and winter weather throughout the state, have consumed significant maintenance funds.

Mr. Good encouraged localities to be realistic about what projects can be funded in the near term. Mr. Good suggested focusing planning efforts on projects that have a chance of being completed in the next few years, rather than spending money studying projects that might be 25 years out. Mr. Good recommended that localities brainstorm prior to conducting studies to ensure the development of realistic projects.

Mr. Good expressed concern about federal transportation funding approaches and programs with requirements that further complicate the development process and increase project costs.

Regarding regional priorities, Mr. Good emphasized that I-81 improvements remain a high priority. Mr. Good noted that projects with local financial participation receive more attention from the CTB. Mr. Good added that safety issues receive much higher priority in funding considerations.

Chair Arrowood thanked Mr. Good for meeting with the SAWMPO and emphasized the value of face-to-face communication with CTB members.

Upcoming Meetings

Chair Arrowood noted that the next TAC meeting is scheduled for April 2, 2025, and the next Board meeting is scheduled for April 16, 2025.



Meeting Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Arrowood adjourned the meeting at 11:07 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Paula Melester". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Paula Melester
Director of Transportation

A short, horizontal red line with a small, stylized mark in the center, possibly a signature or a decorative element.