

# KALAMAZOO AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY POLICY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the May 31, 2023 Meeting

## CALL TO ORDER

The May 31, 2023 Policy Committee Meeting was called to order at 9: 05 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

Curt Aardema	Central County Transportation Authority
Rob Britigan	City of Parchment
Marsha Drouin	Richland Township
Jeff Franklin	Michigan Department of Transportation, Planning
Tim Frisbie	Village of Vicksburg
Jeff Heppler	Village of Augusta
Joanna Johnson	Road Commission of Kalamazoo County
Lisa Imus	Village of Lawton
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
Randy Thompson, Chair	Comstock Township
Jerry VanderRoest	Charleston Township

## MEMBERS ABSENT

John Gisler	Kalamazoo County
Robert Henderson	Van Buren Public Transit
Tracey Locey	Brady Township
Don Ulsh	Schoolcraft Township

## OTHERS PARTICIPATING

Sean McBride	Metro
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Megan Mickelson  
Elizabeth Rumick  
Jon Start  
Steve Stepek  
Trevor TenBrink  
Ali Townsend  
Bret Witkowski

Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study  
Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study  
Citizen  
Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study  
District Director for Congressman Huizenga  
Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study  
Van Buren County Road Commission

#### **CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

There were no changes or additions to the agenda.

#### **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Johnson moved, and it was duly seconded by Heppler, **“to approve the agenda of the May 31, 2023 Policy Committee Meeting.”** MOTION CARRIED.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No public comments were made.

#### **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 APRIL 26, 2023 MEETING

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

#### **FY 2023 – 2026 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AMENDMENTS**

Referring to the Transportation Improvement Program Amendment included in the meeting packet, Stepek explained it is a Kalamazoo County Douglas Avenue project for an increase in local cost of \$370,000.

Heppler moved, and it was duly seconded by Franklin, **“to approve the FY 2023 – 2026 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment.”** MOTION CARRIED.

#### **MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION MASTER AGREEMENT**

Stepek explained the included document is the operating agreement between Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) and the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). It is being presented for renewal for another 3-year term of October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2026. Both parties have worked well together and wish to continue the arrangement for KATS to complete the legislative requirement of MDOT funding allocations. It is functionally unchanged from the last contract. KATS is presenting the document for a recommendation of approval and to allow the Policy Committee Chairperson to sign on KATS behalf.

Johnson moved, and it was duly seconded by Drouin, **“to approve Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study’s Michigan Department of Transportation Master Agreement and allow Chairperson Thompson to sign on KATS behalf.”** MOTION CARRIED.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ANNUAL REVIEW**

Sorensen reported the Finance and Personnel Subcommittee met with Executive Director Stepek for the annual review. After discussions on performance, and review of the rate of inflation, the Subcommittee recommends a 6 percent rate increase beginning with the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) new fiscal year on October 1, 2023. Sorensen reported that collection and consideration of feedback from all parties that work with Stepek will now be conducted biannually as opposed to annually. Stepek elaborated that not only was the process laborious, but there were also participation issues. The review style has been revised from assigning a number on a scale of 1 to 10, to more of a 360-degree review.

Johnson moved, and it was duly seconded by Heppler, **“to approve KATS Executive Director Stepek’s review and 6 percent rate increase effective October 1, 2023.”** MOTION CARRIED.

## **LEGISLATIVE DISCUSSION: TREVOR TENBRINK DISTRICT DIRECTOR FOR CONGRESSMAN BILL HUIZENGA**

Stepek introduced and welcomed Trevor TenBrink, District Director for Congressman Huizenga. As requested at a previous meeting, an invitation was extended to the new Congressman’s office to attend and speak at a meeting. TenBrink explained Huizenga’s district boundary extends from Northern Ottawa County south to Berrien County, including Allegan and Van Buren Counties, and portions of Kalamazoo and Calhoun Counties. In addition to Huizenga’s district office in Holland, one is planned for Portage. TenBrink assured attendees funding for projects would not be rescinded. TenBrink fielded questions and comments from attendees.

## **CONTRIBUTED SERVICE UPDATE**

Stepek explained a summary of the fiscal year-to-date contributed services for the fiscal year-to-date April 30, 2023 is included in the packet for your review.

## **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION UPDATES**

Aardema introduced Aditya Rama as the new Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority (KCTA) representative for Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) Policy Committee. Rama was welcomed. A legislative breakfast was held in mid-May. It was well attended by Kalamazoo County representatives, and TenBrink came also. Information on Metro was discussed along with a tour of Metro facilities. The Central County Transportation Authority (CCTA) / KCTA board is working to obtain a new security services provider for the Kalamazoo Transit Center. A contract should be finalized at the next board meeting. Plans are underway to roll out new processes to the Metro bus system resulting from the Comprehensive Operational Analysis. McBride elaborated on the importance of having a successful security guard contract for the Transit Center which is used by millions of people a year. Metro’s previous partnerships for security with the City of Kalamazoo and Kalamazoo County were withdrawn due to staffing shortages. Metro would welcome the opportunity to reenter into a contract with law enforcement but in the meantime will be contracting with security firms.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Steppek stated Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) is working with a consultant to update our website. KATS received notification that we will be going through a Certification Review in November. As previously discussed, KATS is still waiting for our final allocations for funding. Both the new census results and Michigan's noncompliance with Federal Highway Administration repeat drunk driving sentencing minimums will impact allocations. Once funding is determined, KATS Transportation Improvement Program Subcommittee will meet to determine where to shift projects to align with the new allocation. In response to Johnson's inquiry, Stepek responded that the National Functional Classification update process cannot begin until KATS receives its official urban area.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

No new business was brought forth.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No citizens' comments were made.

## **MEMBER COMMENTS**

VanderRoest of Charleston Township reported the M-96 Michigan Department of Transportation project is complete. VanderRoest is very pleased and appreciative with the result.

Pfeiffer provided the Michigan Department of Transportation update. The completed M-96 project includes use of a newer technology on rumble strips called sinusoidal rumble strips. These strips offer the same vibrating safety benefit for drivers but have lesser external noise for residence when vehicles travel across them. The US-131 project from Schoolcraft to Three Rivers is underway. A large I-94 project in Berrien County, and M-89/M-343 projects will be let on Friday. The M-40 project between Lawton and Paw Paw will begin next week.

Heppler reported the Village of Augusta water project will start after July 4, 2023. The Village of Augusta will work with the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County on chip seal projects over the summer. Plans are underway for next year's bridge project. On behalf of Kalamazoo County, Heppler said a downtown Kalamazoo Event Center arena will be built next to the new courthouse.

McGinnis reported Portage Road and Shaver Road projects in the City of Portage are underway. The city is researching additional locations to install electric vehicle charging stations. The city applied for federal funding to improve its electric vehicle infrastructure.

Britigan reported City of Parchment local road projects are complete.

Sorensen invited attendees to the Kalamazoo County Chapter of the Michigan Township Association annual golf outing on June 23, 2023. The Cooper Township Hall remodeling project will begin next week and is expected to last through February of 2024. The main entrance will be moved to the rear and recently acquired adjacent property will be turned into a much-needed parking lot.

Johnson of the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County (RCKC) reported Sprinkle Road remains closed for railroad work. Once this railroad work is completed this week, railroad work on N Avenue will follow. The Lake Street project is underway. Use the Olmstead entrance to access the Kalamazoo County Expo Center. RCKC has 185 projects planned. An experimental scrap tire project for the local

road system will occur this month. Johnson thanked Townships for partnering with them for the project. RCKC participated in and was complementary of the recent Michigan Township Association conference. RCKC is developing a Safety Action Plan. Attendees and everyone in the public is encouraged to participate in the Safety Action Plan survey available on the RCKC website through July 15, 2023. Feedback is appreciated. Comments will be used to develop a Safe Streets for All Plan which will be used to apply for federal funding. Progress continues on the new RCKC facility. Move-in is expected next summer. Tours are available during the construction with anticipated Open Houses in 2024. The Transportation Asset Management Council updated its Unified Planning Work Program. The RCKC annual report is out. RCKC is hiring.

Frisbie invited attendees to the Village of Vicksburg 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Old Car Festival June 10, 2023. The Burg Days of Summer Program will be held every Wednesday beginning June 14, 2023 through August 14, 2023 from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The program includes live music and several activities for families.

Lemon reported the City of Galesburg infrastructure project on Washington and Division is underway.

Imus reported the Village of Lawton is gearing up and excited for the M-40 project.

Thompson reported the Comstock Township water project in the area of 33<sup>rd</sup> Street and M-96 is over half done. The new Comstock Township building should be done by the end of the month with move-in anticipated in August.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Chairperson Thompson adjourned the meeting at 9:58 a.m.

*The next meeting of the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study Policy Committee will be held on Wednesday, June 28 or Aug 30, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.*

*Approved 8/30/23 (er)*