

BATTLE CREEK AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
Policy Committee
Minutes of April 27, 2016 Meeting

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Harry Burdett, Mark Dionise, Steve Frisbie, Deb Owens, Tom Sprau, John Lanum, Rich Werner, and Angela Kline

NON-VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: None

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: Steve Buller, Laveta Hardish and Rob Behnke

NON-VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: Rachael Tupica and SMPC

OTHERS PRESENT: Jason Latham, Pat Karr and Andrew Tilma

Chair Sprau called the meeting to order at 1:37 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).

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

It was moved by Owens, supported by Frisbie, to approve the agenda. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Res.
16-12

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

It was moved by Werner, supported by Burdett, to approve the minutes of the March 23, 2016 meeting, as presented, subject to any additions, corrections or changes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Res.
16-13

COMMUNICATIONS

Karr reported the following items of communication:

- BCATS recently received the “call” for projects for utilizing unobligated Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5303 transit planning funds. This will be discussed in more detail later on the agenda.
- BCATS has received a product from the consultant working on the regional transit study for the state. The 164 page report looks at the “region” areas of Region 3 and Region 4 separately as far as resources

and data. There are also recommendations for the Prosperity Region 8 (that encompasses Regions 3 & 4) as a whole. The report is currently out for comment before being finalized by the consultant.

- A special TIP related newsletter was mailed early in April by BCATS. It is posted to the BCATS website and went out to all the usual individuals, groups and locations.
- BCATS has received notification from MDOT of work on several projects around the area - Exit 88 on I-94 is having the interchange reconstructed. Work there has begun and will last through September. MDOT is closing streets in Albion for about a week for rail crossing work. A handout was provided for the Albion project.
- MDOT has released the dates for public meetings regarding the update of its state Transportation Plan, the closest location is in Kalamazoo on May 24th. A handout listing all of the meeting dates statewide was distributed.
- The City of Battle Creek's underground propane station is operational. This project utilized CMAQ funds. An article written about the station by City of Battle Creek staff was handed out.
- BCATS has received an e-mail about the start of the state sponsored safety study for the Southcentral Michigan Planning Council area. The first meeting of some of the principals involved will take place in early May. We are told we will be kept informed of progress on this project.
- Rachael Tupica, of the FHWA office in Lansing, has announced that she is taking a new position in Federal Highways in the Oregon division office. She will be leaving Michigan near the end of June. She will be greatly missed by everyone in Michigan, especially the BCATS staff. Lanum noted several other changes at the Lansing FHWA office.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Quarterly Financial Report January - March, 2016

Karr reviewed the material for this report which was made available to the members in the advance material. The expenses for the year are on budget to this point.

It was moved by Frisbie, supported by Owens to receive and file the January - March, 2016 Quarterly Financial Report for BCATS, as presented. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
16-14**

B. FY 2017 Unified Work Program (UWP) Draft

Karr indicated that a draft of the FY 2017 UWP document was provided as an advance handout item. The draft includes MDOT participation figures provided by Rick Fowler, BCATS' program manager at MDOT. The document also includes a draft of the local share table, ie; the local contributions required to support the program for next year. The UWP also has budget figures by generalized account categories for the coming year. Karr asked that any comments about the draft be provided to her as soon as possible. The document will be brought back to the BCATS Committees in May for action to approve the document.

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

C. Battle Creek Transit Application for Supplemental Planning Funds for a Route and Service Study

Karr reviewed the background material for the current call from MDOT for special projects involving transit planning studies that was included in the memo addressed to the Policy Committee. A \$6 million pool of funding has been established by MDOT from unobligated FTA Section 5303 funds for transit planning. Battle Creek Transit (BCT) is very interested in applying for funding under this program for a comprehensive route and service study, financial plan, and other aspects of a master plan. The letter from Werner which was sent out to the Policy Committee members details the intended scope of the project. The requirements for applying for this special pot of funds include support for the application by the MPO Policy Committee.

Werner discussed the need for this type of comprehensive study for not only BCT, but transit as a whole beyond BCT's service area. There is a requirement for a 20% match for this funding program. There was discussion about countywide efforts to address needs for transit service across the county. Burdett updated the Committee members about the efforts by the many participants in these countywide discussions. Werner added that any study developed for this funding program will include a look at the interest coming from outside the BCT area. In response to a request from Lanum, the budget for BCT's application is anticipated to be \$150,000 total.

There was discussion about any issues of conflict of interest on the part of the City of Battle Creek representatives as far as this voting on this issue. It was determined that there was not a conflict in recommending the submittal of this application for funding.

Karr stated that staff and the Technical Committee are supportive of BCT's proposal for this type of study and its application to MDOT for this competitive funding program. If Policy Committee also supports the project, the necessary information will be provided to BCATS' MDOT Program Manager by the May 6th deadline.

It was moved by Kline, supported by Dionise to support the submittal of an application by Battle Creek Transit to MDOT for use of unobligated Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5303 funds for a transit study as outlined in Werner's letter. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Res.
16-15

D. Termination of Current Memorandum of Understanding with Battle Creek Transit Regarding Planning Responsibilities

Karr referenced the memo provided to the Committee members. The memo indicates that the situation with the current agreement regarding planning responsibilities between BCATS and BCT is that it was executed in 1998 and a great deal has changed as far as the federal requirements since then. At BCT's Triennial Review earlier this month, FTA noted that an updated agreement regarding responsibilities for the planning function between the two organizations is necessary. Although the current memorandum of understanding (MOU) requires a 60-day notice of termination to dissolve the agreement by either party, it has been clarified by the City of Battle Creek Attorney's office that if the two parties agree to develop a new agreement to supercede the current one, that the termination provision does not need to be acted upon. Therefore, the action today is requested to be modified to authorize BCT and BCATS staff to develop a new MOU for transportation planning responsibilities which would be brought back to each body for action once drafted. The current MOU is to remain in effect until a new one is adopted. The new MOU is to address the issues identified by FTA in BCT's Triennial Review. It is anticipated that a new MOU should be developed for the BCATS Policy Committee to act upon in June or July. According to the FTA findings, the parties have until mid' August to have the new MOU in place.

Werner noted that there is another MOU agreement between MDOT, BCATS and BCT. He asked whether this will need to be updated as well. Karr indicated that the MOU Werner referenced can be evaluated as well.

It was moved by Kline, supported by Werner, to support development of a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between BCATS and City of Battle Creek/BCT for the transportation planning responsibilities to reflect current federal requirements. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
16-16**

E. FY 2016 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Projects Status Report

Tilma noted that the implementing agencies updated the Technical Committee two weeks ago as to the status of their current year (FY 2016) TIP projects. He provided a list of those projects and reviewed the progress toward implementation for each one. The cells on the table highlighted in yellow represent changes that will be acted upon with the TIP amendment anticipated for next month. All of the local road projects scheduled for this year have been obligated, with let dates within the next couple of months. The transit projects which are scheduled require flexing of funds to the Federal Transit Administration. MDOT projects are proceeding on schedule as well.

Tilma stated that there are several lines on the table indicating federal incentive funding for the closure of rail crossings in the City of Battle Creek. This is associated with the "Quiet Zone" project the City of Battle Creek is undertaking.

Frisbie asked how the roadway segments are selected for the joint Preventative Maintenance project. It was indicated that the roadway condition rating systems for each agency are used to identify where there are roadway segments that will benefit from these types of treatments.

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

F. 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Status Update

Karr provided the Committee with an update as to the status of the 2040 BCATS' long range transportation plan. The current BCATS' 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan is undergoing a minor update to meet requirements for maintaining a horizon year of at least 20 years, as well as the five-year update cycle for air quality attainment areas. She noted that a request for extending the completion time period for the Plan update has been formally submitted to MDOT, with copies going to FHWA and FTA. The request provides that the Policy Committee will act on an update of the Plan at its November, 2016 meeting.

Lanum noted that this extension of the timeline will need to be reflected in the narrative of the FY 2017 Unified Work Program.

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, May 25, 2016, 1:30 p.m. in the City of Springfield Council Chambers.

B. Committee Member Comments

Lanum commented on future changes to the planning process that are expected with the issuance of new regulations from the federal Department of Transportation.

Karr indicated that the May Policy Committee meeting will have an agenda with many important action items. She requested that members reserve this date on their calendars, if they have not already done so.

Dionise reported on several MDOT projects for this construction season. Sign replacement will be happening along I-94 and I-69. He referenced a MDOT flyer explaining why MDOT replaces signs that may appear to still have some useful life. He indicated that he would provide a link for the flyer to Karr. He also announced that the work on the I-94BL (W. Michigan Ave.) in Marshall will begin in July. Dionise indicated that there is a high speed rail staff person currently assigned to the TSC office while work is being done on the roadbed and at intersections with roadways along the Jackson to Battle Creek Amtrak corridor. This is a large rail project. The MDOT staff person is Michael Deboer.

Dionise noted that there is a new Area Engineer at FHWA's Division office in Lansing as well as the other staffing changes noted earlier by Lanum.

C. Public Comments

Jason Latham, from the MDOT Southwest Region office in Kalamazoo, commented on the sign replacement process used by the firms contracted by MDOT and indicated that there may be double signs at some locations during the update process.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Sprau adjourned the meeting at 2:35 p.m.