

MONTACHUSETT METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MMPO) MEETING

Held Remotely via GoToMeeting.com

Hosted by the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission
464 Abbott Avenue, Leominster, MA 01453

Minutes March 25, 2020

D. Mohler representing MassDOT Secretary Stephanie Pollack called the remote meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. After a roll call of participants, he reviewed how the remote meeting would proceed including public comments being accepted through the chat feature.

I. Introduction

SIGNATORIES PRESENT

David Mohler, MassDOT OTP; Arthur Frost MassDOT Dist. 3; Mary Jo Bohart, Fitchburg; Trevor Beauregard, Gardner; Gordon Robertson, Leominster; Bonnie Mahoney, MART; Guy Corbosiero, MRPC; Tracy Murphy, Subregion 1; Rosemarie Meissner, Subregion 2; Tim Kilhart, Subregion 3

MEMBERS AND GUESTS PRESENT

Bryan Pounds, MassDOT OTP; Derek Krevat, MassDOT OTP; Mike Bolduc, MassDOT Dist. 2; Laura Hanson, MassDOT Dist. 2; Sarah Bradbury, MassDOT Dist. 3; Ann Sullivan, MassDOT Dist. 3; Christopher Timmel, FHWA; Bob Szocik, Templeton; Joshua Hall, Westminster; Keith Hickey, Winchendon; Steven Tyler, Howard Stein Hudson; John Sopka, Teleport.com

STAFF PRESENT

Sheri Bean; Brian Doherty, George Kahale, Glenn Eaton

II. Public Comments

No public comments were made.

III. Approval of February 19, 2020 Minutes

A motion was made to approve the February 19, 2020 MPO Meeting Minutes as presented. The motion was seconded and passed with Subregion 1 abstaining.

IV. Montachusett FFY 2021-2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

- *Review & Discussion of FFY Target Funding Scenarios*
- *MPO Selection of Preferred Funding Scenario*
- *Review of Transit and Statewide Project Listings*

B. Doherty presented various handouts related to the funding scenarios developed for the TIP for FFY 2021-2025. The first handout presented was a listing of the Transit Element for FFY 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025. The project listing was forwarded by MassDOT after submittal by the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MART). The second handout was a presentation of the statewide projects such as bridges, trails and interstate improvements scheduled for the Montachusett Region. These projects were identified by MassDOT. The final handout included two potential funding scenarios developed by the MRPC for the Target projects included in the TIP. These scenarios focused on project priority, design status and estimated costs. The goal in each scenario was to develop a fiscally constrained project listing for each of the TIP years. B. Doherty then proceeded to review each federal

fiscal year, the projects contained in each year and any changes to the project from the last MPO meeting. It was noted that Scenario 1 and Scenario 2 included the same projects with the major difference being how the Leominster Route 12 project (#604499) is Advanced Constructed. In Scenario 1, the cost for Route 12 is spread over three years, FFYs 2023, 2024 and 2025 while in Scenario 2, it is spread over only FFYs 2023 and 2024.

A motion was made to develop Scenario 1 for the Draft FFY 2021-2025 TIP. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

V. Montachusett FFY 2020-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

- *Review of Possible FFY 2020 TIP Amendments*
- *MPO Action Related to Possible FFY 2020 TIP Amendments*

B. Doherty presented members information received from MassDOT that results in changes to various projects in FFY 2020. Because of the nature of the changes, a TIP Amendment would be required. This would be Amendment #3 for the current FFY 2020-2024 TIP. Staff then reviewed the necessary changes with the members. Only one project to be changed is part of the target projects for FFY 2020. The Leominster Route 13 project (#605651) has a cost increase of \$745,100. Fortunately, the target projects for FFY 2020 were approximately \$803,000 under the total target. Therefore, the cost increase for the Route 13 project can be covered without impacting any other target eligible project. Other changes include a \$385,481 cost increase to a bridge project (#608365) in Shirley, the moving of the Twin Cities Rail Trail from FFY 2020 to FFY 2021 with a corresponding cost increase of \$2,881,151 and the addition of two new projects as the result of the awarding of two transit grants to MART. As previously mentioned, these projects do not affect any other target projects so the TIP will remain fiscally constrained.

B. Mahoney mentioned that in regards to the new MART projects, recent discussions with MassDOT will result in some changes to the matched amounts but not to the overall total project costs. Those adjustments will be made during the comment period.

B. Doherty mentioned that due to the change of the date of this meeting, there is not sufficient time for a full 21-day comment period before the April 15th MPO meeting. However, if the MPO were to shorten the comment period to 14 days, this would allow for the Amendment to go out and close before the next MPO meeting.

A motion was made to reduce the comment period for TIP Amendment #3 from 21 days to 14 days. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

A motion was then made to release TIP Amendment #3 for a reduced 14-day public review and comment period. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

VI. Updates

- *MassDOT Highway Division*

A Frost mentioned that the Leominster Route 13 project is in final design and is expected to be advertised in July; Ayer Route 2A project #607902 is at final design with an ad date of April 4th but based on current events that may change.

B. Mahoney updated members on changes in the transit system due to the current conditions. Many routes and shuttle services have been reduced or closed. Service changes are provided on the MART website, Facebook pages, etc. The MART Offices are open but with a reduced staff. Also, MART is

running fare free on all services until at least April 7th and will then make any changes based on the Governors' actions or decrees.

VII. Administrative Matters

- Next MPO Meeting

B. Doherty indicated that the next MPO meeting is scheduled for April 15th at 1:00 PM. The meeting will also likely be a virtual meeting.

A. Frost mentioned to MPO members that MassDOT will be continuing construction projects as a way to help keep the economy moving as best as possible.

G. Kahale asked a question regarding acquiring some highway signs for the Wachusett Station. A. Frost stated to send him an email and he would forward it to the appropriate person.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 1:37 p.m.

DOCUMENT/EXHIBITS PRESENTED AT MEETING

1 MPO 3 25 2020 Agenda
3 MPO 2 19 2020 Minutes
4 Current Target Projects
4 FFY 2021 2025 TEC Scores
4 Target Scenario 1
4 Target Scenario 2
5 FFY 2020 Highway Transit Amendment #3 Info 3 10 2020
6 CIP 2021-2025 Public Meeting Flyer
6 Culvert Replacement Grants Flyer 2020
2020 Meeting Calendar Update 3 18 2020