

KALAMAZOO AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY POLICY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the February 28, 2024 Meeting

CALL TO ORDER

The February 28, 2024 Policy Committee Meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. at Metro in Kalamazoo, by Chairperson Thompson.

INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions were made by all present.

ROLL CALL

Meeting attendance was recorded on the sign-in sheet.

MEMBERS PARTICIPATING

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| Curt Aardema | Central County Transportation Authority |
| Doug Burleson | Van Buren County Road Commission |
| John Gisler | Kalamazoo County |
| Todd Hackenberg | Village of Lawton |
| Robert Henderson | Van Buren Public Transit |
| Jeff Heppler | Village of Augusta |
| Carl Keller | Village of Vicksburg |
| Tracy Locey | Brady Township |
| Pat McGinnis | City of Portage |
| Robin Madaras | City of Parchment |
| Sherine Miller | Kalamazoo Township |
| Pete Pfeiffer | Michigan Department of Transportation, TSC |
| Aditya Rama | Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority |
| Jeff Sorensen | Cooper Township |
| Paul Sotherland | KATS Citizens' Advisory Committee |
| Randy Thompson, Chair | Comstock Township |
| Bret Witkowski | Van Buren County Road Commission |

MEMBERS ABSENT

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| Heather Bowden | Michigan Department of Transportation, Planning |
| Marsha Drouin | Richland Township |
| Joanna Johnson | Road Commission of Kalamazoo County |
| Judy Lemon | City of Galesburg |
| Chris Praedel | City of Kalamazoo |
| Don Ulsh | Schoolcraft Township |
| Jerry VanderRoest | Charleston Township |

OTHERS PARTICIPATING

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| Tom Hohm | Bike Friendly Kalamazoo |
| Sean McBride | Central County Transportation Authority |
| Megan Mickelson | Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study |
| Fred Nagler | Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study |
| Elizabeth Rumick | Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study |
| Paul Selden | Bike Friendly Kalamazoo |
| Steve Stepek | Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study |
| Ali Townsend | Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study |

CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were no changes or additions to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Sorensen moved, and it was duly seconded by Locey, **“to approve the agenda of the February 28, 2024 Policy Committee Meeting.”** MOTION CARRIED.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Paul Selden, Chair at Large of Bike Friendly Kalamazoo (BFK), introduced BFK’s new President, Tom Hohm. Hohm thanked attendees for years of advocating for biking and continuing efforts.

CONSENT AGENDA

- ACCEPTANCE OF THE TREASURER REPORT
- ACCEPTANCE OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT
- ACCEPTANCE OF THE SOUTHCENTRAL MICHIGAN PLANNING COUNCIL REPORT
- APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 31, 2024 MEETING

Heppler moved, and it was duly seconded by Aardema, **“to accept and approve the items on the Consent Agenda.”** MOTION CARRIED.

TITLE VI PLAN DRAFT DISCUSSION

Steppek reminded attendees that the Title VI plan updates were mentioned at prior meetings. As reported in the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) Certification Review, new Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration guidelines require all subrecipients of federal funds statewide to refer any Title VI complaints to agencies one level up as opposed to self-investigating them. Therefore, KATS complaints would be referred to the Michigan Department of Transportation. KATS Title VI plan included in the meeting packet has been updated to reflect this complaint process change. The plan is out for public comment with anticipated adoption at next month's meeting.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION UPDATES

Aardema reported earlier this week presentations were made to the Central County Transportation Authority (CCTA) / Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority (KCTA) board by River North Transit, part of Via Transportation, the vendor selected for the microtransit pilot program. River North has valuable experience with similar programs around the state. With their insight and guidance, boundaries, and sections for the microtransit program have been established. The three microtransit sections will be roughly aligned around the perimeter of the Metro fixed-route area on

the west side, south side, and east side. Vehicles would stay within their section boundaries, so they are ready to go on short notice. The program is designed for movement within each region as opposed to between regions. The vehicle could connect a rider to the fixed route bus line. The 18-month pilot program will start with seven vehicles. Three in the south region, and two in each the west, and east regions. The vehicles will be new or newer leased vehicles with some ADA access. The External Relations Committee selected Metro Link as the name for the new service. Details on branding, marketing, and fare structure are being planned. Rama added that as a demand service, Metro Link will be used by a customer base different from those that use the current prescheduled Metro Connect service. The impact of the proposed \$40 million dollar public transportation cut in the state budget was discussed. McBride provided additional information on other municipalities using microtransit and how the service can more fully meet public transportation needs. Further discussion ensued.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

As outlined in the memo in the meeting packet, Stepek pointed out that Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) is participating with West Michigan Trails to update a regional recreational trails plan. To voice input on trail plans, you are invited to attend the meeting hosted by KATS at Metro on March 20, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. KATS finalized Certification Review Document was received yesterday, so it was too late to include in today's meeting. There were no findings, two commendations, and ten recommendations. KATS is already well on the way to covering all recommendations. Progress will be shared at next month's meeting. Representatives from the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration will make a presentation on the review at a later date. Email Stepek if you are interested in taking the KATS 101 training course. The other commendation KATS received was on the work staff is doing on the Complete Streets Implementation Plan. Work has started on the Prioritization Subcommittee. Changes will be incorporated into the KATS prioritization process to prepare for the call for the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) this fall.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business was brought forth.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Selden, Chair at Large of Bike Friendly Kalamazoo (BFK), announced that BFK's new Director is Isaac Green who is also on the BFK board and is the Executive Director of the Open Roads Bike Program. Selden provided a handout with more detailed information. This year's Kalamazoo Bike Week will be held May 11, 2024 through May 18, 2024. Upon request, Selden has lots of literature aimed at motorist and bicyclist safety available for agencies. Related signs are also available. If your agency would like to participate or be recognized at this years Bike Week, fill out and return the form to Selden. The Kalamazoo Bike Week Orientation and Planning Meeting will be held on Webex on March 26, 2024 from 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Reach out to Selden if you have examples of business facades that could be used to expand the bike mural program. The Bike Boosters Mini Grant applications are due April 2, 2024. Many organizations have received the benefit of the grants in past years for such things as bike racks or bike lights. Hohm added there will be a bike show at Bronson Park on May 11, 2024.

MEMBER COMMENTS

Sotherland announced the March Kalamazoo Bike Club Cycling Shorts program will feature Pat McGinnis from the City of Portage speaking on 'Pedaling in Portage.' The free event, open to the public, will be held March 12, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. at the Oshtemo Township City Center.

Heppler reported plans are underway for the Village of Augusta 2024 Washington Street bridge project. M-96 improvements are being planned for this summer. The Parks Department has a Request for Proposal out for the design of the trail expansion from Galesburg to Ft. Custer.

Contact Gisler if you are interested in Avelo Airline \$25 dollar-off coupons for roundtrip flights from Kalamazoo to Orlando taken through the end of June 2024. Aardema, who also serves on the airport board, added Avelo increased service to Orlando from two days a week to three days a week.

Burleson reported the Van Buren County Road Commission has numerous projects out for bid. The five-year road plan annual update will be accepted at the next commissioner meeting.

Since a City of Kalamazoo representative was not present, Aardema mentioned the Central County Transportation Authority (CCTA) / Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority (KCTA) board was briefed on upcoming City of Kalamazoo projects. Impactful construction will be on Whites Road, northbound Westnedge Road, Howard, and the Inkster Bridge. Detours for Metro bus routes impacted by the projects are posted on their website.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairperson Thompson adjourned the meeting at 9:40 a.m.

The next meeting of the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study Policy Committee will be held on Wednesday, March 27, 2024 at 9:00 a.m.

Approved 3/27/24 (er)