

# **MONTACHUSETT JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (MJTC) MEETING**

**MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 14, 2018**

**Meeting Held at**

**STERLING TOWN OFFICES- BUTTERICK BUILDING**

**1 PARK STREET, STERLING, MA 01564**

J. Wyman called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.

## **I. Introduction**

### **Members**

Sarah Bradbury, MassDOT District 3; Doug Walsh, Athol; Ken Chenis, Lunenburg; Jon Wyman, Westminster; Phil Duffy, Clinton; John Kilcoyne, Sterling; Ross Perry, Sterling; Michael Pineo, Sterling; Nikki Tishler, MassDOT OTP

### **Staff**

George Kahale, George Snow, Sheri Bean, David Fee

## **II. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

## **III. Approval of January 10, 2018 Minutes**

It was the consensus of the MJTC to approve the January 10, 2018 MJTC minutes as printed.

## **IV. Montachusett Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

- *Review & Discussion of FFY 2018-2022 TIP Amendment #3*
- *FFY 2019-2023 TIP Project Prioritization Scoring*

G. Snow reviewed the FFY 2018-2022 TIP Amendment #3. He mentioned the amendment was currently in the 30 day public review and comment period ending on February 15<sup>th</sup>. The reason for the Amendment was to adjust funding to Project Number 6081888 [Gardner-Leominster-Sterling Intersection Improvements at Three (3) Locations] as a Regionally Prioritized Project raising total funds available previously from \$700,000 to \$2,085,219. In addition, the same project had funding adjusted as a State Prioritized Modernization Project adjusting the total funding from \$500,000 to \$537,278. G. Snow then stated a recommendation to the MPO from the MJTC is requested at this meeting. The MJTC recommendation to the MPO should state that the MPO should either endorse or not endorse FFY 2018-2022 TIP Amendment #3. The MJTC made a motion to recommend to the MPO that FFY 2018-2022 TIP Amendment #3 be endorsed by the MPO and the motion was approved. A member asked where the money was coming from. Mr. Snow answered that that the MMPO was under the funding allocation target; therefore, this project adjustment would be fully funded. Another member asked why the rotary project had become more costly. Mr. Snow said a road safety audit finding showed more pedestrians were using the facility so pedestrians facilities were added to the project, bike lanes were added and the west bound off ramp was redesigned to reduce backed up traffic on the ramp.

S. Bean reviewed the *FFY 2019-2023 TIP Project Prioritization Scoring*. She indicated the green highlighted projects had not been scored yet and the blue ones would be presented at the next MPO meeting by the respective jurisdictions. Communities are encouraged to provide new information on projects if it was not included in the project scoring. Members asked about the criteria for scoring and how they are weighted. The MRPC staff will provide the members with the criteria scoring sheet used at the next meeting.

## **V. Sterling Transportation Planning Efforts**

### *- Discussion of Current Projects & Issues Related to Transportation*

S. Bean asked what people thought about the new roundabout in Sterling. She was informed by a member that the local police chief reports that the number of accidents and crash severity have already dropped dramatically; however, a lack of lighting is a problem for drivers trying to find the correct lane for their destination. Drivers are also trying to avoid hitting the curb.

A member questioned if drainage problems would be addressed for the Sterling intersection project on Route 12 as part of the aforementioned TIP Amendment #3 project. S. Bradbury recommended the MassDOT project engineer be contacted for project details.

## **VI. Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (CPT-HST)**

### *- Status Update Presentation*

G. Kahale gave a Powerpoint presentation of the plan which will provide updated 2016 U.S. Census data on the target population demographics for the region and identify gaps in transit service needs. Strategies to address gaps and prioritize solutions will be included. He displayed maps which showed the location of medical, educational, employment centers and target population density in relation to current fixed MART transit routes. A member asked what “closed door service” meant on one of the map legends. Mr. Kahale said it was merely an area where the bus is not allowed to pick up passengers. He noted that one of the triggers for the update was the addition of extra bus service to Shirley, Ayer, Harvard and Devens.

A member asked if food accessibility was an issue raised during public participation events. Mr. Kahale said that there were people wanting to go from Winchendon to Gardner to the supermarket but that getting a ride back was a concern.

After the last CPT-HST plan, MART extended service hours to 5 or 6 pm on weekdays and to 8 pm on Saturday. FTA has told MART to expect a \$2 million dollar cut in funding so services with minimal demand may be curtailed.

## **VII. Regional Population Projections for the Next Regional Transportation Plan**

### *- Community Projections Status*

G. Snow explained how MRPC staff examined different population projects and settled on the one that proved to be the most accurate on previous projections to actual U.S. Census population for 1990, 2000 and 2010. He stressed that these figures do not tie community funding allocations to population. They are solely for transportation modeling. Members noticed that the projections seemed “flat” out to 2040 and they generally trend downward from 2030 to 2040. A member questioned if migration was taken into account. N. Tishler said migration was factored in and all

regions in the Commonwealth were using the same projections provided by University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute (UMDI). D. Fee added that population growth for all of the New England states were all low or declining more than Massachusetts. Ms. Tishler said low fertility and high death rates due to an aging population have driven the population numbers. A member noted that the population is shifting more to larger urban areas contributing to population declines in rural areas.

## **VIII. Contract Status Reports**

### **a. FTA/RTA**

G. Kahale said ground was broken today on the Ayer Commuter Rail Parking project.

### **b. MassDOT 3C**

S. Bean asked if any member community had any projects they would like to see included in the upcoming 2019 UPWP. She said that the main task would be to update the RTP.

Ms. Bean said they have held a couple of public outreach meetings in January for the Regional Trail Guide Update and to continue outreach with groups such as the Massachusetts Audubon Society, Massachusetts Fish & Wildlife.

She said that MPO subregion meetings had been held. Attendance was uneven but discussions were fruitful. We hope make the subregion meetings a regular feature held on a quarterly basis.

Ms. Bean referred to the Federal Target Comparison FFY 2018-2022 TIP vs. FFY 2019-2023 TIP and the Culvert Replacement Municipal Assistance Grant Program handouts. A member asked if there was still a target shortfall. S. Bradbury replied that they were in the process of verifying current cost estimates of projects.

## **IX. Administrative Matters**

The next meeting of the MJTC will be on March 14, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. in the Westminster Town Hall.

## **X. Adjournment**

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

### **DOCUMENTS/EXHIBITS AVAILABLE AT MEETING:**

2/14/18 Agenda

1/10/18 Minutes

Draft Amendment #3 to the FFY 2018-2022 TIP

Federal Target Comparison FFY 2018-2022 vs. FFY 2019-2023 TIP

Montachusett FFY 2019-2023 TIP Project List- TEC Ver. 3.0 Scoring Alphabetical Listing

Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (CPT-HST) Update

Population Projections for Montachusett Communities

Notice of Grant Opportunity Culvert Replacement Municipal Assistance Grant Program