

BATTLE CREEK AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
Policy Committee
Minutes of October 23, 2019 Meeting

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Mallory Avis, Harry Burdett, Derek King, Annjanette Kremer, Jeff Franklin (for Don Mayle), Dave Morgan, Kristine Parsons (for John Midgley), and Greg Rickmar

NON-VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: None

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: Laveta Hardish, Tim Hill and Rande Johnson

NON-VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: Andy Pickard and Southcentral Michigan Planning Council

OTHERS PRESENT: Brian Kernstock, Pat Karr and Andrew Tilma

Chair Burdett called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m. in the Council Room of the Susan L. Anderson Municipal Building (Springfield City Hall), 601 Avenue A, Springfield, MI 49037.

ROLL CALL

A quorum was present (see above for voting members present). Introduction of members was completed to take roll call and for the benefit of all in attendance.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

It was moved by Rickmar, supported by Morgan, to approve the agenda. Karr noted an addition to the agenda, item 7.C.3) - Staff Attendance at the Fall Asset Management Conference. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY to approve the agenda with the noted addition.**

Res.
19-40

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

It was moved by Rickmar, supported by Parsons, to approve the minutes of the September 25, 2019 meeting, as presented, subject to any additions, corrections or changes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Res.
19-41

COMMUNICATIONS

Karr reported the following items of communication:

- The FY 2020-2023 TIP document was approved by the federal funding agencies and was effective as of October 1, 2019. Copies of the new TIP were provided to the members. The document can also be accessed on the BCATS website.

- The amendment to the new TIP which was approved locally in September has also been approved by the federal agencies, so those changes are now official. The next opportunity for amendment will be at the November BCATS Committee meetings. All changes for that amendment need to be provided to BCATS by Friday, October 25th.
- BCATS received a net asset distribution check from the insurance carrier, MMRMA, in the amount of \$833 in September. This amounts to getting 37% of the insurance premium back that was paid for FY 2019.
- The audit for the 2019 fiscal year will commence soon. The auditor will be on-site at the BCATS office on November 7th.
- The new Asset Management Plan template has been posted to the Transportation Asset Management Council's website. The Calhoun County Road Department will be the first agency in the BCATS area to address this new requirement.
- Announcement has been made of upcoming regional Asset Management Summits. The one for the southwest regional area is on November 12, 2019 in the morning at the Van Buren Conference Center in Lawrence, MI. Committee members are encouraged to attend this event.
- BCATS' FHWA representative, Andrea Dewey, has accepted another position within the FHWA Lansing Division office. Until a new Community Planner is hired, the supervisor, Andy Pickard, will be BCATS' FHWA contact from the Lansing Office.
- Helmer Road at the rail crossing between Avenue A and Upton Avenue will be closed for two weeks starting next Monday, October 28, 2019 as a new rubberized crossing is installed.
- The Capital Avenue bridge over I-94 remains closed as MDOT works on needed repairs to the bridge decking.
- BCATS has received information from the MDOT air quality specialist relative to what needs to be submitted for TIP amendments as far as an air quality statement now that BCATS is considered to be a limited orphan maintenance area. This is due to the court case involving the 1997 air quality standards.
- Congratulations were offered to Greg Rickmar who celebrated 39 years of employment with the City of Battle Creek as of October 20th.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Base-Year (2016) Socio-Economic Data in Travel Demand Forecast Model for 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

Tilma reviewed this topic and noted the material provided at the September meeting and additional material distributed at this meeting. He explained the travel demand forecast model process and how this data will be utilized in the development of a base-year for that computer model, calibrated to the year 2016. In the future, proposed changes to the base-year will be added to project traffic volumes into the future. Tilma indicated that there are a few minor changes that will be made to the provided

data to make sure that all of the employment information is as accurate as it can be for this process. Tilma asked Morgan about the number of employees reported for Canadian National Railroad in the Porter Street area. This is one of the entries that is being investigated for accuracy.

Morgan asked about the prospects for a center left-turn lane on M-66 (Capital Avenue NE) from Morgan Road to Pennfield Road. Tilma indicated that this would be an issue to pursue with MDOT and that future development in that area could identify this roadway as a candidate for future improvement within the travel demand modeling process. Morgan identified several new developments along that stretch of roadway. Kremer stated that her staff would look at the crash data along this stretch of M-66 (Capital Avenue NE).

It was moved by Parsons, supported by Morgan, to approve usage of the Base-Year (2016) Socio-Economic Data for the continuing development of the Travel Demand Forecast Model, subject to additional minor changes as may be necessary. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
19-42**

B. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment Policies and Process

Tilma discussed a handout provided to the members for this item and reviewed the many subjects being dealt with by a statewide JobNet Policy Committee that he is serving on representing BCATS.

That group is addressing policy issues associated with JobNet within the TIP process. This includes the 25% threshold for cost changes that trigger a TIP amendment and whether that 25% applies to the phase cost, total cost, or even just the federal cost. This remains unresolved by the committee.

There are other items for that group to discuss that can trigger a TIP amendment, such as changes in scope, length, and projects that fall into the maintenance category. Kremer reviewed how projects are developed for the maintenance category of projects and how funding is allocated to this bank of funding. Tilma noted that there are also the issues of TIP exempt projects and the definition of “regionally significant” projects being address at the state level. Another issue is that when obligation dates change, it can change the construction year of a project, but if the obligation date change is within the same fiscal year it doesn’t prompt any type of notification to the metropolitan planning organization.

Also included on the distributed memo was a listing of planning findings from FHWA to MDOT that came with the approval of the new TIP. It is being required that a Total Cost over all phases and all years for every project be developed and listed in the TIP. FHWA has indicated that this is to be implemented for the STIP and Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Improvement Programs by September 30, 2020.

Tilma will continue to participate with this statewide committee and provide input on this variety of topics related to the TIP and JobNet.

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

C. Report from Study Management Committee

1.) Health Insurance for FY 2020

Parsons reported out from the Study Management Committee that it is recommended that the Policy Committee authorize continuing with the current Simply Blue PPO health insurance coverage through the City of Battle Creek for BCATS staff with the current 20% premium co-pay by staff. It is also recommended that BCATS fund the HSA plans at the same level as was done in 2019. It was reported that the dental and life insurance premiums are unchanged and that the costs for the items in the recommendation are within the budgets for these items as established in the BCATS FY 2020 Unified Work Program.

It was moved by Parsons, supported by Avis, to maintain the existing health insurance options for BCATS staff, dental insurance and life insurance, and to continue the contribution to the employee HSAs as recommended by the Study Management Committee. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
19-43**

2.) Annual Review for A. Tilma, BCATS Principal Transportation Planner

Parsons reported for the Study Management Committee that, after reviewing the annual evaluation completed by Karr for Tilma, the Study Management Committee recommends a 2.5% salary increase for Tilma based on the positive review and current cost-of-living information presented to the Study Management Committee. It was noted that Tilma has been with BCATS for 31 years.

It was moved by Franklin, supported by Parsons, to approve a 2.5% salary increase for Tilma. (The increase to be effective as of his anniversary date of November 2nd.) MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
19-44**

3.) Staff Attendance at Transportation Asset Management Council (TAMC) Fall Asset Management Conference

Karr stated the need for BCATS staff to attend one of the two TAMC Asset Management conferences held by the state Transportation Asset Management Council each year, as specified in the FY 2020 Unified Work Program. The spring conference usually conflicts with the May Policy Committee meeting and is also usually held at a northern resort location. Therefore, Karr is looking to attend the fall conference and have the requirement for attending one of the annual conferences fulfilled for FY 2020. The fall conference is being held in Marquette, Michigan. Karr noted that although the costs for this conference will be paid 100% by the Asset Management grant and are not excessive, the total will exceed the \$300 amount necessary to be approved by the Policy Committee, per the personnel policies.

It was moved by Parsons, supported by Avis, to approve attendance at the fall TAMC Asset Management Conference by Karr. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
19-45**

COMMENTS

A. Next Meeting

Chair Burdett announced that the next Policy Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 20, 2019, 1:30 p.m. in the City of Springfield Council Chambers. This is the third Wednesday of the month rather than the 4th Wednesday, due to the Thanksgiving holiday.

B. Committee Member Comments

Morgan announced that the annual Armed Forces Appreciation Day in 2020 will be held on May 3, 2020.

Tilma thanked the Committee for their consideration with the salary adjustment they approved.

Burdett indicated that there are some safety concerns along M-96 (Dickman Road) in the area of Army Road. There was recently a pedestrian fatality in that area. Residents cross the road to access the party stores and small food establishments from the apartment complexes located along that stretch of M-96 (Dickman Road).

Kremer updated the Committee about MDOT projects in the BCATS area. There is the possibility that work on the Capital Avenue bridge over I-94 could be completed at the end of this week, about a week before the original estimate. Kremer indicated that transit will be informed when the bridge will reopen so that transit's normal routes can be reinstated. Kremer also reported that there have been some problems with the top course asphalt mix being used on the I-94 resurfacing project (6 ½ Mile Road to 11 Mile Road) and that some of it will have to be milled out and replaced since the mix did not meet specifications when tested. This will further delay completion of the project.

The M-311 (11 Mile Road) bridge project (over the Kalamazoo River) is also delayed due to water issues that were identified at the start of the project.

C. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Burdett adjourned the meeting at 2:26 p.m.