

GREATER MORGANTOWN MPO

June 16, 2011 Minutes City Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT: Anthony Giambrone, Charles Bryer, Patty Lewis, Bill Byrne, Perry Keller, David Bruffy, Asel Kennedy, Joe Fisher, Joe Statler, Mike Kelly

MEMBERS ABSENT: Janice Goodwin, Eldon Callen

1. CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Fisher called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

2. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

3. APPROVAL of MINUTES: Mr. Byrne moved to approve the minutes of May 2011 as submitted; seconded by Mr. Keller. The motion unanimously carried.

4. FINANCE REPORT: Mr. Austin reported expenditures have been reimbursed by the State. All current bills have been paid, leaving a balance of approximately \$38,000. Mr. Byrne moved to accept the report as submitted; seconded by Mr. Giambrone. The motion unanimously carried.

5. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Mr. Austin reported:

a. The selection committee for the LRTP consultant has chosen Burgess & Niple of Columbus Ohio. The other two companies, URS and Parsons Brinkerhoff have been notified of the selection. It is hoped that the scope of work and contract will be ready by the August meeting;

b. TDM Project. A Transportation Fair, with BOPARC, MountainLine, WVU and Positive Spin will be held on July 1 at Marilla Park. Board members are encouraged to attend. Work is being done with students doing a summer program through BOPARC regarding the MPO and road improvement. A minimum of 200 children are expected to attend.

c. Working with the DOT to promote corridor protection through out the state. Met with Senator Beach to discuss the institution of a pilot program to preserve corridors and develop policies that could promote cost effective transportation improvements;

d. Working to address issues with the public regarding the construction on University and Beechurst Avenues;

e. The Dynamic Signal system has been on since May. Some problems will need to be worked out as the system is refined. It is very successful on the 705 Corridor;

f. Met with the DOH's design director on the Mileground Project. The DOH is doing further exploration on utility and land use issues. The refined design will be

presented to the public. Mr. Keller also stated underground surveys are being conducted for utilities. There are also additional storm water issues that may need to be dealt with. Additional purchase of right of ways may be required. Mr. Byrne asked if the University Avenue project will be completed by August 19. Mr. Austin advised it would be. Mr. Spencer expressed concern over the size of the sidewalks being only 48 inches. He also asked if there is still a plan for a crosswalk. Mr. Austin stated there would be a crosswalk but not at the bridge. Mr. Fisher asked if pedestrian guard rails were considered. Mr. Keller stated he would mention that to the design engineers.

6. TIP AMENDMENTS: Mr. Austin stated two projects would be added and one project will be removed.

- a.** From WV 7/I-68 Interchange to WV 7CR 22. Project U331 7 03615 00 – Construct a turn lane and add signals. Turn lanes will be added to both off ramps and a turn signal to and from westbound I-68. (CAC recommended against approval. It did not understand its priority in the MPO structure).
- b.** Monongalia County Urban Mass transit/Morgantown Monongalia MPO. Vanpool Program Startup funds. FHA approved the transfer of \$50,000; \$8,000 will be used as promotional monies and the remainder will kick start van pooling. FHA will give approval when the process may begin.

Removing:

- a.** Re-surface I-68 from Milepost 4.18 for a distance of 4.2 miles. Mr. Austin reported the local design engineer advised this project may be readded at some point in the future.

(CAC would prefer to move the project back instead of removing it).

Mr. Kennedy moved to include the first two projects and remove the project as recommended; Mr. Kelly seconded it. Discussion on the motion was as follows:

Mr. Kennedy stated that the funds are not allocated to the MPO for the projects, they were just recommended by the State. Mr. Byrne stated he did not want to lose the funds but felt there are more pressing traffic issues and that he would like to save up the funds for larger projects. Mr. Austin stated Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality funds are targeted for smaller projects and not major capacity improvements.

Mr. Spencer questioned the Vanvoorhis/Chestnut Ridge road intersection configuration. Mr. Austin advised it was under study and there are no funds available for that project. The DOH is looking into alternatives. The project may become eligible for funding if an acceptable solution is found. There is no definitive schedule for any improvement to the intersection. Mr. Keller stated the study has not evaluated potential alternatives. There are no cost estimates and it is not included in the TIP. He also stated the DOH design engineers have obtained new

software to evaluate roundabouts and traffic circles and their efficiencies. This will be used to evaluate any alternative under consideration.

Mr. Spencer asked if there will be a signalized crosswalk for the new signal at Mountaineer Station. Mr. Keller is unsure because the DOH is not paying for the light, WVU is. Mr. Spencer also expressed concern with the truck traffic problems on Christy and Windsor Streets. Mr. Bryer then asked if there would be any consideration given to Greenbag Road.

After discussion, the vote on Mr. Kennedy's motion unanimously passed.

7. Draft UPWP. The draft has been submitted for approval. The key item of the draft is the update of the LRTP, \$156,000 is budgeted for the first phase of the project. Also included is a 3% cost of living increase for the MPO staff and a potential pay increase for the Assistant to the Director after the completion of her probationary period; \$20,000 budgeted for updating GIS capabilities in coordination with the County's GIS efforts.

Mr. Kennedy objected to the pay raise at the end of the assistant's probation period. He believes it is too excessive. He also referenced page 27—The City and the County Commission have to make the local match. He requested the MPO's budget be submitted in January so the City and County know what needs to be approved. Mr. Kennedy also noted the City and County are paying lump sums to the MPO giving a higher percentage than the match. That is why there is an excess of money in the MPO's budget. He feels these problems need to be addressed.

Mr. Austin stated he will document the percentage of the match spent during the current year. He also noted that it was his understanding that in the past the City and the County had agreed to allow the MPO to keep unspent matching funds to assure that the MPO was solvent. Mr. Kennedy acknowledged that he agreed with Mr. Austin's description of the history of the MPO's match.

Mr. Bryne also stated the city employees were only given a 1 ½ percent raise. The county employee's raises were just about 2%. The MPO should give raises that are comparable.

Mr. Fisher recommended the MPO officers work with Mr. Austin on the assistant's evaluation and will handle the issue of a raise based on the grievances heard. Mr. Kennedy moved to have the MPO officers handle the evaluation and raise issue; seconded by Mr. Byrne. The motion unanimously passed.

8. Draft MPO FOIA Policy. The MPO's FOIA policy provides four hours of staff time at 20 pages at no charge. After that, copy costs are 25 cents/page and an estimate of staff's time at the employee's loaded salary rate. The policy was reviewed by Attorney Peter DeMasters and approved. Mr. Statler and Mr. Kelly advised they want to make sure that it was ok to charge for staff's time. Mr. Byrne moved to approve the policy as amended in conformance with MPO member's objections; Mr. Keller seconded it. The motion unanimously passed.

9. OTHER BUSINESS:

- a.** Mr. Keller stated one self certification needs to be added to the UPWP draft stating all federal rules and regulations have been complied with. It then needs to be signed by the Chairman and Paul Mattox, Sec. of the DOT.
- b.** Mr. Spencer brought up Marcellus Shale development. He is concerned with the amount of additional truck traffic on Westover Roads. Mr. Byrne noted the MPO does not have the ability to deal with this problem but it is a valid concern. Mr. Keller advised the DOH has assurances from contractors that any damage to roads would be fixed at the company's expense. Mr. Spencer requested a letter of concern be sent from the MPO to Senator Kessler to address well drilling and its impact on transportation. Mr. Byrne then suggested this matter be referred to the CAC for a drafted statement that expresses a desire for someone to address the transpiration issue. Mr. Kennedy advised it is not the job of the MPO to say where trucks may or may not go. Mr. Fisher stated he does not believe the CAC should draft and/or send a letter. Mr. Statler and Mr. Kennedy agreed. Mr. Bruffy added that as a point of order, this issue is not on the agenda and cannot be dealt with. Mr. Fisher stated anyone wishing this issued be taken to the CAC can ask it be placed on next month's meeting agenda. Mr. Spencer would volunteer to draft the letter.
- c.** Referencing construction of the new school off 705, Mr. Statler was concerned in the hearing delay for the project on the Mileground. There needs to be some direction as to what is going to happen on the Mileground, or at the very least, at the intersection. Mr. Austin stated the design engineer has met with the architects and has given them direction. Mr. Keller stated the contract for the Mileground construction may be broken into sections so the intersection may be dealt with.
- d.** Mr. Fisher noted that this would be the last meeting for Mr. Spencer and Mr. Bryer. Resolutions were read thanking them for their years of service.

10. NEXT MEETING: August 18, 2010

11. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm