



**KALAMAZOO AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES OF APRIL 9, 2009**

The April meeting of the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study Technical Committee was called to order at 9:09 a.m. at the Kalamazoo County Road Commission lower level conference room. Meeting attendance was recorded on the sign-in sheet.

MEMBERS PRESENT

John Byrnes (Chair), Shahid Abbas, Michael Bippley, Brian Burlingham, Rick Fowler, Darrell Harden, Keith Hernandez, Tom Hohm, Lotta Jarnefelt, Cheri Lutz, Fred Nagler, Jodi Stefforia and Dallas Williams.

MEMBERS ABSENT

Muhammad Arif, Christopher Barnes, Dennis Durham, Chris Forth, Dale Hein, and Bill Schomisch.

OTHERS PRESENT

Marty Dodge, Dan Lewis, Paul MacNellis, Michelle O'Neill, Nicole Dalman, Kathy Schultz, Jon Start and Steve Stepek.

MINUTES FROM THE MARCH 12, 2009 MEETING

Kathy Schultz noted that Frank Szopo called to correct the March minutes, as he was not in attendance for that meeting.

Motion by the Technical Committee, "***to approve the corrected minutes from March 12, 2009.***" Motion approved.

POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT

Jon Start gave the overview of the March 25th Policy Committee meeting. The committee took action to approve amendments to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) which included Kalamazoo County Road Commission's and Metro Transit's projects. They also approved KATS document retention policy, safety projects, and high risk rural road projects. Dennis Durham gave a presentation on the River Reach Boulevard project. The Policy Committee indicated that they wanted to provide federal funding for the River Reach Boulevard project.

The Policy Committee supported staff's recommendation that accounting and auditing procedures be handled by two accounting firms. There has been interest expressed in looking into improvements to the US-131 at US-131 Business Route interchange again.

Staff discussed briefly the past actions on this interchange concept. In the past, a transportation benefit cost study and an economic benefit study looked at improved access to the area at US-131 and US-131 BR only. Congressman Upton designated \$1.5 million in an earmark for early preliminary and preliminary engineering at this interchange. Very little of this funding has been spent. Staff believes that a worthwhile project to use these funds that would be within the requirements of the earmark would be one that looks at various concepts of the interchange to determine which is most viable. If funding was sufficient, it might also include analysis and projection on traffic pattern changes. Bobbi Welke from MDOT will give a presentation on the National Environmental Policy Act as it might apply to this interchange project at the April 29th Policy Committee meeting.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS - None

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)

Jon Start told the committee that there were amendments that were being requested for 2009 projects. These are: Kalamazoo Valley River Trailway, Riverview Drive from Mosel Avenue to G Avenue; Kal-Haven Trail from 10th Street west; Portage Northwest Trailway Extension; I-94 Bridge over the RailRoad construction supervision; I-94 bridge over Portage Road emergency repairs, and an increase in the CMAQ project on M-43 at 11 signal locations.

Motion by the Technical Committee to ***“to approve FY 2009 Transportation Improvement Program amendments and recommend Policy Committee approval.”*** Motion approved.

Mr. Start told the committee that the Policy Committee approved two Kalamazoo County Road Commission projects and also approved several public transit projects using ARRA funds. The TIP Subcommittee met and developed funding for FY 2011. Parchment agreed to spread their funding over FY 2011 and FY 2012. The remaining STP funding would be used for City of Kalamazoo, City of Portage, and Road Commission projects in 2011 and 2012.

Jon told the group that staff had discussed a modification to the brochures used to notify the public of TIP projects. Instead, there would be a notice printed in the Kalamazoo Gazette and each municipality would receive a notice to post. There also would be a “public notice” section on the KATS website, with a comment section for residents to complete. This topic brought some discussion among the group, and it was decided that KATS staff would meet with local agencies and research further how to contact the public.

LOCAL BRIDGE PROJECTS RESOLUTIONS

The Kalamazoo County Road Commission and the City of Portage are applying for Local Bridge Program funding. They are requesting support for their applications. Tom Hohm spoke about the five local bridge fund applications that the Kalamazoo County Road Commission is seeking approval. These include; 40th Street bridge over Little Portage Creek, River Street Bridge over the Kalamazoo River, TS Avenue bridge over the Portage River, 8th Street bridge over Amtrak, and S Avenue bridge over the Portage River. The City of Portage also had a resolution for the Kilgore Road bridge over Portage Creek.

Motion by the Technical Committee, ***“to approve the resolutions as presented.”*** Motion approved.

2035 TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Jon Start asked the group if they had any suggestions or modifications to the 2030 Transportation Plan Goals and Objectives that might be incorporated in the 2035 Plan before it went to the Citizens Advisory Committee. No one expressed any changes so on April 16th, the Citizens Advisory Committee, as well as the public, will be asked for their input.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION UPDATE

There was not a representative of Metro Transit present, but Jon Start did mention seeing yard signs for millage support recently. On Tuesday April 14th from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. Metro Transit will be doing a socio-economic survey to encompass all riders. This will give Metro Transit a better idea of who is riding busses and their demographics. This survey was last completed in 2003.

STATUS REPORTS

Dallas Williams said the Milham Road from Oakland Drive to Angling Road project is under contract and scheduled to start at the end of April. The City of Portage's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) projects will be let on June 5th.

Fred Nagler reported that the City of Kalamazoo's ARRA projects will be let in August. The 2009 STP projects on Lovell Street and on Bronson Boulevard will start Monday April 13th. The City's Congestion Mitigation Air Quality project is ready for a July letting.

Cheri Lutz told the group that the Village of Schoolcraft's ARRA project will be let in July.

Tom Hohm reported that the Kalamazoo County Road Commission's project on 43rd Street from R Avenue to Q Avenue has begun. The Road Commission's ARRA projects are set for letting in August or September. The CMAQ Sprinkle Road corridor project has also begun. Progress is being made with the Kalamazoo River Valley Trailway.

Michelle O'Neill told the committee that MDOT's Westnedge Avenue at Crosstown Parkway project will start at the end of April.

Michael Bippley said that MDOT is working to re-time the lights on M-43 between 9th Street and Berkley. Interconnection of these signals will begin in the fall of 2009.

Lotta Jarnefelt said the aerial fly overs for the county pictometry are complete. The entire county is in 12" resolution, with 10 units in major urban areas in 4" resolution. Training is available if interested.

Keith Hernandez told the group about the approval of the Portage Creek Corridor reuse plan. This includes areas from Portage Road to Burdick Street and Stockbridge Avenue to Cork Street. Residents voted to use the Allied paper site as open space, with progression into office/business development and a trailway along the creek. For more information, please visit www.portagecreekreuse.com. The planning commission approved the Downtown Comprehensive Plan.

AGENCY TIME SHEETS

Jon Start reminded the committee to get their time sheets in to KATS at the beginning of each month.

OTHER NEW BUSINESS

Jon Start handed out a timeline for ARRA projects and spoke about critical dates for getting projects in for obligation. Beginning in July, more ARRA funding may become available. Any additional projects must be obligated by March 2010.

There was brief discussion and agreement that the ARRA funds should be treated like STP funds by KATS and be capped.

KATS will be meeting soon with agencies to review next year's Unified Work Program and identify projects that will be included in it.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairperson Byrnes adjourned the meeting at 10:10 a.m.