

MONTACHUSETT JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (MJTC) MEETING

MINUTES OF APRIL 15, 2015

D. Manugian called the meeting to order at 7:00p.m.

I. INTRODUCTION

MEMBERS

Doug Walsh, Athol; Pauline Hamel, Ayer; Frank Maxant, Ayer; Ken Chenis, Lunenburg; David Manugian, Groton; John Wyman, Westminster

Ex-Officio

Sarah Bradbury, MassDOT District 3; Jeff Hoynoski, MassDOT District 2

Guests

Charlie Powderly, The ARC of Opportunity

Staff

Sheri Bean, Brad Harris, Brian Doherty, George Snow, George Kahale

II. APPROVAL OF January 21, February 18, and March 18, 2015 MINUTES

The minutes of January 21, 2015 as printed were approved by consensus.

The minutes of February 18, 2015 as printed were approved by consensus.

The minutes of March 18, 2015 as printed were approved by consensus.

III. FFY 2015-2018 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AMENDMENT (TIP)

B. Harris distributed handouts which summarized the two amendments up for discussion. The first amendment involves full bridge replacement on Jackson Road over Route 2 in Lancaster. The project was included in our 2015 – 2018 TIP as an advanced construction project over two years. MassDOT informed us that the project was advertised and the contract was obligated. The project was able to be funded over one year instead of two. The TIP needs to be amended to remove the project from the 2015-2018 TIP. The removal of a project from the TIP requires an amendment. The MPO recommended that the amendment be released for a 30 day public comment period. The comment period started on March 16 and closed on April 14, 2015. No comments were received at that time. A consensus is needed by the group to recommend that the amendment be endorsed by the MPO and that the Planning Commission authorizes the Chairman to sign and endorse the amendment with the MPO. This is a simple removal of a project from the TIP and does not affect our target funds.

By consensus, the MJTC approved the recommendation that the MPO and MRPC endorse the proposed amendment.

The second amendment up for discussion concerns the 2015 Transit Element. There were some recent transit grant awards given out to our region and MART made a few changes to the project descriptions and allotment of funds. Due to these changes an amendment to the TIP is needed. The MPO reviewed these changes at the last meeting and voted to release the document for a 30-day public review and

comment period. That comment period began on April 13 and closes on May 12, 2015. We will review and discuss possible endorsement at the next MPO meeting. Since we will not be meeting again before that time we need a recommendation tonight, based upon comments received to date, that the amendment should go forward.

B. Harris reviewed the grant awards and there was a question concerning the replacement of the vans between the other agencies and if they were replacing existing vans.

C. Powderly stated that he had just recently heard about this and believes they are replacing an existing van.

A question was asked regarding the funding source.

B. Harris replied that this was a statewide grant program and proponents have to apply and compete against other agencies. The change is reflecting the additional grant awards.

By consensus, the MJTC approved the recommendation that the MPO and MRPC endorse the proposed amendment.

IV. FFY 2016-2019 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)

B. Harris stated we are working on development of a new TIP for FFY2016-2019. The target estimates have been received. The 2016 allotment has not changed. The targets went up by one to two million in the other years.

We met with the districts as well as MassDOT Boston at TIP Day to discuss the regions projects.

B. Harris reviewed the list of projects compiled during this meeting and distributed a listing of projects to the MJTC. He reviewed the status of projects on that list.

Discussion followed on the target figures and the funding for the TIP.

V. 2015-2016 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP) DEVELOPMENT

-Project Listing

-TEC Review

B. Harris stated that the UPWP is our budget and task tool for the program year. This will be the first year of a new MassDOT four year contract. We received our Planning Allocation for the upcoming fiscal year which we base our UPWP budget on. He distributed a handout that summarized the allocation. The allocation is for \$536,779 an actual reduction from last year of approximately \$7,000. MRPC's UPWP will be based on that amount. That amount will also be the basis for the estimate for our four year MassDOT contract. He explained the tasks of the UPWP and the possible scopes of work for them. A draft needs to be out for public review in May for endorsement in June.

Discussion followed on types of projects that could be included in the UPWP as well as additional types of funding options.

VI. REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN (RTP) UPDATE

-Schedule Update

B. Harris, referring to a calendar handout, stated that the deadline for the RTP endorsement was June 30, 2015 but it has now been changed to July 31, 2015. The schedule has been adjusted accordingly. The biggest changes to the calendar are to the MPO meetings in June and July. We were scheduled to meet on June 10th and we are moving that to June 17th and instead of July 8th we will meet on July 22nd. In June, the MPO will vote to release a draft document for public comment. That will run from June 22nd to July 21, 2015. At the July meeting the final document will be approved and endorsed after comment review. We are applying the same schedule to the TIP and UPWP.

-Regional Projections – Population and Employment

G. Snow, referring to a handout, gave a briefing of the regional population and employment projections.

The 2016 projections were developed for the MRPC region by MassDOT. The population projections were developed based on trends in births, deaths, and migration. The employment projections were developed based on employment data from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development.

The projections for each MMPO municipality cover a 30 year period from 2010 – 2040 in 10 year intervals. Within the MMPO region population is projected to grow 3% and employment is projected to grow 6% by 2040.

Discussion followed on the projections.

-Status Update

B. Harris informed the MJTC that there are some draft chapters that are being looked at and encourages the group to keep checking the website for the draft chapters.

VII. CONTRACT STATUS REPORTS

a. FTA/RTA

G. Kahale stated Wachusett Commuter Rail Station and Layover Facility construction should be completed by Fall 2016. It is currently under construction and there are no issues other than the delay in completion. The Fitchburg Commuter Rail Line improvements are on schedule and will be completed by December 2015. The double track and signals have been completed and Littleton Station is complete. Littleton is asking for a parking needs assessment. MBTA has announced the suspension of the entire Fitchburg line on weekends beginning Saturday, April 25 through Sunday November 22, 2015, excluding holidays. They are doing this to allow work to be performed between North Station and Fitchburg. Bussing will not be provided during weekend interruption. Weekday service will not be interrupted.

Ayer Train Parking is still under negotiation between MBTA and the landowner for pedestrian access. When this is completed MART will begin the project. Before the property transfer is complete MART cannot spend any money on the project.

Discussion followed regarding the Ayer Parking Facility.

South Acton Train Station will be completed by the end of the year. North Leominster Parking Garage is complete. MRPC is assisting MART with the design of a bus route in Lunenburg. MART is proposing to increase the bus fare by \$0.25. They will have three public meetings. There will also be some adjustment to the bus routes. MART was required by FTA to conduct a comprehensive analysis of their bus route system.

Discussion followed regarding the bus route adjustments.

b. MASSDOT 3C

B. Harris stated that our traffic count program will begin shortly. We are looking to get some interns on staff shortly. B. Doherty will be going through some training our new pavement management program which will be up and running this year.

Discussion followed on the Traffic Count program.

VIII. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

B. Harris stated that Charlie Powderly from the ARC of Opportunity is interested in becoming a MJTC Organizational member and will follow through with a letter.

The next MJTC Meeting is May 20th at 7:00 p.m. and MPO is May 13th at 1:00 p.m.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

DOCUMENTS/EXHIBITS AVAILABLE AT MEETING:

January 21, 2015 Minutes
February 18, 2015 Minutes
March 18, 2015 Minutes
April 15, 2015 Agenda
2016-19 TIP DAY project list Montachusett 3 24 2015
Draft Amendment #1 Summary and Memo
DRAFT Amendment #2 Summary Memo 4 10 2015
Draft Budget 2015-2016
MMPO 2016 Population and Employment Projections
TEC FFY2016-19 TIP Projects 3 26 2015
TIP and UPWP Schedule 2015 Updated 4 8 2015
TIP Project List FFY2016-19 Draft #1 Summary