

BATTLE CREEK AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
Policy Committee
Minutes of March 25, 2020 Conference Call-In Meeting

VOTING MEMBERS PARTICIPATING: Mallory Avis, Harry Burdett, Bill Scutt, Don Mayle, Derek King, Annjanette Kremer, John Midgley, Barb Darlington (for Dave Morgan), and Greg Rickmar

NON-VOTING MEMBERS PARTICIPATING: None

VOTING MEMBERS NOT PARTICIPATING: Tim Hill and Laveta Hardish

NON-VOTING MEMBERS NOT PARTICIPATING: Andy Pickard and Southcentral Michigan Planning Council

OTHERS PARTICIPATING: Jeff Franklin, Pat Karr and Andrew Tilma

Chair Burdett called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m. via a conference call due to the COVID-19 virus situation.

ROLL CALL

Karr conducted a roll call for members and any guests who were on the conference call line, identifying each member and their agency. Members indicated their presence for the purpose of establishing a quorum. It was determined that a quorum of the voting members were participating on the call. Karr announced that the meeting was being recorded as is the usual practice at in-person meetings. This was emphasized for the benefit of any members of the public participating on the call.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

It was moved by Rickmar, supported by Midgley, to approve the agenda. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY to approve the agenda.

Res.
20-07

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

It was moved by Rickmar, supported by Darlington, to approve the minutes of the January 22, 2020 meeting, as presented, subject to any additions, corrections or changes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Res.
20-08

COMMUNICATIONS

Karr reported the following items of communication:

- Karr attended the web meeting for the county transit study. The consultant has not delivered the final report yet.

- The January amendment to the current TIP was approved in early February.
- Changes related to the updated local program allocations from MDOT for the STUL program have been made in JobNet.
- The City of Battle Creek's Infrastructure and Utility Services coordination meeting in January was very informative and there were many of the utility companies represented.
- Karr attended the region's infrastructure asset management summit on Friday, February 7th which was held at the Van Buren Conference Center in Lawrence, Michigan. Karr was the only person from Calhoun County in attendance.
- The Regional Prosperity Committee met on February 6, 2020 and voted to dissolve the organization in light of the deletion of funding for the initiative in the state budget. Projects which are still in progress will be completed and grants to implementing agencies will be monitored and closed out. There are no further meetings of this group scheduled.
- The pre-Unified Work Program meeting with MDOT and FHWA was held on Monday, February 24th in Lansing. FHWA, MDOT and BCATS staff attended and Avis participated via the call-in option. The current year's work activities were reviewed and discussion took place about work activity for next year's 2021 Unified Work Program.
- Karr served her jury duty the first two weeks of February and was called to serve on a jury which required her to be away from work for 2 ½ days.
- The day after the last Policy Committee meeting, BCATS was notified that state Category F funding was awarded for a portion of Morgan Road (M-37 to North Avenue). This project was originally in the current TIP with STP funding. The Category F funding will be added to the existing project.
- Karr attended the Office of Highway Safety Planning's annual Traffic Safety Summit on March 10-11th in East Lansing, MI.
- A call has come from MDOT for FY 2023 local bridge projects. This information has been made available to the local units of government, with a request to let BCATS know if any bridge projects will be submitted for that call. All applications are to be submitted electronically by Friday, May 1st.
- The City of Battle Creek was successful in having local safety funding awarded for its planned round-about at the intersection of North Avenue and Emmett Street. MDOT awarded \$600,000 in safety funding toward the total cost of the project.
- A new 2019-2022 Michigan Strategic Highway Safety Plan has been developed and was released by the Governor's Traffic Safety Highway Commission at the end of January.
- Cities under 10,000 population can now apply for State Category B funds. Springfield is an eligible community and is preparing an application. Applications are due by June 1st.
- BCATS received a communication from MDOT indicating that the Department's work on the transportation system is essential and considered critical infrastructure and this work will continue with its partners.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS

A. FY 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment #5

Tilma reviewed the long list of projects proposed for this amendment, which includes some major projects announced by MDOT for the Rebuilding Michigan program. There are also local, rail crossing and transit projects on the amendment list, totally thirteen items for the amendment. Kremer indicated that the large MDOT I-94 project will be a design/build project, which will proceed with minimal preliminary engineering by MDOT itself. Tilma stressed consideration of non-motorized issues with some aspects of the multi-faceted I-94 project.

It was moved by Rickmar, supported by Darlington, to approve Amendment #5 to the FY 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program, as presented. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
20-09**

B. FY 2021 Unified Work Program (UWP) Preliminary Issues and Outline

Karr reviewed the outline which was provided to the member in advance of the meeting. The next steps are preparing a draft of the FY 2021 UWP and hopefully sharing that with the BCATS Committees in April. A final draft is usually to be considered for action by the Committees in May. FY 2021 UWP documents are still to be submitted by the MPOs to MDOT by June 1, 2020. She asked for any input into the development of next year's work program be provided to her.

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

C. Annual Michigan Transportation Planning Association Conference

Karr noted the memo prepared for this agenda item which was posted for the members in advance of the meeting. She emphasized the possibility that the conference may be cancelled, but that it could still be held since it is scheduled later in July this year.

It was moved by Midgley, supported by Scutt, to authorize staff attendance at the MTPA conference, if it is held, per the information provided in the memo on this topic. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
20-10**

D. Draft Update of BCATS' Participation Plan

Karr discussed the need to update the current Participation Plan which was adopted in 2014. This is a federal requirement and part of the process for the update of the BCATS Metropolitan Transportation Plan. It was hoped to provide the 45-day notice required for this Plan update early in April, with approval of the new document in May. However, since the desired public involvement process for the notification of the draft document can not be carried out due to the current health situation, the scheduling for advancement of this document is being put on hold.

This was a discussion item not requiring action at this time.

E. Staff Issues Associated with State “Shelter-In-Place” Order

Karr referred to the memo she put together about the issues created by the Governor’s most recent Executive Order for persons and businesses in Michigan. There were two issues identified. Staff support for non-federally billable time during the required “Stay home, Stay safe” order and designation of “essential” personnel for BCATS. Staff can’t necessarily do all of the things at home that can be done at the office. BCATS does have a fund balance that can support some staff time which would otherwise not be covered at this time.

It was moved by Rickmar, supported by Scutt, to: 1) approve staff utilizing a non-federally billable code for some payroll time during the 3-week period, and any extension of that period, ordered by the Governor when staff will not be able to work a normal schedule and 2) to recognize Karr as essential staff for the financial and payroll operations of BCATS as well as recognizing Tilma as essential staff for meeting the state’s JobNet system requirements for timely action on change requests within that system. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
20-11**

COMMENTS**A. Next Meeting**

Chair Burdett announced that the next Policy Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 22, 2020, 1:30 p.m. in the City of Springfield Council Chambers, provided that the Committee can safely meet.

B. Committee Member Comments

Mayle indicated that it should be possible to access the JobNet functions working remotely. He thanked the staff and Committee members for finding a way to hold the meeting today.

Kremer reported that the TSC staff are continuing to work remotely and in the field. Voice-mail messages can be left for MDOT staff at the regular Transportation Service Center telephone number.

Scutt asked if the state’s rest areas will remain open. Kremer replied that they are remaining open at present with increased cleaning and protocols being followed.

Karr informed the Committee of the measures taken to hold this conference call meeting. She indicated that staff will keep the Committee members updated as to the possibility of the April Policy Committee meeting being held as planned. Karr thanked everyone for their understanding in getting this meeting conducted during this extraordinary time. She was noted that this is the first time such measures have had to be taken to conduct agency business.

C. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Burdett adjourned the meeting at 1:58 p.m.