

JOHNSON CITY MTPO
Minutes of the Executive Board Meeting
Tuesday, August 24, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.
Location: Johnson City Transit Center, Training Room

Executive Board Present

M. Denis Peterson for the Honorable Mayor Joseph C. Wise, City of Johnson City, Chairman
Logan Engle for the Honorable Mayor Curt Alexander, City of Elizabethton
Ashley Shelton for the Honorable Mayor Kathy Bullen, Town of Unicoi
The Honorable Mayor Joe Grandy, Washington County
Ronda Sawyer for the Honorable Governor Bill Lee, State of Tennessee
The Honorable Mayor Irene Wells, Town of Bluff City

Executive Board Not Present

The Honorable Mayor Chuck Vest, Town of Jonesborough
The Honorable Mayor Patty Woodby, Carter County
Johnny Deakins, Jr., Tennessee County Highway Officials Association

Others Attending

Glenn Berry, Johnson City MTPO
Mary Butler, Johnson City MTPO
Phil Pindzola, City of Johnson City
Anthony Todd, City of Johnson City
Calvin Clifton, Mattern & Craig

Summary of Motions:

- **Approved** – Minutes from April 27, 2021 meeting; and
- **Approved – Resolution 2021-08** – Approved resolution to adopt the Fiscal Years 2022-2023 Unified Planning Work Program.

Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 10:09 a.m. by the Acting Chairman, Mr. M. Denis “Pete” Peterson, standing in for the Honorable Mayor Joseph Wise. Mr. Peterson proceeded to call the meeting into order and Mr. Glenn Berry made a roll call of attendance.

Roll Call No. 1 for Attendance:

Mayor Curt Alexander, who is represented by Ms. Logan Engle: Present; Mayor Kathy Bullen, who is represented by Ms. Ashley Shelton: Present; Mr. John Deakins, Jr.: Not Present; Mayor Joe Grandy: Present; Governor Bill Lee, who is represented by Ms. Ronda Sawyer: Present; Mayor Irene Well: Present; Mayor Patty Woodby: Not Present; Mayor Chuck Vest: Not Present; and Chairman Mayor Joseph Wise, represented by Mr. Pete Peterson: Present.

A quorum has been determined.

Agenda Item 1: Chairman Mr. Peterson asked if there was any input from the public. It was stated that there were none.

Agenda Item 2: The minutes from the April 27, 2021 meeting were reviewed.

Ms. Ronda Sawyer made a motion for the board to approve the minutes of the April 27, 2021 meeting. The Honorable Mayor Irene Wells seconded the motion. Chairman Mr. Peterson asked for a roll call vote.

Roll Call No. 2 for Agenda Item 2:

Mayor Curt Alexander, who is represented by Ms. Logan Engle: Yes; Mayor Kathy Bullen, who is represented by Ms. Ashley Shelton: Yes; Mr. John Deakins, Jr.: Not Present; Mayor Joe Grandy: Yes; Governor Bill Lee, who is represented by Ms. Ronda Sawyer: Yes; Mayor Irene Well: Yes; Mayor Patty Woodby: Not Present; Mayor Chuck Vest: Not Present; and Chairman Mayor Joseph Wise, represented by Mr. Pete Peterson: Yes.

All approved. **Motion carried.**

Agenda Item 3: Chairman Mr. Peterson moved to Item 3, for the Executive Board to consider approval of adopting the Fiscal Years 2022-2023 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

Mr. Berry explained that the UPWP covers two years and lays out the planning products that will be undertaken over that time frame. The short-range item is the new Transportation Improvement Program, which will be started this year. There are several long-range items. He stated the MTPO is finishing up with the Transportation Management Area Study, and we are beginning to hire a consultant to update the long-range transportation plan. Also, the MTPO is partnering with the state to update the Regional ITS Architecture Plan and the state will match the MTPO’s PL funds to complete the project. For the Multimodal section, the highlight is the update to the Coordinated Plan.

Ms. Sawyer asked when would the rural / urban designations be released. Mr. Berry responded we expect the U.S. Census Bureau to release the designations around 2 years after the actual census, which would be around February of 2022, which is coming up soon. He went on to say that the U.S. Census Bureau is running a little behind and it could be spring.

Ms. Ashley Shelton asked if we decide to become a TMA. Mr. Berry and Ms. Sawyer both stated no, the Urbanized Area designation and population were determined by the U.S. Census Bureau. And if the

population is 200,000 people or more, the area will be designated as a Transportation Management Area by FHWA with a notice in the Federal Register. Mr. Peterson said we had been aware of this since the 2010 census and it is very possible the U.S. Census Bureau will combine the Kingsport Urbanized Area and the Johnson City Urbanized Area, which would probably put us over 200,000 in population. Ms. Sawyer asked about the population of the Bristol Urbanized Area and if it had grown. Mr. Berry stated the Bristol Urbanized Area was in danger of losing population and that none of the counties in southwest Virginia grew in population, but rather lost population. He further stated he thought there was a provision that allowed an existing MPO to remain an MPO if its population dropped below the current threshold of 50,000 people, if the Governor and everyone agreed, but that needs to be confirmed with FHWA.

Ms. Ronda Sawyer made a motion for the board to approve the adoption of the Fiscal Years 2022-2023 Unified Planning Work Program. Ms. Logan Engle seconded the motion. Chairman Mr. Peterson asked for a roll call vote.

Roll Call No. 3 for Agenda Item 3:

Mayor Curt Alexander, who is represented by Ms. Logan Engle: Yes; Mayor Kathy Bullen, who is represented by Ms. Ashley Shelton: Yes; Mr. John Deakins, Jr.: Not Present; Mayor Joe Grandy: Yes; Governor Bill Lee, who is represented by Ms. Ronda Sawyer: Yes; Mayor Irene Well: Yes; Mayor Patty Woodby: Not Present; Mayor Chuck Vest: Not Present; and Chairman Mayor Joseph Wise, represented by Mr. Pete Peterson: Yes.

All approved. **Motion carried.**

Agenda Item 4: Chairman Mr. Peterson move to Item 4, which is an update on the status of projects in the Fiscal Years 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Mr. Berry showed an Excel spreadsheet that listed the projects currently in the TIP and their status. He also provided a handout to the members. Mr. Berry stated that Elizabethton is back on track in bringing several of their projects forward, including Safe Routes to School and the Linear Path projects. These projects are in the NEPA/environmental process and it will take time to get through this phase. The Covered Bridge is also in the environmental process and is estimated to be complete in a year.

Johnson City is closing out several projects, most notably the Indian Ridge Road project. He also stated that there was good news on the Knob Creek Road project, that TDOT will be taking over the project, as it connects with the new state route project from Mizpah Hills Drive to SR-354 (Boones Creek Road). The Bluff City signal at SR-34/11E and Industrial Park Road is under construction. The Elizabethton signal at Broad Street and SR-37/19E has now went out for bid twice in combination with the SR-91 project, and unfortunately, the cost is much higher than estimated. It remains to be seen what TDOT will decide to do on these two projects. Lastly, the I-26 Exit 17 diverging diamond is now complete.

Agenda Item 5: Chairman Mr. Peterson stated the last item on the agenda is Other Business and the first part is an update from MTPO Staff.

Mr. Berry announced that he will schedule a TIP workshop with the Executive Staff in the next few months, after he goes on vacation on September 18-25. Also, our next meeting will be on September 28 to host a presentation by the KCI consultant staff on the TMA Study. Mr. Berry asked if the Board would like to have this meeting remotely, as there are no action items scheduled for this meeting. The Board agreed to have it in person, if the room is large enough.

Mr. Berry stated that there were no announcements from the Tennessee Division of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Ms. Sawyer with TDOT also spoke and stated that the State of Tennessee will be updating the state long range plan and for the members to be thinking about comments on the plan.

Mayor Wells asked the members if the traffic signal at Main Street in Bluff City could be replaced. Mr. Berry recommended that Mayor Wells contact Mr. Matt Cate at the Tennessee Transportation Assistance Program at the University of Tennessee for advice on what upgrades would be needed and to ensure the signal still met warrants due to the low traffic volumes. Mr. Berry stated the MUTCD manual had several warrants for traffic signals and they had used TTAP in the past for Elizabethton for a traffic signal warrant analysis.

Adjourn: There being no further business, Chairman Mr. Peterson adjourned the meeting at 10:54 a.m.