

**MONTACHUSETT JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES OF WEDNESDAY, MAY 19, 2010**

P. Caron called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

I. INTRODUCTION/ MEMBERS PRESENT

Paula Caron, Fitchburg; David Manugian, Groton; Pauline Hamel, Ayer; Robert Saiia, Lunenburg; Noreen Piazza, Lancaster; Laurie Scarborough, MassDOT; Laila Michaud, Westminster; Craig Bardenheuer, Harvard

EX-OFFICIO

Trey Wadsworth, MassDOT

GUESTS

Frank Maxant, Ayer; Peter Johnston, Ayer

STAFF

Glenn Eaton, George Kahale, Sheri Bean, Brad Harris, Brian Doherty, Stephanie Brow

II. APPROVAL OF APRIL 21, 2010 MINUTES

P. Caron asked for a motion to approve the minutes of April 21, 2010. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

III. SELECTION OF NOMINATING COMMITTEE

B. Harris stated that the Chairman appoints a convener to the nominating committee. That convener then selects four other individuals to serve on the committee. The job of the nominating committee is to meet before the June 2010 meeting and to come up with a slate of officers for chairman, vice-chairman and secretary to present at the June meeting. The slate of officers will be announced at the June meeting and the floor will be open for nominations. The elections will be held at the July meeting.

Paula Caron was appointed as the convener for the nominating committee.

IV. FFY2011-2014 MONTACHUSETT TIP – UPDATE AND DEVELOPMENT

B. Harris indicated that we met last month and reviewed an amendment to the 2010-2013 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and it was out for a 30 day public comment period at that time. As of last month's meeting there were no comments received. On the last day of the comment period we received an email comment from MassDOT Highway Division/District 3 and a follow-up email from District 2 regarding a proposed change for the 2010-2013 TIP. The comment regarded the South Street project in Westminster. Due to issues related to design and right-of-way it was recommended that this project be removed from FFY 2010 and the Route 32 project in Petersham be moved into FFY 2010 at the total

available target amount \$3,007,450. District 2 commented in concurrence with District 3's comment. The amendment was endorsed as presented by the MPO at the May 12, 2010 meeting.

B. Harris, referring to handouts, reviewed the projects that will be up for discussion for prioritization during the next few meetings as part of the development of the FFY2011-2014 TIP. The next step in the process is known as Transportation Evaluation Criteria (TEC). Each project is reviewed based upon a scoring system. The intent is to compare projects based upon scoring to help prioritize projects. Staff met with MassDOT before this MJTC meeting to conduct the TEC review.

We will then start looking at what we have for Federal Aid Targets. Typically, we have target figures now, however, there have been some changes on the Federal level; the same money coming to the state at the last minute caused the state to have to review and recalculate the target figures. We hope that these new target numbers are available by the end of the month.

Based upon last year's TIP there are four projects that are candidates for programming in FFY 2011: South St., Westminster at approximately \$3 million; Baldwinville Rd. at approximately \$5.4 million; Route 70/Old Union Turnpike, Lancaster at approximately \$1.15 million and North Central Pathway, Winchendon at approximately \$1.9 million.

MJTC will work to develop a draft FFY2011-2014 TIP listing as a recommendation to the MPO for their review and release as a draft document for public comment.

V. MONTACHUSETT 2011 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN – REGIONAL PAVEMENT CONDITIONS REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

B. Doherty gave a PowerPoint Presentation to the committee titled *Pavement Management Themes*. See Presentation handout.

Comments and Questions:

L. Michaud stated that a few years ago MRPC was doing pavement management in the individual communities. Does this replace that function on a bigger scale?

B. Doherty stated that these are Federal Aid eligible roads. MRPC started doing this to get a better understanding of the roadways we have to prioritize. MRPC would like to offer it's services if we had the ability to communities to review local jurisdiction roads. We are trying to get the system off the ground and satisfy Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) requests.

MRPC is using RSMS software for data collection and management. Some communities are interested in MRPC collecting, maintaining and sharing this data.

P. Caron asked if MRPC has offered services to communities for pavement management for this type of system.

B. Doherty replied that as of now, we have just started our system and are trying to build up MRPC's inventory. We have talked with a couple communities interested in maintaining a system or having MRPC maintain a system for them. This would be further down the road. That service that would be valuable to DPW departments as they look at their maintenance schedules.

B. Harris stated that Hubbardston is using RSMS collecting their own data. Brian has been available to help them out with questions.

D. Manugian inquired how one finds out, within ones town, what roads are included on the Federal Aid eligible list.

B. Harris replied that MRPC has the information and that information can also be found on MassDOT's website. It is recommended to email MRPC for the link because it is difficult to find. (note: Functional Classification Maps can be found at: www.massdot.state.ma.us . Search for "road inventory maps").

N. Piazza asked if the updated information can be presented in a report to this committee.

B. Doherty replied that a report could be distributed or the information can be given to anyone interested on an informal basis. The preliminary numbers are broken down in the pavement management report as well as in the chapter if you have any particular requests for data that can be provided easily.

B. Harris stated that if you go to the MRPC website, the documents page, the Regional Pavement Management System Report is available.

N. Piazza asked if what comes out of the report leads into recommendations for the TIP.

B. Harris stated that in the prioritized ranking, the criteria, we use this data to help us score under "condition" whether a project is going to result in an improved road surface condition number 1, 2, or 3. Communities can use the data to help generate projects in their Project Need Form.

B. Saiia asked if there has been any coordination of research that this board is aware of as far as product development for roads, for example, used tires that end up going into warehouses or dumps that can be mixed in with the pavement.

B. Doherty stated that there are a number of research tools such as Baystate Roads Program in Massachusetts and the University of New Hampshire that examine such questions or issues.

VII. OPEN MEETING LAW AND COMPLIANCE

G. Eaton stated that MRPC is advising local officials to be fully aware of the Open Meeting Law and the committee's roles and responsibilities as well as the State Public Records Law, State Conflict of Interest Law and Procurement Law.

There are some changes to the Open Meeting Law that will take affect July 1, 2010. A variety of communities in the Montachusett Region have the same attorney. Templeton is having their attorney come out and do a presentation on this law. MRPC's general counsel, Mark Goldstein, is giving MRPC a presentation on the Open Meeting Law next Tuesday.

G. Eaton summarized some of the new changes to the Open Meeting Law. One of the biggest changes that will affect a lot of committees is the requirement stating that you must post the topics on your agenda. Generally speaking, if you don't post what you're going to be talking about you can not discuss

it. This has implications in just doing general business. Web site postings do not qualify.

VI. COMMITTEE MEMBERS ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

G. Eaton stated that a simple, bulleted list of this committee's roles and responsibilities is in the process of being created and should be included in the handouts at the next meeting. Members change so it will be used as an educational tool for current and new members. It will be put on the MRPC website.

It was suggested that an acronym list be created.

G. Eaton stated that there is an acronym list on the MRPC website.

VIII. CONTRACT STATUS REPORT

a. FTA/RTA

G. Kahale gave a brief overview of the FTA/RTA projects.

- **Wachusett Commuter Rail Station and Layover Facility**

Westminster Board of Selectmen has approved the new location of the Layover facility in Westminster Business Park at Theodore Drive. The Consultant has completed a Noise Assessment Study at the request of Westminster Board of Health and approved by the Town. MRPC Staff reviewing Environmental Assessment report completed by the Consultant to be submitted to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA); Also MRPC Staff are working on Request for Proposals RFP for Land Surveys and Properties Appraisals for the Wachusett Station and the layover facility Project.

The proposed project of the Wachusett Station and the layover facility involves construction of a new passenger station and parking facility, and requires the relocation of train staging Facilities for both the MBTA and Pan Am Southern, as well as upgrades to one of the two existing mainline tracks from the present terminus of the Fitchburg Line to a proposed MBTA layover facility approximately 1.5 miles west of the proposed Wachusett Station. The project will benefit both passenger rail service and freight operations.

- **Expansion of MART Storage Facility**

MRPC Staff continue to work with the contractor Vanguard construction to resolve construction issues, the removal of the contaminated soil has been completed, roof installation over the existing building has began. MART anticipated a completion of the construction of the expansion of the Vehicle Storage and Bus Wash Facility by December 2010.

- **Parking Expansion at N. Leominster Station**

MRPC Staff continue to work with the FTA on the Categorical Exclusions study to purchase an abutting property for the expansion of N. Leominster parking garage structure facility for the Four-hundred (400) plus parking spaces to be constructed at North Leominster Train Station.

- **Fitchburg Commuter Rail Improvement**

The consultant HNTB Architecture & Engineering of Burlington continue to work on the engineering design of the Fitchburg Line Improvement projects. Preliminary design should be completed by June 2010. They intend to start construction in June of 2010 and phase the project so work can begin in

sections along the line. A Stimulus Federal Fund of approximately \$ 40,000,000 has been approved to construct the double tracks of about 10 miles between Ayer and South Acton, and new accessible Commuter Rail Station at Littleton.

- **Ayer Parking Facility**

MRPC Staff continue to assist MART and the Town of Ayer to move forward the construction of the Ayer Commuter Rail parking facility at the Rail Trail parking lot Location at Park Street. A meeting with the State Transportation Secretary and the Town Officials was held in Boston on May 3, 2010 and follow up meeting will be held on May 20 with MBTA and MassDOT to discuss the federal funding and the scope of services for Architecture & Engineering consultant to work on the Ayer Commuter Rail parking facility.

b. MASSHIGHWAY DEPARTMENT 3C

A meeting of the MRPC Route 140 Safety Improvement Task Force Study is scheduled for Thursday May 27, 2010 in the town of Westminster. MRPC staff will continue to review the status to date of the study including recent analyses of alternative improvements.

Consistent with requirements laid out in Chapter 25 of the Acts of 2009 (An Act Modernizing the Transportation System of the Commonwealth), the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) is preparing a five-year capital investment plan for the MassDOT Highway Division. The Plan will include an analysis of the planned sources and uses of funding to be invested in the roads, bridges, bicycle/pedestrian facilities, and ancillary infrastructure of the Commonwealth

Public Hearings were held to solicit public input on Wednesday, May 19th in Quincy, MA and also on Tuesday, May 25th in Framingham, MA.

The draft plan is also available online at the following address:

<http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/planning/documents/2011-2015HwyCapInvestmentPlan.pdf>

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

X. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, P. Caron adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m.