

2. Minutes

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 09/19/2022

The Transportation Advisory Committee held a virtual and in-person TEAMS meeting on Monday, September 19, 2022 at 4:30pm

Members Present

Rocky Mount – Mayor Sandy Roberson, Reuben Blackwell, Richard Joyner,
Edgecombe County – Evelyn Powell
Nash County – Robbie Davis
Nashville – Louise Hinton
Sharpsburg – David Pride
NCDOT – Melvin Mitchell

Members Absent

None

Others Present

Brad Kerr CRM
Jordan Reedy CRM
Linda Rideout CRM
Carlos Moya-Astudilo NCDOT TPD
Jennifer Collins NCDOT Div 4
Scott Miles CRM
Ramon Muckle CRM
Elton Daniels CRM
James Salmons NCDOT Div 4
Todd Gardner TRT
Brandon Oliver FHWA
Andy Brown NCDOT Div 4

Welcome and Introductions

Meeting came to order at 4:31pm called by Robbie Davis
A Quorum was met
Introductions were given by each attendee before proceeding

Minutes of the 05/16/22 TAC Meeting

The minutes of the May 16, 2022, TAC meeting had been mailed to members with the current meeting agenda. Motion made to approve the minutes, and

Commissioner Pride voiced the second. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Mrs. Hinton had question about page 3, a grammatical error needs to be addressed. Also, on page 4, 3rd paragraph – tours planned, but comment is incomplete and doesn't conclude paragraph. Jordan Reedy addressed this issue, says there is some concern about group size doing a tour of facility.

James Salmons responded about facility concerns about the size of the group, wanted to reorganize into smaller groups.

Chair suggested corrections be made to minutes. Chair suggested that motion be called but will include changes to agenda as a stipulation to approval. Mr. Pride OK with changes. Motion approved with stipulation that changes and corrections be made as discussed.

Action Items

3.1 TCC/TAC By-Laws.

Chairperson introduced the need for an update to the By-Laws. Jordan Reedy discussed changes to by-laws.

- The Rocky Mount MPO staff have updated the TCC and TAC By-Laws.
 - This update will not change any core functions or responsibilities of either committee
 - Will reinforce the methodologies that both currently function by.
- Modifications from this update include:
 - The ability to hold meetings virtually/hybrid
 - 2 year length for the TCC chairpersons
 - Member may serve more than one term consecutively if reappointed by their elected board.
 - Can be reappointed as many times as they are nominated to serve.
 - New policy for voting member attendance – if miss two consecutive meeting, must attend another meeting before they can vote.

Brad Kerr suggested change in title for city traffic engineer be made to reflect new title. All agreed.

Chair discussed TAC By-Law changes. Asked for clarification on section 4 on attendance. (page 14) – Mimics the TAC for the TCC. Requires attendance to vote if 2 consecutive meetings are missed. Will not count towards quorum, will not have a vote until they attend again to be in good standing again.

Chair also asked Jordan Reedy to clarify ‘weighted votes’.

Mr. Reedy explained that it's common across MPOs. Only time it's taken into effect is in the case of a tie vote. Explanation of why Rocky Mount has a greater weighted vote is population based. Mentions that in the time that his predecessor or his own time with the city, has not ran into any ties. Rare occurrence.

Question to Chair from Reuben Blackwell under #4 for attendance – is there a process for a designated alternate? Jordan Reedy responded – has not established designated alternates, will suggest a conversation about who the alternates would be. Mr. Blackwell suggested it may not be appropriate be chosen for them, since they are elected officials, and designee should have the concerns of the electoral group. How did we determine that these By-Laws needed to be changed? Chair responded, as stated, guidelines come from MPOs from across the state for suggested By-Laws. Mr. Blackwell also asked to Jordan Reedy if guidance were given by state, Jordan explained that guidelines were given to him from MPOs of similar size, and those were used to establish draft, approved by NCDOT representatives to make sure they fall in line with other MPOs. Jordan explains By-Laws have not been updated in some time and were in need of a ‘refresher’. Mr. Blackwell stated that he hasn't heard of anything in process like this with meeting attendance for voting in any other context. Also is concerned about designees. Mr. Blackwell also gave recommendation/statement – if there are revisions to By-Laws, it should be a committee activity. Chair states he has no objections.

Chair asks if any other questions – he brings up alternate/designee – suggested elected board member may want to have their own designee. Mr. Mitchell gave his thought on the topic as well. Chair suggested members give Jordan Reedy the names of any designees. James Salmons suggested alternate would have to meet ethics/filing requirements.

Mr. Mitchell asks if something needs to be done in advance prior to meetings. James Salmons stated that they must have attended ethics standards. Jordan Reedy suggested that Mr. Mitchell may not need to meet ethics standards as a concern for his particular role with the MPO.

Chair asked Jordan Reedy to clarify article 6, last paragraph. Mr. Reedy asked for time to return a response, unless someone else present would be able to clarify.

Chair explains if something comes before the board that is not an NC route, and someone in a region does not want that to occur, that the municipality would be able to take action. Chair asked if there was a disagreement in action, how that would be handled. Sandy Roberson asked that this be clarified. Reuben Blackwell asked that in the event of a tie, does everyone from the municipality would have to agree?

Mr. Roberson responded that it would have to be a majority if that disagreement happened. Reuben Blackwell brings up that an alternate may be in attendance at all meetings to keep up with details. Mr. Roberson brought up that a disagreement could stop a project. Brad Kerr explained that very few cases of where it wouldn't be on a state

road, but for the purpose of amendment be made that it's worded to show the majority of 3. Jordan Reedy explains that it depends on the number in attendance.

Chair requests approval of TAC by-laws, subject to change of article #6.

Motion by Mayor Roberson, Second by Mrs. Hinton. Motion approved. None opposed.

All in favor, no opposition. Motion approved.

3.2 STIP Amendments.

Jordan Reedy explained that the regularly scheduled monthly NC Board of Transportation meetings, Item N is a standing order of business to adopt changes to the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Adopted changes need also to be adopted by the respective MPO and RPO. This allows for amendments to the current stip. Usually for state-wide projects. Often for cost increases, etc. Delivered to Jordan by the DOT, voted on by the BOT.

Mr. Reedy also explained that at previous meeting, BOT met and approved amendments for May, June, July, August. There had been concern that pre-approved amendments were coming before the board. Mr. Reedy explained that is not true, MPO has the final say. He added that these current amendments are generally more state-wide concerns, usually not-specific to this MPO.

- Changes are typically proposed one month and brought back for the final review and adoption the following month.
- Clarification of the Item N process was given in an email to Jordan Reedy.
 - Email was reviewed during this committee meeting.

Requested Action: Recommend the TAC to Adopt the Stip Amendments

Chair asks for approval. First motion: Richard Joyner Second motion. Evelyn Powell Motion approved, no opposition.

Transportation Planning Activities and Initiatives

4.1 Travel Demand Model Update.

Mr. Jordan Reedy summarized updates of the Travel Demand Model and included the following information:

- Rocky Mount MPO staff have completed the employment verification portion of the Travel Demand Model Update.
 - This task involved contacting all businesses in the MPO with more than 50 employees, to verify their total employment number. Jordan called these businesses to get accurate numbers. Finished a little over a month ago.

- These numbers are used as indicators for future traffic generation.
- Being completed prior to MTP, to be used as a guide for the MTP.

Chair asks for questions. R. Blackwell asks about when projects are in the development process, do we have the ability to update the travel demand model, or is it only done annually? Mr. Blackwell stated that his concern is rooted in possible predisposition to have results from previous older data, as opposed to current data, which affects certain demographics and may leave out others. Mr. Blackwell stated his concern about determining future needs.

Jordan Reedy explained to attendees that the TDM is not the only data that gets put into the MTP, has a lot of public information involved in it, communicates with disadvantaged community members and under-served areas. Information will be obtained from the public and stakeholders during upcoming MTP meetings, a lot of information is gathered during public meetings, and talking to community leaders before the MTP is finalized. Mr. Blackwell is concerned about situations in the past that he has witnessed, where opportunity is not adequately dispersed in an equitable manner.

Jordan Reedy asked Mr. Blackwell for more information on how this process can be most equitable and for contacts of business and community leaders to get better insight. Mr. Blackwell states that the committee and board members have that insight as well since they represent their communities.

Carlos Moya-Astudilo stated that the TDM is a computer-based approached to planning, taking into consideration local present and future land-use plans. These are transportation plan-mandated but need to get together with Jordan Reedy to develop long term comprehensive plans. Will have at least 4 or 5 local workshops and community outreach to see if federal MTP has areas that need to be worked on if there are issues. Mr. Astudilo states that there will be plenty of opportunities for the community and local officials to give input to MTP. He stated that it's very important to get information to Jordan Reedy, as every 3-5 years details need updating as transportation plans are not static.

4.2 MTP Update 2023.

Mr. Reedy reported on the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, and included the following information:

- Rocky Mount MPO staff and the MTP Selection team reviewed letters of interest from three qualified professional planning firms.
 - Chose Kimley Horn as the most qualified applicant after careful scoring, strictly on qualifications, not on cost.
- Kick-off meetings for the plan will begin soon.
- Selection committee were Jordan, Carlos, Ramon. Selection was unanimous among the committee.

Chair asked if there were any questions. None.

4.3 Carbon Reduction Program.

Jordan Reedy gave information and updates on the Carbon Reduction Program and included the following information:

- The Rocky Mount MPO was allocated \$152,843, with a 20% local match required, for carbon reduction program projects.
 - These funds are available for up to four years
 - The NCDOT must confirm project eligibility prior to the start of the project
 - Some examples of what these funds can be used for:
 - Traffic management
 - Public transportation
 - Transportation alternatives
 - Development of a carbon reduction strategy
 - Travel demand management
 - Deployment of alternative fuel vehicles

Jordan Reedy explained he was out during last week's meeting, and will attend tomorrow's meeting instead. Meetings are posted online. This project is very new, funds come from federal government. Funds are used similar to how CMAQ funds are used – anything to reduce pollution. Will have more information at the next meeting. Will share sooner than next meeting if able. Jordan asks members to consider attending the online events as well.

Chair asked if 20% match is in the current budget. Jordan explains that this amount is not in the budget for this current year. Says that local municipality is responsible for the 20% match much like CMAQ. Chair asked how projects would come to the board. Mr. Reedy responded he's unsure if projects have to be studied first, or if suggestions are approved without a study prior to. Brad Kerr suggested it's similar to CMAC projects, project will be moved to expedite them.

Information Items

5.1 STIP Project Status.

Jordan gave the following report:

- U-5026 & R-5720 (Sunset Ave/ 1-95 Interchange and Eastern Ave widening)
Update:
 - 60.5M
 - 55.11% Complete.

- Original completion date was 6/30/2023. Revised completion date is expected to be 7/2/2024
- B-5980 (I-95 Interchange Improvements at Halifax Road, SR1544) Update:
 - 23M
 - Work began 9/9/2021. 38.2% complete.
 - Completion date expected to be 4/29/2024.
- U-5996 Old Carriage Road widening. Update:
 - Let date 1/18/22
 - 2.95% complete.
 - Completion date expected to be 4/30/2025
- U-5947 Benvenue Road / US 64 Ramp Roundabout. Update:
 - Let date 4/26/2022
 - Expected completion date 9/29/2023

Mr. Blackwell asked what the investment on the Old Carriage Rd. project is. Jordan Reedy states that he'll respond to him later when he has that figure. Chair explains connection of project. Brad Kerr suggests it connects 64 to Sunset. Jordan Reedy will get total project cost to Mr. Blackwell. Mr. Reedy asked if anyone present from the DOT knew the amount, but no response.

Jordan Reedy stated that he's unsure if U-5947 has started. Says he believes that the contract is awarded, so it's in process, but no ground work yet.

Louise Hinton added that the cost was noted in previous minutes for the roundabout of 4 million.

Chair states we are fortunate to have that much work going on in our area at one time. Thanked DOT for looking out for our area.

5.2 Falls and Peachtree Bicycle Lanes.

Jordan Reedy gave the following report that when temp markings were out there, there was some public pushback.

He has received positive feedback since the permanent markings have been put in place.

- Coordinated by Rocky Mount and NCDOT Division 4
- From two-lane, one-way corridors to one-lane, one-way corridor with buffered bicycle lanes.
- As a result:
 - Traffic has slowed down
 - Safety has increased
 - No real travel delays noted
- Bike lanes were prioritized in the Rocky Mount Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan

- Will be instrumental in completing the connection between the upcoming Monk to Mill Trail, Battle Park, and the new Eastern Avenue Bicycle Boulevard
 - Connection from Falls Rd. all the way across town safely. Has made big impact.

Jordan Reedy stated he is impressed with the impact on the community and how the public has reacted.

Mrs. Hinton asked if bicycle lanes have been abused. Jordan explained yes, prior to permanent markings, people were used to the old road pattern, but not since the permanent markings. Thinks public is better understanding what is going on now with the road and bike lanes.

Richard Joyner added that there are now more cyclists coming into the area. Says it's been good for the farmer's market as well. Mr. Blackwell added that he has not received such glowing comments, and to the contrary, has witnessed near accidents. Thinks some cyclists need instruction on traffic standards. Has seen some near misses at left turn at Peachtree, maybe better signage is required. Understands difficult time getting people acclimated to new method of transportation. Says this is his ward, and he's gotten some feedback for what is going on there. Says residents in area are appreciative of traffic slow-down. Mr. Blackwell states that there is a disconnect in decorum with people who travel. Road disobedience by cyclists is a concern. Richard Joyner adds that there is a cycling club in RM and the Sheriff is involved with the club, and that he is doing trainings. Jordan Reedy asked that Richard Joyner provide more information to him about what is being done in terms of training and activities with the local bike club.

Chair says it's been positive for the Farmer's Market, had some cross-walks installed, so it's safer in that area. Brad Kerr added that markings were put in place for loading zone, and it's still misused with people parking in the loading zone area.

Mr. Blackwell asked about River Falls area, particularly at the roundabout – is it sufficient to control or corral new traffic, are lights being planned to address that? Mr. Mitchell states that based on statistics, roundabouts control speed and flow, have reduced accidents, safety improves. DOT is looking at installing more roundabouts.

Andy Brown added that capacity at roundabout should handle the volume of traffic for that new subdivision. Mr. Blackwell adds that slow-down in that area is a good thing.

Chair asked DOT what the 'green' in the cross-walk means – Jordan Reedy answered that it's a type of cross-walk for the cyclists. Brad Kerr further clarified that the green is an extension of the bike lane.

Chair asked for questions. None were asked.

5.3 Eastern Avenue Bicycle Boulevard.

Jordan Reedy gave the following report:

- Rocky Mount is wrapping up construction of the Eastern/Madison/Carolina Bicycle Boulevard
 - Consists of speed cushions and bicycle street markings (not a truly dedicated bike lane)
- Intent of the project is to
 - Slow traffic
 - Accommodate cyclists
 - Improve safety across the entire corridor
- More information will be shared at future meetings

Mr. Reedy added that he has spoken to some community residents around Eastern Ave, has received positive feedback, traffic has slowed down.

Chair added he drove over that area, and it was very nice.

Other Business

Chair asked to open this part of the agenda.

James Salmons responded to an earlier inquiry during the meeting that the cost for the Old Carriage Road project was 26.9 Million.

Mr. Blackwell requests at future meetings, when announcements are made about how much is being spent, can we get an MWBE breakdown as well, and also if we can include if any local companies are able to participate. Wants a diversified base of contractors. Are we being intentionally inclusive in contracting/bidding/awarding process?

Jordan Reedy responded that the DOT is the selecting party, and Chair adds the DOT can provide that information. James Salmons confirms and will provide that information in the future.

Jordan Reedy adds in regard to the By-Law – he forgot to mention that it was intended to offer hybrid/online meetings. Chair suggests that when you can attend in person, that it's better dialogue, but virtual can help out.

Chair congratulates Jordan on his recent wedding, and that he postponed his honeymoon to attend this meeting. The group wishes Jordan well.

Chair asks about Nashville, intersection 58 and 64 and amount of traffic, to start looking at traffic flow with the large number of restaurants going in there, and more coming.

Chair asked if each member can be given a current MPO map. Brad Kerr adds that it's available online. James Salmons adds that the current census is not yet available to create an updated map, if it's needed, so map is current.

Louise Hinton added that in regard to the Nashville intersection, that a roundabout was planned, but it was nixed.

Announcements

Chair announced the next TAC meeting will be November 21, 2022 at 4:30pm in this same place.

Adjournment

The TAC adjourned at 5:49pm.