

Meeting Record

MPO Officials Committee Meeting

Tuesday, June 23, 2009; 2:00 p.m.
Mayor's Conference Room
County/City Building, 555 South 10th Street
Lincoln, Nebraska

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Mayor Beutler; Bernie Heier, Ray Stevens, County Commission; Doug Emery, City Council; Rich Ruby (representing John Craig), NDOR.

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Brian Praeuner, StarTran; Trish Owen, Mayor's Office; Roger Figard, Public Works & Utilities; Kent Morgan, Michael Brienzo, David Cary and Michele Abendroth, Planning Department

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. The Nebraska Open Meeting Act was acknowledged by the Committee.

Vice Chair Bernie Heier stated that the first order of business is the election of a Chair and Vice Chair for the MPO Officials Committee. Stevens nominated Bernie Heier to serve as Chair, seconded by Emery. As no other nominations were submitted, Heier was elected Chair by acclamation.

Stevens nominated Doug Emery to serve as Vice Chair, seconded by Heier. As no other nominations were submitted, Emery was elected Vice Chair by acclamation.

1. Review and action on the draft minutes of the March 5, 2009 Officials Committee meeting.

Stevens moved approval of the March 5, 2009 Officials Committee meeting minutes, seconded by Emery. The motion carried 4-0 with Ruby abstaining.

2. Review and action on the Technical Advisory Committee *Project Selection Task Force* recommendations to the MPO on project funding recommendations for the Federal Transit Administration Job Access/Reverse Commute (Section 5316), New Freedom (Section 5317), and Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310) programs.

Mike Brienzo stated that the MPO is the recipient of federal funding for Job Access/Reverse Commute (JARC), New Freedom and Section 5310 funding. In order to receive these funds, the MPO must develop a coordinated human service transit plan, which is the basis for the distribution of these funds. A Task Force was set up to oversee the development of the program and the selection of projects. A call for projects was initiated in February of this year. This is

the second year of the program. There was a pre-proposal workshop in March. The Task Force was convened at the direction of the MPO Technical Committee. The Task Force reviewed all the proposals and submitted a recommendation to the Technical Committee, which forwarded that recommendation to the Officials Committee.

The applications for JARC funds include the following:

A proposal from the **Lincoln Literacy Council** for a transportation and voucher program for refugees and their preschool children and infants in traveling to and from work-readiness English classes. They are requesting \$15,500 which they will provide the local match of \$15,500.

The **StarTran Bus Route** project proposal is to use Job Access & Reverse Commute (JARC) funds to fill a gap in unmet transportation needs by providing transportation for low-income persons and persons with disabilities to access employment and job training opportunities. They have requested \$374,594 in program funds which will be matched with the same.

The third proposal is a Driver Voucher Program proposed by the **Center for People in Need** that will reimburse volunteer drivers on a per trip basis for providing eligible low-income workers with transportation to and from employment and employment-related activities. They have requested \$65,000 in funding and will provide the local match of \$65,000.

The Project Selection Task Force has recommended approval of all three of these proposals for JARC funding. These proposals total \$455,094. The MPO had \$473,000 available for this program which means we will carry over \$18,000 for the program next fiscal year.

The applications for New Freedom funds included one proposal from the **League of Human Dignity**. They are proposing to continue the newly developed “Extended Hours Service” program. This is intended to be an on-going program of providing accessible transportation services for persons with mobility limited. They are requesting \$44,440 in funding with matching funds of the same.

The Task Force has recommended approval of this single proposal. With \$113,103 in New Freedom funding available, this means there is a carry over of \$68,663 for the program next fiscal year.

Emery moved approval of the JARC and New Freedom projects as recommended, seconded by Stevens. The motion carried 5-0.

The third program under review is the Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities program or Section 5310 program. This program provides funds for the purchase of vehicles that provide transportation services for the elderly and people with disabilities. FTA provides 80% of the cost of the vehicles and the remaining 20% is to be provided through local funding sources. Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) writes the specifications and purchases these vehicles with costs reimbursed by FTA and the recipient. Proposals are limited to private nonprofit (501(c)(3)) corporations.

Brienzo stated that there were four proposals submitted for this Specialized Transportation

Program. Applications were received from the Seniors Foundation, Tabitha Inc., Madonna Foundation and Clark Jeary Retirement Community. Clark Jeary did not meet the required application criteria for a private nonprofit corporation so they could not be considered for an award. The Task Force has recommended that \$44,000 be awarded to each of the first three applications for the purchase of one vehicle each. If additional funding would become available within this fiscal year, the fourth vehicle is recommended to go to Madonna Foundation who could use two vehicles this year.

Stevens moved approval of the Section 5310 projects as recommended with the understanding that a second vehicle will be purchased for Madonna if the funds become available; the motion was seconded by Emery. The motion carried 5-0.

3. Review and action on a recommendation regarding 2009 Certification that the Transportation Planning Process for the Lincoln Metropolitan Area complies with applicable federal laws and regulations.

Brienzo stated that the federal highway bill requires the MPO to conduct an annual certification process to look at the transportation planning process and see if it is meeting all the regulations. There are ten regulations that we address and identify how we are meeting those regulations. The MPO has a coordinated transportation services plan, a public participation plan, an environment justice plan, a Long Range Transportation Plan, a Transportation Improvement Plan and a Unified Planning Program. The Federal Transit Administration and the Federal Highway Administration conducted a detailed review on May 5 and 6. It is the findings of staff that we are in compliance. This certifies that the planning process is addressing major issues facing Lincoln.

The Technical Committee has recommended that the MPO endorse the compliance evaluation report and certify the Planning Process for the planning area has met the requirements of the certification process.

Stevens moved to endorse the evaluation report and certify that there are no major deficiencies in the planning process and that the planning process is addressing the major issues facing the Lincoln MPO planning area; it was seconded by Emery. The motion carried 5-0.

4. Review and action on *revisions* to the current *FY 2009-2014 Transportation Improvement Program* to add two new projects to the program.

A. Branched Oak SRA, add project, Equestrian Trailhead and Trail Extension

Brienzo stated that this project is supported by the Games and Parks Commission. Estimated costs are \$64,300 with a local match of \$12,860. They would like to begin work on this project this summer.

B. Lincoln Wyuka Cemetery, add project, Wyuka Stables Renovation

Brienzo stated that this is an enhancement project. They have identified \$500,000 in federal transportation enhancement funds awarded by the Nebraska Department of Roads with a local match of \$128,860.

Brienzo stated that they would like to add these projects to the current TIP and with approval

will be included in the State TIP.

Stevens moved approval of the Branched Oak SRA and Lincoln Wyuka Cemetery amendments, seconded by Heier. The motion carried 5-0.

C. City of Lincoln: StarTran, amendments to adjust FTA-Transit Stimulus funding. Brienzo stated that the intent is to program all of the \$3,789,058 in federal stimulus funds. He presented a document detailing this funding.

Mayor Beutler moved approval of the Star Tran amendment, seconded by Stevens. The motion carried 5-0.

5. Review and action on the draft Lincoln City / Lancaster County ***FY 2010-2015 Transportation Improvement Program.***

Brienzo stated that the proposed Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is based on the proposed Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for the City as well as the proposed state and county programs. The goal is to reflect those programs in the TIP. The draft document has been reviewed by the MPO Technical Committee twice. It has also been to the Planning Commission for public hearing. The comments received at the public hearing are identified in the report. The Tech Committee is recommending this document for approval. Upon adoption by the Officials Committee, it will be forwarded to the state for inclusion in the state TIP.

Emery moved to adopt the draft FY 2010-2015 Transportation Improvement Program, seconded by Stevens. The motion carried 5-0.

6. Review and action on the ***Lincoln-Lancaster FY 2009-2010 Unified Planning Work Program*** for Transportation Planning within the Lincoln Metropolitan Area.

Brienzo stated that the Unified Planning Work Program is prepared annually to identify key objectives and planning activities that are to be done during the next year. Input is received from various departments and agencies in its development. Primary participants are Public Works, Planning, County Engineering and the Nebraska Department of Roads. This program has a planning focus but is also designed to coordinate planning activities with other departments and agencies. Elements include discussion on system operations, traffic counting, accident monitoring, as well as on transportation and corridor studies, and environmental studies or programs.

The major planning issues and areas of emphasis include the development of a congestion management process (CMP), transportation funding issues, environmental stewardship and coordination with those involved in goods and freight movement.

The two elements of federal funding for the Program are focused on continuing transportation planning and transit planning. The element on continuing transportation planning describes transportation planning activities that will be funded with PL and SPR funding. This forms the basic transportation planning program to carry out the required MPO planning requirements. The transit planning activities identify FTA funds for Section 5303 and 5307 program funds.

The program serves as the basis for grant applications for those funds.

Brienzo noted that this is a working document and is needed for budgeting purposes. This document has been recommended to the Officials Committee by the Technical Committee.

Stevens moved to adopt the 2009-10 Unified Planning Work Program, seconded by Emery. The motion carried 5-0.

7. Review of the Lincoln Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) **Management Plan and Organizational Structure.**

Kent Morgan stated that staff would like to get guidance from the Officials Committee about the structure of the MPO. He began by noting that the MPO is a federally mandated program and has been in place since the 1960's. We operate under a document called the Operations Plan. Staff feels it is time to make some changes to represent the new federal regulations. Traditionally, MPOs are comprised of Cities, Counties and Authorities. Our structure starts with the Mayor, then the Officials Committee, Planning Commission, Technical Committee and MPO staff.

The proposed changes include the recognition that the MPO Administrative staff is permanently assigned to the Planning Department; the Planning Director becomes the permanent secretary to Technical & Officials Committees; the Planning Director, PW&U Director, and County Engineer annually rotate chairmanship of Tech Committee; and the Tech Committee expands its role to engage the community.

Staff would also like to create four standing subcommittees and others as needed. These include MPO Administration, Programming and Funding, System Management & Operations, MultiModal, and Special Studies & Projects.

The MPO Administration Subcommittee has Mike Brienzo as lead staff with membership including Planning, Public Works, StarTran, County Engineering, and NDOR. It would meet at least quarterly. Work items include the Unified Planning Work Program, annual self-certification/review, federal Certification, prospectus, public participation plan, natural resource agencies, citizen engagement, and regulation review.

The Programming and Funding Subcommittee has Mike Brienzo as lead staff and membership would include Planning, Public Works, StarTran, Parks & Recreation, County Engineering, NDOR, Urban Development, and other agencies as appropriate. It would meet quarterly. Work items would include the TIP, project status and funding, funding and program review, and street system condition inventory.

The System Management & Operations Subcommittee has Randy Hoskins as lead staff. Membership would include Engineering Services, Planning Department, County Engineering, Health, and NDOR. It would meet at least quarterly. Work Items include the congestion management process, ITS, safety and security, crash study, and freight.

The Multi-Modal Transportation Subcommittee has David Cary as lead staff and membership

would include Planning, StarTran, Parks & Recreation, Public Works, and NDOR. It would meet at least quarterly. Work items include the transit system, multi-use trails, bicycle system, pedestrian system, safe routes to school and ADA transition plan for right-of-way facilities.

Staff is also proposing to change the membership of the Officials Committee. Current membership includes the Mayor, City Council Chair, two County Board and the Governor or designee. Staff is proposing that another City Council represented be added.

The next steps include preparing an updated MPO Management Plan for review by the Tech Committee and processing the revised MPO Management Plan through the MPO for adoption.

Committee members expressed their general agreement with the MPO structure.

8. Other topics for discussion.

There being no further business, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 3:08 p.m. The motion carried 5-0.

*** Please note that these minutes will not be formally approved until the next meeting of the Metropolitan Planning Organization Officials Committee. ***

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