

SUMMARY INDEX OF
SANTA FE MPO
TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD
July 15, 2008

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| ADJOURNMENT | Adjourned at 12:01 p.m. | 8-9 |

MINUTES OF THE
SANTA FE MPO
TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD

Tuesday, July 15, 2008

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Santa Fe MPO Transportation Policy Board was called to order by Mayor Coss (in the absence of Chairman Chávez) at approximately 10:42 a.m. in the City Council Chambers, Santa Fe City Hall, 200 Lincoln Avenue, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

A. ROLL CALL

Roll Call indicated that a quorum was not present (established later) as follows:

Members Present:

Mayor David Coss
Patricio Guerrerortiz, Deputy Secretary, NMDOT
Governor Robert Mora, Pueblo of Tesuque
Commissioner Jack Sullivan
Commissioner Virginia Vigil [arriving later]

Members Absent:

Councilor Miguel Chávez, Chairman
Commissioner Michael Anaya
Councilor Matthew Ortiz
Commissioner Harry Montoya

Staff Present:

Mark Tibbetts, MPO Officer
Lucas Cruse, MPO Senior Planner

Others Present:

Councilor Rosemary Romero, City of Santa Fe
Brian DeGani, NMDOT
Donald Martínez, City of Santa Fe
Mary Helen Follingstad, RPA Director
Larry Samuel, Pueblo of Tesuque
Phil Gallegos, NMDOT
Paul Lindberg, Construction Manager for the Rail Runner into Santa Fe

UNDOCKETED ITEM – Presentation on Rail Runner Construction by Paul Lindberg

In the absence of a quorum, Mr. Lindberg presented a report on the construction of the northernmost tracks of the Rail Runner. He shared the problems encountered and delays in the schedule. They were now laying track and installing signals. He anticipated a December completion date.

He reported that last week the contract was let for the Zia platform with the contractor who has done several stations in Albuquerque.

There were conflicts with the Railyard as construction that has interfered with the Rail Runner designs have occurred. The Railyard would be functional in September or October. Some of the panels for crossings were still on order.

For the Highway 599 station, they had several meetings with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to get permission to use the median there. They had some trouble with alteration of the interchange. The loops would be removed for a diamond interchange with signals. He clarified that with the reduction in traffic there, the design was work fine and the numbers would fit for the 2030 data. The design was 65% complete for the station and had a price estimate but they could not break ground until the FHWA approved it.

He explained that the FHWA had requirements regarding WIPP routes. They had a public meeting on the 12th and had an open comment period on the interchange changes. He said that would delay federal approval to October. That would add costs to the construction because the contractor would be finished in December and construction would take until spring.

Secretary Guerrerortíz asked if the ramp was not part the WIPP route. Mr. Lindberg agreed.

Mr. Lindberg pointed out that the original design for that interchange was a diamond shape and the loop was added just before construction but he didn't know why it was added.

Commissioner Sullivan asked what provisions there were for access from the median to the parking area.

Mr. Lindberg said the parking lot was high and there were switchbacks. The path would be covered.

Commissioner Sullivan asked if there was no elevator.

Mr. Lindberg replied that it was too costly. The canopies were to keep ice off the path and there were canopies on top.

Commissioner Sullivan and Secretary Guerrerortíz talked about driving snow and how windy the area was.

Mr. Lindberg agreed to look at it further.

Commissioner Sullivan asked about electric power. Mr. Lindberg said they would have power at the station. He said the initial cost was \$10 million and they were a bit over budget at this point.

Commissioner Sullivan asked if there would be bike racks to accommodate the bike trail coming down Arroyo Hondo and the County was requiring developers on the west side to bring the trail up to the station area.

Mr. Lindberg said there would be racks but they were not sure where that trail terminus would be.

Commissioner Sullivan suggested that Jack Kolkmeier could give him the location. It was one of those skinny parcels fronting Hwy 14.

Mr. Lindberg assured him that the diamond design would allow all of those trail connections.

Mayor Coss asked about the downtown terminal issues and historic preservation issues.

Mr. Lindberg said they had a list of items. One of them was the kiosk or station itself to not use the standard identification there. There were comments on that but most of the aesthetics could be met. He thought the coordination was ongoing.

Governor Mora asked why there was so much lack of communication with other entities.

Mr. Lindberg felt that was a good question and he didn't know how to answer it. He clarified that they had a dialogue going with the City of Santa Fe and Railyard folks. The procedure involved having the project team sending designs to the City but they didn't get much attention until it was imminent. The response from the City happened late in the game regarding how they would handle traffic and other issues. The pace of the project didn't keep up with the negotiations.

Secretary Guerrerortiz thought it was natural to have those adjustments since seeing those things on paper looked different than first envisioned. He thought the communication now was at its best. He used the staging at the Zia platform as an example.

Mr. Lindberg added that MRCOG moved very fast but were not as sensitive to construction issues as DOT was. They were very good at planning stations but something delayed them. Those issues have been worked out and interaction with the City has been good.

Commissioner Sullivan said there were different issues for the County. As a design-built contract, the County didn't have any plans on it. So they were building and then had to back up to take care of the problems that arose. Emergency crossings were an example of components that had not been reviewed.

Mr. Lindberg said they set up task forces to look at those issues. It was different for folks who were

used to seeing a bunch of plans. It has moved fast and it was great to get cooperation on design-built.

Commissioner Sullivan asked if the 599 station was going to be set up for a parking lot for interconnection with northern counties and if there would be a separate lane for buses.

Mr. Lindberg agreed. He said there would be 394 parking spaces.

Commissioner Vigil arrived at 11:11 a.m., thus establishing a quorum.

Commissioner Sullivan was glad to see it moving forward. That was a real keystone for the interconnect.

Mayor Coss thanked Mr. Lindberg for his presentation.

Commissioner Sullivan asked Mayor Coss to chair the meeting and he agreed.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Sullivan moved to approve the agenda as published. Governor Mora seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

April 10, 2008

Commissioner Sullivan moved to approve the minutes of April 10, 2008 as presented. Secretary Guerrerortiz seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Mayor Coss noted that Councilor Rosemary Romero was present.

ACTION ITEMS

- 1. TIP amendment adding federal earmark funds for intermodal stations/bus facilities at Rail Runner stops.**

Mr. Cruse said the packets had a memo from staff summarizing the amendments to the TIP; both of which were for upgrading facilities and equipment to support the Rail Runner.

Commissioner Sullivan asked what the NMARC was.

Mr. Cruse said it was a federal source for specific uses.

Mr. Cruse said the first amendment was for \$490,000 and the other was for \$1,082,000. He explained that the summary came right out of the Federal Register.

Mr. Donald Martínez spoke to the first amendment. He said the money would be used to purchase four 35-passenger buses, buses that were a little shorter than the Santa Fe Trails fleet buses. They could provide for 31 passengers plus 4 wheelchairs.

Mr. Degani explained that the \$1,082,000 award was 5309 funds from NMDOT to MRCOG to have facilities constructed.

Mr. Tibbetts said it was mostly for the Alta Vista Station but the grant was flexibly worded.

Commissioner Vigil said she was in support of this. She felt that a lot of the action the Board had to take was up front without advocating for particular stops. They needed to keep in mind that ridership was going to dictate the routes. Even if these buses were intended for Alta Vista, where ever the riders were there would be a service agreement.

Secretary Guerrerortíz said the \$1,082,000 was not necessarily for rolling stock. The 599 station was part of the transit system and they would have a link there. The intent was to have that facility in place shortly after the Rail Runner starts running.

Commissioner Vigil moved to approve the TIP amendments. Commissioner Sullivan seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous roll call vote with Commissioner Sullivan, Commissioner Vigil, Governor Mora, Secretary Guerrerortíz and Mayor Coss voting in the affirmative and none voting against.

INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Corridor Studies/Rail Runner update (Phil Gallegos-NMDOT District 5)

Mr. Gallegos presented the update. He said t traffic model was complete and they were kicking off all three studies now. Regarding the 599 Rail Runner Station, it would be considered an existing condition for the studies to see if any mitigation needed to be done on traffic flow for I-25, St. Francis, and 599.

Commissioner Vigil asked if the 599 study was to be inclusive of river crossings, with access to Marty Sanchez, etc. as part of the scope.

Mr. Gallegos said it didn't include the river crossings but did include the rest. They would look at land use and traffic flow but that would be a county issue for another river crossing for access to 599. That was way beyond the scope of the 599 study because it has always been an intersection study. He said they were now prioritizing the interchanges.

Commissioner Vigil thought it would logically be a needed part of it. Right now San Isidro crossing was not appropriate for the traffic it was accommodating so that should be a strong component.

Mr. Gallegos said if the traffic studies warranted, it would become part of it.

Commissioner Sullivan asked what "existing condition" meant.

Mr. Gallegos explained that they would look at it as a traffic generator there. Now that they had the model, they would incorporate Mr. Lindberg's numbers in the traffic studies of all three. They would look at how much traffic the station would generate and update the numbers to get an accurate picture of what that station would be doing.

Commissioner Sullivan asked how long it would take.

Mr. Gallegos said the first identification of alternates (Phase A) would take 12 months. Probably 18 months to 24 to get to Phase B. They wouldn't take it to Phase C until they got specifics from the TPB.

Commissioner Sullivan thought that made sense. He asked how they would handle the NE connector off Richards Avenue.

Mr. Cruse said it was in the base model.

Commissioner Sullivan asked if they would assign a projection to it.

Mr. Gallegos agreed and further explained it.

2. Overview of Metropolitan Transportation Planning Process

a. Presentation of MPO structure and functions

Mr. Cruse commented that since they had new members staff wanted to review what an MPO was and what they were to do here. He used a PPT format to explain. He covered the responsibilities of the TCC and showed how the MPO related with Transit, New Mexico DOT, etc. He went through the eight Planning Factors and the four guiding documents: 2030 MTP, TIP, UPWP, PPP.

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan was for 20 years and involved the public. The Transportation Improvement Program was updated biannually with projects on the horizon. The next round would start in the next couple of months. Once the TIP was approved, the DOT implemented them. The UPWP/PPP were annual listings of projects they were working on. The one for this FY was approved by TPB in April.

Governor Mora asked about the ratio of federal to local matches.

Mr. Cruse said it was ordinarily was 80/20 although some were 90/10.

B. Current SFMPO issues

(a) Self-certification

Mr. Tibbetts addressed this issue. He said some of the issues facing the MPO now included self-certification. It was a document signed by the TPB Chair showing that in cooperation with DOT, the MPO was compliant with the federal laws (8). That was standard for all MPOs.

What happened in 2006 was that this MPO had a special review and certain issues and deficiencies were brought up then. Part was on the boundary and the issue of not including tribal lands (lack of consultation) and membership/structure issue. So a membership study was instigated last year. The study was ongoing and they were in the process of responding to the study.

(b) Regional public transportation issues (RTD)

The other issue was regional transportation - coordination and cooperation in planning. So Park and Ride, RTDs, commuters coming in. Perhaps they would create a new RTD for Santa Fe. Right now RTDs were on page 2 of 2008 in the packet. \$88,000 was going through the RTD for facilities in Santa Fe which was part of a grant to the NCRTD and that figure might change because of the pull out but it could still come to Santa Fe through the MPO. Transit providers were the major players in this process.

Mr. Tibbetts reported that Chair Chávez just returned from a national conference concerning SAFTEA-LU. The funding for safety would expire and a new act would have to be funded. He said it might be called Green Tea and would put more funds into public transit because of higher gasoline costs. They were looking at 1.7b to help local public transit systems. This resolution would look at making sure that the funds would go to this purpose. Councilor Chávez would introduce it to the City Council.

He pointed out that MRCOG estimates were 900 per day and now the estimate was 3000 vehicles per day. The City just finished a TOD study and the consultant mentioned that what was needed in Santa Fe was a comprehensive, strategic transit plan.

Commissioner Vigil left at 11:50, thus losing a quorum.

Mayor Coss asked if the report would come to the MPO.

Mr. Tibbetts said it would be done by a private consultant through a cooperative effort with DOT, the new RTD, etc. They would have people coming from Taos for instance and needed a universal fare process that would take people through the zones. How to expand Santa Fe Trails to become a regional service was an issue to look at.

3. Status of the responses to SFMPO Membership/Structure study recommendations

a. Revised Joint Powers Agreement

- (1) consistent with the revised Bylaws adding Tesuque Pueblo and NMDOT; and**
- (2) including proposed cost sharing formula for an independent SFMPO**

b. Revised SFMPO boundary map.

Mr. Cruse handed out the proposed map that was presented at the last TCC meeting. Mr. Tibbetts explained that it was not an action item but an update. It was proposed in light of the County changes. The boundary was to include the urbanizing areas over the next 20 years and also some that wanted to be preserved. For example, Los Lunas asked to be part of Albuquerque area to safeguard routes through there. The MPO has a lot of power on how things were designed, whether they should be built or not.

The boundary map had a JPA that was in process. Mr. Tibbetts wanted to present it in August and hoped the boundary map would have a more realistic basis for it. He pointed out that the existing boundary went through forest areas which wouldn't be developed. Others have been changing. He hoped to come up with an agreement. It was now at staff level and would be discussed at the next TCC meeting.

Commissioner Sullivan suggested they include the presumptive city limit boundary. That would be useful primarily within I-25 and 599. He said he would show I-25 a little differently on the map.

Governor Mora requested a special presentation to the tribal council since it would encompass the Tesuque reservation. He explained that without a presentation, there would be opposition. He added that they had a change of administration yearly and the only people to provide consistency was the form of government.

Mr. Tibbetts agreed to make the presentation to the Tribal Council.

MATTERS FROM THE SFMPO TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD

None.

MATTERS FROM THE SFMPO STAFF

None.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM NMDOT AND FHWA

None.

ADJOURNMENT – Next scheduled meeting – Thursday, August 14, 2008 at 10:00 a.m.

Having completed the agenda and with no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 12:01 p.m.

Approved by:

Miguel Chávez, Chairman

Submitted by:



Carl Boaz, Stenographer