

JOHNSON CITY MTPO
Minutes of the Executive Board and Executive Staff Meeting
Tuesday, December 13, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.
Location: Johnson City Transit Center, Training Room

Executive Board Present

Randy Trivette for the Honorable Mayor Joseph C. Wise, City of Johnson City, Chairman
The Honorable Mayor Jeff Broyles, Town of Bluff City
Logan Engle for the Honorable Mayor Curt Alexander, City of Elizabethton
Glenn Rosenoff for the Honorable Mayor Chuck Vest, Town of Jonesborough
The Honorable Mayor Joe Grandy, Washington County
Ronda Sawyer for the Honorable Governor Bill Lee, State of Tennessee
John Deakins, Jr., Tennessee County Highway Officials Association

Executive Board Not Present

The Honorable Mayor Kathy Bullen, Town of Unicoi
The Honorable Mayor Patty Woodby, Carter County

Executive Staff Present

Randy Trivette for Cathy Ball, City of Johnson City, Chairman
The Honorable Mayor Jeff Broyles, Town of Bluff City
Matthew Balough for Daniel Estes, City of Elizabethton
Glenn Rosenoff, Town of Jonesborough
Kim Kreckow for Eldonna Janutolo, Johnson City Transit
Doug Jones for Washington County Highway Department
Chase Milner for First Tennessee Development District
Ronda Sawyer, Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT)

Executive Staff Not Present

Debbie Kessler, Town of Unicoi
Roger Colbaugh, Carter County Highway Department
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

Others Attending

Representative Tim Hicks, Tennessee House District 6
Glenn Berry, Johnson City MTPO
Mary Butler, Johnson City MTPO
Phil Pindzola, City of Johnson City
Anthony Todd, City of Johnson City
Ambre Torbett, Sullivan County
Tracy Kissel, NET Trans
Tyler Gillenwater, Bristol MPO
Micah Bray, Bristol MPO
Melanie Fleenor, Bristol MPO
Christie Brown, TDOT Region 1
Trampus Grindstaff, TDOT District 17

Others Attending, continued:

Troy Ebbert, TDOT OCT

Jason Carder, Mattern & Craig

Hannah Plummer, KCI

Summary of Motions:

- **Approved** – Minutes from June 21, 2022 meeting;
- **Approved** – Resolution 2022-07 to adopt the Johnson City MTPO 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan;
- **Approved** – Resolution 2022-08 to self-certify the metropolitan transportation planning process for the Johnson City MTPO;
- **Approved** – Resolution 2022-09 to adopt the Fiscal Years 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP);
- **Endorsed** – Number One Priority for Knob Creek Road Project, from Marketplace Blvd to west of Mizpah Hills Drive, for the TDOT Three-Year Work Program; and
- **Approved** – Resolution 2022-10 to support 2019-2023 Safety (PM1) Performance Targets by TDOT.

Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 10:04 a.m. by the Chairman, Mr. Randy Trivette, standing in for the Honorable Mayor Joseph C. Wise.

Agenda Item 1: Chairman Mr. Trivette asked if there was any input from the public. There were no comments from the public. Mr. Glenn Berry made an announcement that Mayor Richard Bowling, a past member of the Executive Board, passed away on December 9. Mayor Jeff Broyles mentioned the details of the funeral services.

Agenda Item 2: Chairman Mr. Trivette moved to Item 2, to approve the minutes from the June 21, 2022 meeting.

Ms. Ronda Sawyer made a motion for the board to approve the minutes of the June 21, 2022 meeting. Mr. John Deakins Jr. seconded the motion.

All approved. **Motion carried.**

Agenda Item 3: Chairman Mr. Trivette moved to Item 3, to consider approval of a resolution to adopt the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).

Mr. Berry introduced Ms. Hannah Plummer of KCI, the consultant who was hired to update the MTP. Ms. Plummer presented the Executive Summary and a StoryMap to detail the process to update the MTP. Also made available was a final draft of the MTP. Please see below links to the documents viewed:

- 2050 MTP - https://jcmppo.org/mtp/2050/JohnsonCityMTPO_2050_MTP_Final.pdf
- Executive Summary - https://jcmppo.org/mtp/2050/2050MTPExecSummary_Final.pdf
- StoryMap - <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/41350f540b3f4a7b9cac5455c8cd8c0b>

The Honorable Mayor Joe Grandy asked about the inflation factor that was used for the annual growth. Ms. Plummer explained that 5% was used for the first five years of the plan and then 3.4% was used for the remaining years. Mr. Berry said these rates were a compromise with TDOT and FHWA to assist with predicting costs during these high inflation years.

Mayor Grandy made a motion for the board to approve the resolution to adopt the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. The Honorable Mayor Jeff Broyles seconded the motion.

All approved. **Motion carried.**

Agenda Item 4: Chairman Mr. Trivette moved to Item 4, to consider approval of a resolution to self-certify the metropolitan transportation planning process for the Johnson City MTPO that must accompany the adoption of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Mr. Berry explained that as a small MPO, we self-certify that we follow all federal laws and regulations that must be followed when carrying out the metropolitan planning process. This self-certification must accompany the adoption of the new TIP and will also be signed by TDOT. Mr. Berry announced that the Johnson City MTPO staff recently went through a planning status review with TDOT staff. Ms. Sawyer said the program received high marks. Mr. Berry thanked her for her assessment.

Mr. Deakins made a motion for the board to approve the resolution to self-certify the metropolitan transportation planning process. Ms. Sawyer seconded the motion.

All approved. **Motion carried.**

Agenda Item 5: Chairman Mr. Trivette moved to Item 5, to consider a resolution to adopt the Fiscal Years 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Mr. Berry went over the list of projects that are included in the new TIP. He discussed the projects that are funded with STBG-L, which is the allocation provided by TDOT to the MPO to program for projects. These local projects include a traffic signal for Jonesborough, downtown lighting and traffic signal grouping for Johnson City, Linear Path/Tweetsie Trail connection and two improvements to Overmountain Road in Elizabethton, and improvements to Christian Church Road and Old Gray Station Road. Then he covered TDOT's groupings for state roads, safety and national highway system projects. He also mentioned the transit projects for both Johnson City Transit and NET Trans. He concluded with the Transportation Alternatives projects, which includes the structural rehabilitation of the Elizabethton Historic Covered Bridge and a grouping of future awards. Below is a link to the final draft of the new TIP: https://jcmpo.org/TIP/2023_2026/Johnson%20City%20MTPO%20FY%202023-2026%20TIP.pdf.

Mr. Berry also explained that one major project was not included in the TIP, which is the Knob Creek project, from Marketplace Blvd and Mizpah Hills Drive. Further discussion on this project will occur in the next item.

Ms. Logan Engle made a motion for the board to approve the resolution to adopt the Fiscal Years 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program. Mr. Glenn Rosenoff seconded the motion.

All approved. **Motion carried.**

Agenda Item 6: Chairman Mr. Trivette moved to Item 6, to consider approval to endorse the proposed project of Knob Creek Road, from Marketplace Blvd to west of Mizpah Hills Drive, as the number one priority.

Mr. Berry explained that each year, TDOT asks the MPOs to rank projects for inclusion in the Three-Year Work Program. The process is going to work a little differently, in that once a project is added to the Work Program, TDOT will be committed to seeing that project through all phases to completion. The MPOs will no longer be asked to rank each phase of a project.

The Johnson City MTPO only has one project to rank this year, the Knob Creek Road project from Marketplace Blvd to west of Mizpah Hills Drive. This section of the Knob Creek project is still a priority with the Johnson City MTPO. Currently, the City of Johnson City is managing the project through the Preliminary Engineering and Right-of-Way phases. Soon, the project will be handed off to TDOT to manage the Construction Phase, possibly by April 2023. Once that handoff happens, TDOT can inform the MTPO how much to put into the TIP for Construction through the TIP amendment process. This project is a companion project to the Knob Creek Road section from Boones Creek Road to Mizpah Hills Drive that is in the IMPROVE Act and will become a state route. Mr. Troy Ebbert explained that the first section that Johnson City is managing must be constructed first, before the second section can function as a state route.

Mr. Berry discussed multiple changes happening to the way that TDOT delivers projects. He mentioned they are trying to accelerate how fast projects get to construction to within five years. He showed a video clip about IPD. Below is the link to the video:

<https://youtu.be/5CcCGN5blog>

Ms. Christine Brown with TDOT Region 1 explained that two projects have used the IPD process. Mr. Rosenoff asked if IPD was a spin-off from what other states have done. Ms. Brown said yes. Mr. Ebbert explained that the process will have a single project manager from the start of a project to the end, from planning through construction. Chairman Mr. Trivette asked if this process will be centralized and Mr. Ebbert said the intent is that the project management will be located in the regional offices. Mr. Trivette responded that he is concerned this will create more bottleneck issues. Mr. Phil Pindzola asked how is money allocated for projects. Mr. Ebbert explained that once a project hits the Three-Year Work Program, it should begin in that three-year time frame.

Ms. Ambre Torbett asked if TDOT was hiring more people. Mr. Ebbert said yes, but they are also expanding consultant groups. Ms. Torbett explained her concerns with staffing turnover and that its hard to get in contact with TDOT staff about project issues, when that person keeps changing.

Chairman Mr. Trivette expressed his concerns that even though the Executive Board votes to endorse this project as the number one priority, it still may not make it to the Three-Year Work Program. Mr. Berry explained that this is just one step in the formula to prioritize projects for the entire state. MPO endorsement counts for about 11% of the formula. The Regional offices also have input for another 11% percent. There are also operational and safety criteria to round out the formula.

The Honorable Representative Tim Hicks explained that it is good to know more about the project that the Executive Board is prioritizing and what it means to them. Representative Hicks is focused on advocating for projects in Northeast Tennessee starting in January 2023. He can't guarantee a project will receive funding, but he can try to fight for it. He emphasized that Commissioner Eley wanted to see projects ready to go to construction, if a local jurisdiction was managing the PE & ROW phase before they were turned over to TDOT to complete.

Mayor Grandy made a motion for the board to endorse the Knob Creek project, from Marketplace Blvd to west of Mizpah Hills Drive, as the number one priority for the Johnson City MTPO. Mr. Rosenoff seconded the motion.

All approved. **Motion carried.**

Agenda Item 7: Chairman Mr. Trivette moved to Item 7, to consider approval of a resolution to support 2019-2023 Safety (PM1) Performance Targets by TDOT.

Mr. Berry displayed the safety targets that were adopted by TDOT. He said we should continue to support those targets. Unfortunately, the rate of fatalities has gone up. The MTPO has recently received access to a new software from AASHTO that will display where crashes occur. He also mentioned that Anthony Todd and Tyler Morris are working on a similar version for Johnson City. In the new year, the MTPO staff will begin reviewing this data to identify areas that need safety improvements. Crashes are increasing on I-26. He also mentioned that we need to support our first responders with incident management training and clearing crashes in a safe and timely manner. Doing so will help reduce the rate of secondary crashes.

Ms. Sawyer made a motion for the board to approve the resolution to support the 2019-2023 Safety (PM1) Performance Targets by TDOT. Mr. Deakins seconded the motion.

All approved. **Motion carried.**

Agenda Item 8: Chairman Mr. Trivette moved to Item 8, the Annual Listing of Obligated Projects.

Mr. Berry provided information on the Annual Listing of Obligated Projects, which includes a cover sheet that summarizes the funding that was obligated by the federal government for projects in the region. This list includes both projects funded by FHWA and FTA (transit). He mentioned that funding amounts in red means those funds were returned to the funding pot of whence they came during a project's closeout.

Agenda Item 9: Chairman Mr. Trivette moved to Item 9, Other Business.

Mr. Berry announced that the Johnson City MTPO will begin a new Unified Planning Work Program next year. He asked if there are any planning projects that anyone is interested in doing, to submit those to him. Also, he mentioned that additional performance targets are forthcoming for pavements and bridges (PM2) and system performance (PM3). TDOT is currently finalizing those targets and the MPO has 180 days after that to adopt them.

Mr. Berry introduced Mr. Ebbert to explain more information about the "Build with Us" initiative from TDOT, which will introduce new ways to improve transportation conditions across a growing state. He mentioned choice lanes that can be built as a partnership with private parties and drivers can pay a fee to use them. The fee can increase according to congestion conditions. Mr. Ebbert said TDOT Commissioner Butch Eley will be coming to discuss the initiative with the MPOs in the spring. Mr. Berry played a video clip from TDOT:

<https://youtu.be/QcGQYONMoNM>

Representative Hicks explained that the choice lanes will be for large urban areas, like Nashville, as a way to let the residents of those areas pay for improvements where they live. This will free up funds to help other areas of the state with projects.

Mr. Deakins thanked Representative Hicks for attending the meeting and invited him to attend future meetings.

Adjourn: There being no further business, Chairman Mr. Trivette adjourned the meeting at 11:36 a.m.