

KALAMAZOO AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY POLICY COMMITTEE
Approved Minutes of the November 20, 2019 Meeting

CALL TO ORDER

The November 20, 2019 Policy Committee Meeting was called to order by Chair Randy Thompson at 9:01 a.m. Thompson welcomed Joe La Margo, City of Portage City Manager and congratulated David Anderson on his new City of Kalamazoo mayoral position.

INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions were made by all present.

ROLL CALL

Meeting attendance was recorded on the sign-in sheet.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Curtis Aardema	Central County Transportation Authority
David Anderson	City of Kalamazoo
Dan Bishop	Village of Lawton
Rob Britigan	City of Parchment
Carol Daly	Village of Mattawan
Marsha Drouin, Treasurer	Richland Township
Jason Gatlin	Wakeshma Township
John Gisler	Kalamazoo County
Libby Heiny-Cogswell	Oshtemo Township
Joanna Johnson	Road Commission of Kalamazoo County
Greg Kinney	Van Buren County Road Commission
Joe La Margo	City of Portage
Don Martin	Kalamazoo Township
Tracey Locey	Brady Township
Pete Pfeiffer	Michigan Department of Transportation, TSC
Paul Schincariol	Van Buren County Road Commissioners
Jeff Sorensen	Cooper Township
Randy Thompson, Chair	Comstock Township
Don Ulsh	Schoolcraft Township
Jerry VanderRoest	Charleston Township

MEMBERS ABSENT

Sarah Moyer-Cale	Village of Paw Paw
Pamela Goodacre	Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority
Jeff Heppler	Village of Augusta
Carl Keller	Village of Vicksburg
Don Mayle	MDOT, Planning
Tom Swiat	Prairie Ronde Township

OTHERS PRESENT

Deb Buchholtz	Road Commission of Kalamazoo County
John Hinkle	Texas Township
Sean McBride	Metro
Megan Mickelson	KATS
Dexter Mitchell	Kalamazoo Township
Fred Nagler	KATS
Josh Owens	Oshtemo Township

Elizabeth Rumick	KATS
Paul Sotherland	KATS Citizens Advisory Committee
Jon Start	KATS
Steve Stepek	KATS

CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

No changes or additions to the agenda were requested.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION by Sorensen, SECOND by Hinkle, ***“to approve the agenda of the November 20, 2019 Policy Committee Meeting.”*** MOTION APPROVED.

CITIZENS’ COMMENTS

No citizens’ comments were made.

CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION by Martin, SECOND by Sorensen, ***“to accept and approve the items on the Consent Agenda as listed.”*** MOTION APPROVED.

RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2020 STATE SAFETY TARGETS

Start stated the memo on Calendar Year 2020 State Safety Targets was distributed at today’s meeting. Referring to the material, Start pointed out the downward safety forecast trend and explained the option of adopting state targets, which Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) and all Metropolitan Planning Organizations in the state have historically done. KATS supports State Safety Targets as presented and recommends the Policy Committee authorize Chair Randy Thompson to sign the resolution of support as the Technical Committee approved.

MOTION by Hinkle, SECOND by Heiny-Cogswell, ***“to approve the Resolution of Support for Calendar Year 2020 State Safety Targets.”*** MOTION APPROVED.

KATS MODEL UPDATE PART TWO

Start referred to the Cambridge Systematics Memo included in meeting materials. KATS hired Cambridge Systematics to update the Travel Demand Model for use in the next KATS Metropolitan Transportation Plan. In this next phase, Cambridge Systematics will calibrate and validate the model at a cost not to exceed \$24,898.67. On May 29, 2019, KATS obtained approval for a Cambridge Systematics budget of \$30,000 in its FY2020 Unified Planning Work Program. KATS has been happy with Cambridge Systematics and recommends the Policy Committee approve the work program.

MOTION by Johnson, SECOND by Sorensen, ***“to approve the KATS Model Update Part 2.”*** MOTION APPROVED.

NOMINATION COMMITTEE FOR POLICY COMMITTEE OFFICERS

Start reminded the committee that election of Policy Committee Officers including Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer will occur at the December meeting.

Ulsh inquired whether there was still a Nominating Committee, which was discussed and will be worked on. Thompson agreed to serve another year as Chair.

TRANSITION PLAN FOR KATS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Start reported he plans to retire as Executive Director of Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study on May 6, 2020. In the Transition Plan enclosed in the meeting materials, KATS Finance and Personnel Subcommittee identified key milestones and dates to ensure a successful transition, which will occur

January 2020 through March 2020. At the March 2020 Policy Committee Meeting, official action will be taken to approve or deny the transition.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION UPDATES

Aardema reported Central County Transportation Authority (CCTA) and Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority (KCTA) met Monday November 18, 2019. Metro Connect On-Demand, county-wide ridership service set a record breaking 17,000 rides in October and continues to grow. The CCTA Board set a 0.9 millage rate for the upcoming millage request which will be on the March 2020 ballot. The millage, set after analysis by staff and the board, will allow continuation of current services while remaining efficient with funds. Metro will explore opportunities for partnership with large employers in the area, especially along Portage Road, using its current program with Bronson as a model. An East Comstock Township pilot route ended since numbers don't support continuation of service, mainly due to seasonal businesses such as greenhouses. Metro may explore the route in the future. The pilot Youth Mobility Program funded by the Foundation for Excellence allowing Kalamazoo public high school student access to buses has seen extensive ridership response of about 30,000 rides per month or 70,000 total since the school year started. Due to Transit Center behavior, bus crowding and staff issues, service from 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. may be suspended unless students have a Metro ID or parental permission slip. Metro recognizes the need and demand for the service and continues to review the program.

Ulsh suggested Metro talk to dispatchers to learn about issues with the Youth Mobility program. Ulsh Inquired if Metro has looked at expanding to US-131 north of Schoolcraft where two new businesses are expanding. Aardema explained the southern CCTA boundary is the City of Portage city limit but could look into a Metro Connect van-shuttle route. Thompson mentioned Comstock is looking into a van-type route to replace the eliminated route there. Sotherland expressed appreciation for Metro's data driven, proof of concept, way of working rather than experimenting.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Start reported Stepek attended the October 23, 2019 City of Kalamazoo planning meeting on downtown streets. This public meeting was the second of four. The city is using consultants and staff to analyze data and model microsimulation of networks.

KATS has not had a great response from utility owners in providing projects for the Infrastructure Mapping Project, whereby the goal is to assist all agencies and Metro Transit with coordinating utility, road and bridge projects. If better response isn't received, KATS may shelve the project. However, Michigan Infrastructure Council, Water and Transportation Asset Management Council and the state of Michigan are mapping road projects.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Michigan Department of Transportation partners, conducted their second Certification Review of Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study last week. KATS appreciates use of Metro Transit's conference room. Reviews are conducted with the objective of evaluating the transportation planning process, highlighting good practices, exchanging information and identifying opportunities for improvement. The process to revise the KATS dated Title VI plan has begun. To better include the limited English proficiency population, Mickelson added Google Translate to the KATS website at KATSMPO.org. Translators used by the Department of Transportation are available to KATS should they be requested. Although KATS In-Kind Contribution for its program match is a lengthy administrative process, there is no expectation for recommendations to change it. Assuming population thresholds don't change and more Metropolitan Planning Organizations are created, drawing from the same pot of money, dilution of federal planning dollars will result. This may necessitate augmenting resources with cash contributions instead of our current In-Kind Contributions.

Stepek pointed out that the federal government budget expires tomorrow. The House passed a continuing resolution to December 20th so it's now in the Senate. Since this is the last year of the

Federal Transportation Bill, it is a rescission year, meaning the federal government can take state money back, estimated at 325-328 million dollars. Use bank account money to fund projects such as the Kalamazoo River Valley Trail project so it doesn't get taken back.

Start stated we need to re-educate agencies and all staff to turn in time-sheets. KATS relies on time sheets and appreciates agencies providing the contributed service program match they agreed to. In response to Kinney's inquiry, Start responded time sheets are due the 15th of the month for the previous month. KATS program utilizes a tapered match, meaning required match may not equal the local share on any single invoice but will equal or exceed the local share over the life of the project.

NEW BUSINESS

Aardema clarified that the previously discussed millage rate is for Central County Transportation Authority, urban fixed route, and will be on the March 2020 ballot. The Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority county-wide millage will be on the 2021 ballot.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

No citizens' comments were made.

MEMBER COMMENTS

Aardema, as a member of the Airport Board, reported the Board met last week and optimistically approved the recommendation for a new Director who brings previous experience as the Flint Airport Director and may be instilled within two months.

Gisler reported Kalamazoo County will hold a special meeting November 26, 2019 at the County Building to discuss options to resolve the County's recent loss of in-house council. Current ideas include using consultants out of Lansing, hiring attorneys, utilizing the prosecutor's office. The city may lose 1.2 million dollars due to state budget line item vetoes which would impact Sheriff road patrol and jail staffing.

Hinkle stated Texas Township continues pumping water to decrease lake levels. The two lake associations are drafting long-term solutions to present to the county and have also applied to FEMA for assistance. Members noted beavers building dams significantly impact water levels.

Kinney updated Van Buren County Road Commission's progress on selection of a Managing Director. The search is narrowed down to two candidates. After business references and a background check is conducted, second interviews will be December 19, 2019.

Britigan reported the City of Parchment continues with lead water service line replacement which creates temporary road closures. This should be wrapped up by the end of the year with patching scheduled for next spring.

Anderson shared that MDOT owns 650 miles of rail line in the state of Michigan including the Amtrak line from Kalamazoo to Dearborn. Aardema clarified Amtrak owns track west of Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo. Since 90 percent of Amtrak tickets are purchased on-line, the staffed ticket booth at the intermodal station in downtown Kalamazoo will be eliminated in January, 2020. Anderson appreciates Metro's work with Youth Mobility Program.

Ulsh inquired about MDOT's status of the safety analysis of the US-131/ Shaver Road/ West U Avenue interchange. Pfeiffer of MDOT, responded results not yet issued.

Johnson reported Road Commission of Kalamazoo County (RCKC) approved the 2020 Budget and 2020-2024 Capital Improvement Plan. Projects are complete for winter. Each Michigan Avenue closed due to the investigation of Amtrak's accusation of rail line damage by County team and contractors. MDOT Office of Rail, Amtrak Officials, Contractors and County team determined no damage and work will resume soon. RCKC didn't turn in October, 2019 timesheets and will improve.

Heiny-Cogswell reported Oshtemo Township is responding to Federal United States Department of Agriculture questions on the sewer project and is expecting release of federal funds so the project can

go to bid. West Main Corridor Improvement Authority project is not moving forward due to lack of funds. Oshtemo is in the process of acquiring property for the Fruit Belt rail line, a goal for the Non-Motorized Plan Trail.

La Margo, Portage City Manager, is looking forward to getting to know members and comes with 25 years of experience in state and municipal government in Illinois.

Bishop announced Lawton's Christmas Parade will be December 13, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.

Stepek reminded the committee of the Holiday Breakfast preceding next month's December 18, 2019 meeting. KATS is available for time sheet and other training. KATS 101 Training Schedule will be issued in January, 2020.

McBride attended the Amtrak meeting with Anderson and noted Kalamazoo has the second highest ridership in the state behind Ann Arbor, so is a key component to the Amtrak system including the connection between Chicago and Detroit. There are future plans to upgrade the line from Ann Arbor to Kalamazoo.

Start reported at the fall Transportation Asset Management Council, Pat Karr, Executive Director Battle Creek Area Transportation Study and FEMA recommended all agencies have emergency procurement procedures in place.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, Chair Randy Thompson adjourned the November 20, 2019 Policy Committee Meeting at 10:00 a. m.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, December 18, 2019 - 9:00 a.m.