

# KALAMAZOO AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY POLICY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the December 20, 2023 Meeting

## CALL TO ORDER

The December 20, 2023 Policy Committee Meeting was called to order at 9:04 a.m. at Metro in Kalamazoo, by Chairperson Thompson.

## INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions were made by all present. Greg Kinney, Van Buren County, joined the meeting virtually.

## ROLL CALL

Meeting attendance was recorded on the sign-in sheet.

## MEMBERS PARTICIPATING

Curt Aardema	Central County Transportation Authority
Heather Bowden	Michigan Department of Transportation, Planning
Rob Britigan	City of Parchment
Marsha Drouin	Richland Township
Todd Hackenberg	Village of Lawton
Jeff Heppler	Village of Augusta
Sarah Joshi	Central County Transportation Authority
Greg Kinney	Van Buren County Road Commission
Judy Lemon	City of Galesburg
Pat McGinnis	City of Portage
Sherine Miller	Kalamazoo Township
Pete Pfeiffer	Michigan Department of Transportation, TSC
Chris Praedel	City of Kalamazoo
Aditya Rama	Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority
Jeff Sorensen	Cooper Township
Paul Sotherland	KATS Citizens' Advisory Committee
Jodi Stefforia	Comstock Township
Randy Thompson, Chair	Comstock Township
Don Ulsh	Schoolcraft Township
Jerry VanderRoest	Charleston Township

## MEMBERS ABSENT

Tim Frisbie	Village of Vicksburg
John Gisler	Kalamazoo County
Robert Henderson	Van Buren Public Transit
Joanna Johnson	Road Commission of Kalamazoo County
Randy Smith	Brady Township

## OTHERS PARTICIPATING

Sean McBride	Central County Transportation Authority
Sean McCann	Michigan State Senate
Megan Mickelson	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Fred Nagler	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Julie Rogers	Michigan House of Representatives
Elizabeth Rumick	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Jodi Stefforia	Comstock Township
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

Heppler moved, and it was duly seconded by Sorensen, **“to approve the agenda of the December 20, 2023 Policy Committee Meeting.”** MOTION CARRIED.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

Sorensen welcomed Michigan House of Representative Julie Rogers and State Senator Sean McCann. Members thanked them for attending.

## 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 NOVEMBER 29, 2023 MEETING

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

## FY 2023-2026 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AMENDMENTS

Referring to the amendments enclosed in the meeting packet, Stepek explained the majority of the projects are traffic safety projects. Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study is excited to see the regionally significant US-131 at US-131 BR interchange project that has been discussed for nearly 20 years come to fruition. The project is required to go through the federal process even though it is not funded with any federal money. It is funded fully with state funds. Stepek clarified for Britigan that the project is shown twice on the TIP because the Michigan Department of Transportation separates projects by phase. One project refers to the right-of-way, the other refers to the construction phase. Members echoed Miller’s thanking State Representative Rogers and Senator McCann for assistance in obtaining funding for this project.

Sorensen moved, and it was duly seconded by Drouin, **“to approve the FY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program Amendments.”** MOTION CARRIED.

## **2024 SAFETY PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

Steppek noted the safety performance measure information was provided in the meeting packet. Steppek reminded attendees that every year Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) adopts the statewide safety performance targets. The target is not a goal. The goal is zero deaths in all categories. However, the target or prediction of fatalities and serious injuries is increasing. KATS Technical Committee is revising the verbiage of our resolution of support to show decreasing trends of death and injury in our Metropolitan Planning Organization region. Once the resolution is approved by the Technical Committee, it will be presented for adoption here.

## **METRO MICROTRANSIT PRESENTATION**

After opening remarks, Sean McBride of Metro introduced Sarah Joshi, Metro's Deputy Director of On-Demand Services for the presentation. Joshi explained what Microtransit is, the benefits of it, a map of the planned service area, and a projected timeline for the service. Metro released the Request for Proposals in October. A vendor is anticipated to be approved by the board in January. The Microtransit pilot program is planned to start in April 2024. McBride and Joshi answered questions relating to branding, drivers, vehicles, fares, sustainability, and other details.

## **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION UPDATES**

Aardema reported Metro's External Relations Committee participated in the Maple Hill Holiday Parade. The Central County Transportation Authority (CCTA) / Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority (KCTA) board approved the purchase of four new 40-foot diesel buses. The board approved an update of technology in middle-age buses. Rama added the Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority approved battery replacement on some hybrid buses and adjusted safety targets.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

The updates are included in the meeting packet. Steppek added his biannual review is underway. Forward any comments or questions to Chair Randy Thompson. The Finance and Personnel Committee will meet in early 2024. The Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study Technical Committee elected new officers. Jodi Stefforia, Comstock Township and Anna Horner, Oshtemo Township are the new Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

No new business was brought forth.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No citizens' comments were made.

## **MEMBER COMMENTS**

In response to Sotherland's question, McBride and Aardema answered there is a small, free Amtrak short term parking lot adjacent to the railroad tracks off Rose Street. When traveling west on Kalamazoo Avenue, there is a small turn-off area for transportation drop-offs.

McGinnis reported the City of Portage East Central Avenue trail construction is out for bid. Construction is expected in 2024. The South Westnedge Avenue storm water relief project will be out for bid early next year with construction slated for next summer.

VanderRoest announced Charleston Township reviewed safety at six intersections. Two are major concerns. The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has a million-dollar project upcoming on MN and Mercury. VanderRoest recommended installation of a larger sign at M-343 and Sprinkle Road. It was determined that the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County has jurisdiction over other Sprinkle Road intersections where there are large signs. MDOT has jurisdiction over the intersection at M-343 and Sprinkle and will not be installing a bigger sign.

Heppler reported the Village of Augusta water project on the south side of the village has been completed. Plans are underway for the 2024 Washington Street bridge project.

Heppler provided the Kalamazoo County update. The County Commissioners held their last meeting of the year. Discussions included the new courthouse and parking for it.

Pfeiffer reported that the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) M-40 south of I-94 interchange project in the Paw Paw area has been removed from the MDOT capital 5-year plan due to inflated prices. Design for the project continues as MDOT hopes to obtain future funding. The M-343 at Sprinkle Road project has been removed because it is unfunded. Those funds were reallocated to the I-94 westbound to US-131 northbound project scheduled for 2025.

Thompson reported the open house for the new Comstock Township Hall was well attended by approximately 125 people.

Attendees wished each other Merry Christmas, Happy Holiday, and Happy New Year.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Chairperson Thompson adjourned the meeting at 10:17 a.m.

*The next meeting of the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study Policy Committee will be held on  
Wednesday, January 31, 2024 at 9:00 a.m.*

*Approved 1/31/24 (er)*