

BATTLE CREEK AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
Policy Committee
Minutes of March 23, 2016 Meeting

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Terry Blaniar (for Harry Burdett), Dharmesh Valsadia (for Mark Dionise), Steve Frisbie, Steve Buller, Greg Rickmar (for Deb Owens), Tom Sprau, and Angela Kline

NON-VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: None

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: John Lanum, Laveta Hardish, Rich Werner, and Rob Behnke

NON-VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: FHWA and SMPC

OTHERS PRESENT: Kristine Parsons, Pat Karr and Andrew Tilma

Chair Sprau called the meeting to order at 1:34 p.m. in the Council Room at Springfield City Hall, 601 Avenue A, Springfield, MI 49037.

ROLL CALL

A quorum was present (see above for voting members present). Introductions were made for the benefit of all present.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

It was moved by Kline, supported by Buller, to approve the agenda. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Res.
16-08

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

It was moved by Kline, supported by Blaniar, to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2016 meeting, as presented, subject to any additions, corrections or changes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Res.
16-09

COMMUNICATIONS

Karr reported the following items of communication:

- There is a consultant driven safety study that will be commencing in the Southcentral Planning Council area (Calhoun, Kalamazoo, Branch and St. Joseph counties) to develop a regional safety plan. The effort is in the beginning stages and the BCATS Committees will be keep informed of its progress.

- BCATS has received an estimate of the Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds and Planning funds that the BCATS area can expect to receive from the new federal transportation bill (the FAST Act). The funding level is actually less than originally expected and less than the amounts programmed for FY 2016.
- The Michigan State Police/Office of Highway Safety Planning Traffic Safety Summit is going on this week. Karr has been attending and there is one half-day session remaining tomorrow (March 24th).
- BCATS and Battle Creek Transit staff attended the annual Unified Work Program (UWP) meeting with MDOT and FHWA staff in Lansing last Wednesday. The purpose of the meeting is to review the current year's work program and to discuss the development of next year's UWP. The new fiscal year starts October 1, 2016.
- Tilma has submitted all of the BCATS' area local projects to the statewide electronic Transportation Improvement Program (termed the "E-STIP"). A combined state and local listing of projects for the new FY 2017-2020 program of projects is to be provided back to BCATS for the development of the entire urban area Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) by BCATS over the next couple of months.
- The project being submitted for the Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) program were finalized and submitted to MDOT in early February, 2016. The statewide CMAQ review committee has met to discuss all of the projects submitted. BCATS has not had any official notification of the status of those projects as far as their eligibility for CMAQ funding.
- BCATS has received formal notification from the City of Battle Creek that it is updating its Master Plan. This was done in accordance with the provisions of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act of 2008, P.A. 33 of 2008, as amended. The City of Battle Creek has also held public forums about the Master Plan update.
- BCATS received a March 1, 2016 letter from Sharon Edgar, Administrator of the MDOT Office of Passenger Transportation, regarding the Regional Transit Mobility initiative developed in response to the Governor's June, 2014 special message which included a concern for the mobility of senior citizens. A conference call on this topic is scheduled on April 18th and Battle Creek Transit will be participating.
- BCATS has been informed that funds may be available for special transit planning studies yet this fiscal year as a result of a large balance of unexpended federal transit 5303 funding soon. Battle Creek transit is interested in applying for funds to conduct a full-scale route and service study.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

A. FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Administrative Actions Notification

Tilma reviewed the TIP Administrative Actions being presented to the Committee for information. There is not an official amendment to the current FY 2014-2017 TIP at this time. Tilma noted a rail project that has come to his attention that crosses multiple urban areas. The \$8.2 million 2016 project is for work on the Jackson to Battle Creek rail line.

Tilma highlighted the modifications included on the TIP list that had been made available to the members. He noted that the amount necessary to be paid back to the MDOT region for loaned CMAQ funding has been finalized as noted in the “Comments” section of the table. Two 2015 projects that were not completed are being removed from the program.

The next amendment opportunity for the current TIP is May, 2016. Frisbie asked about the scheduling of work on East Avenue and if it could be rescheduled to coincide with the township’s neighborhood work in that area. There was discussion about the possibility of the Calhoun County Road Department considering the option of “advance constructing” that project and converting it to federal funding in the future.

This was an information item not requiring official action at this time.

B. FY 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Update

Karr provided a time line update on the work being done to develop the new FY 2017-2020 TIP. There will be an additional public information piece developed in April. A standard financial chapter has been developed for use statewide and that chapter will be incorporated into the BCATS’ TIP document. Karr noted that BCATS’ contact at the MDOT Southwest Region for TIP matters, Darrell Harden, has accepted a position in the central planning office in Lansing and will no longer be attending the BCATS meetings. It is expected that his position will be filled at the Region office. Karr noted that the BCATS Committees are expected to have the FY 2017-2020 TIP document in May for approval.

This was an information item not requiring action at this time.

C. FY 2017 Unified Work Program (UWP) Preliminary Outline and Listing

Karr reviewed the “Preliminary Transportation Outline” material made available to the members. She noted changes to the “Systemwide” focus areas and “Specific developments, potential developments and issues” for the BCATS area. Karr indicated that a draft FY 2017 Unified Work Program will be presented to the BCATS Committees in April, with approval of the final document scheduled for May, 2016. Karr highlighted the development of a “Continuity of Operations” plan as a potential FY 2017 work activity.

This was an information item not requiring action at this time.

D. Annual Michigan Transportation Planning Association (MTPA) Conference

Karr indicated that the MTPA annual planning conference will be held in Kalamazoo this year in July. Since the conference is so close, there will be no hotel costs this year. The advance memo provided to the members lists a total estimated cost of \$900 for two staff persons to attend the conference. The registration fee is \$325 per person if paid before April 15, 2016.

It was moved by Kline, supported by Frisbie, to approve BCATS staff attendance at the 2016 MTPA Annual Conference with expenses not to exceed \$900 for two staff persons. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
16-10**

E. Report from the Study Management Committee**1. Annual Review for Pat Karr, Executive Director**

Kline reported for the Study Management Committee that the Committee completed its annual review for Pat Karr, BCATS Executive Director. The Study Management Committee recommends an increase in salary for Karr of 2.5%, effective with her anniversary date in the position of March 25th. Kline added that based on the statewide average of salaries for Karr's position level, the full-time equivalent of her salary is still within the range of comparable positions. Karr works thirty hours per week, 75% of full-time.

It was moved by Blaniar, supported by Frisbie, to approve the Study Management Committee's recommendation of a 2.5% salary increase for Karr, effective March 25, 2016. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
16-11**

2. Change to BCATS' e-mail host - update

Karr updated the Committee as to issues surrounding the hosting of its e-mail addresses. The current host agency is phasing out the plan that BCATS uses and a new host agreement will have to be decided upon. Karr indicated that she will be working through this issue and will keep the Committee updated as to the status. It is anticipated that this change will result in increased costs to BCATS for this service.

This was an information item not requiring action at this time.

COMMENTS

A. Next Meeting

Chair Sprau announced that the next Policy Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 27, 2016, 1:30 p.m. in the City of Springfield Council Chambers.

B. Committee Member Comments

Valsadia indicated that he has received an update about the Helmer at Columbia intersection in relation to the monitoring of that signaled intersection now that the I-94 Business Loop has been rerouted through that intersection on a permanent basis. Two weeks ago, new signal timing has been implemented and the intersection will continue to be reviewed for any further improvements.

Kline reported that the township local work is proceeding.

Karr thanked the Committee for their consideration in her review.

Buller asked about the status of the 6 ½ Mile Road project. Kline indicated that the project was not able to be let in 2015 due to a lack of obligational authority. Therefore, the project is being held as a possibility if any additional funds become available. Kline indicated that a skip pave project for the segment is currently planned in lieu of the project that was previously scheduled.

Frisbie announced the hiring of a new staff at the Calhoun County Road Department to enhance the engineering department that Kline oversees, including an employee to conduct oversight of contracts.

C. Public Comments

There were no public comments at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Sprau adjourned the meeting at 2:27 p.m.