

KALAMAZOO AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY POLICY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the November 17, 2021 Meeting

CALL TO ORDER

The November 17, 2021 Policy Committee Meeting was called to order remotely in accordance with Kalamazoo County State of Emergency Declaration, by Chair Randy Thompson at 9:00 a.m.

INTRODUCTIONS

Participants in the meeting stated their name and location from which they are attending the meeting remotely.

ROLL CALL

Remote meeting attendance was recorded on the sign-in sheet.

MEMBERS PARTICIPATING

	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Call-In Location</u>
Curtis Aardema	Central County Transportation Authority	City of Kalamazoo
Rob Britigan	City of Parchment	Comstock Township
Carol Daly	Village of Mattawan	Village of Mattawan
Marsha Drouin, Treasurer	Richland Township	Richland Township
Jeff Franklin	Michigan Department of Transportation, Planning	Owosso, MI
Jason Gatlin	Wakeshma Township	Wakeshma Township
John Gisler	Kalamazoo County	Pavilion Township
Libby Heiny-Cogswell, Vice Chair	Oshtemo Township	Seattle, WA
Adam Herringa	City of Portage	City of Portage
Lisa Imus	Village of Lawton	Village of Lawton
Martin Janssen	Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority	Cooper Township
Joanna Johnson	Road Commission of Kalamazoo County	City of Kalamazoo
Sarah Joshi	City of Galesburg	City of Galesburg
Greg Kinney	Van Buren County Road Commission	Village of Decatur
Nick Loeks	Texas Township	Texas Township
Sherine Miller	Kalamazoo Township	Kalamazoo Township
Dennis Olson	Village of Vicksburg	Village of Vicksburg
Pete Pfeiffer	Michigan Department of Transportation, TSC	Benton Harbor, MI
Chris Praedel	City of Kalamazoo	City of Kalamazoo
Jeff Sorensen	Cooper Township	Cooper Township
Paul Sotherland	KATS Citizens Advisory Committee	Kalamazoo Township
Randy Thompson, Chair	Comstock Township	Comstock Township
Jerry VanderRoest	Charleston Township	Charleston Township

MEMBERS ABSENT

	<u>Agency</u>
Edward Hellwege	Village of Paw Paw
Jeff Heppler	Village of Augusta
Tracy Locey	Brady Township
Don Ulsh	Schoolcraft Township

OTHERS PARTICIPATING

	<u>Agency</u>
Megan Mickelson	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Julie Rogers	Michigan House of Representatives
Elizabeth Rumick	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Kathy Schultz	Central County Transportation Authority
Paul Selden	Bike Friendly Kalamazoo
Steve Stepek	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Ali Townsend	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Craig Williams	KATS Citizens Advisory Committee

CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Chair Thompson noted Stepek would like to discuss the creation of a nomination committee to determine recommendations for the three committee officer positions for calendar year 2022.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION by Johnson, SECOND by Heiny-Cogswell, ***“to approve the agenda of the November 17, 2021 Policy Committee Meeting.”*** MOTION APPROVED.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Selden of Bike Friendly Kalamazoo and the Kalamazoo Region Bike Route Committee announced that the head of the Kalamazoo County Public Art Commission has accepted an invitation to chair next year’s Bike Friendly Kalamazoo Public Art Competition. Building site selection for murals is underway. Contact Selden if you have a potential building candidate.

CONSENT AGENDA

- ACCEPTANCE OF THE TREASURER’S REPORT
- ACCEPTANCE OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT (NOVEMBER 4, 2021)
- ACCEPTANCE OF THE SOUTHCENTRAL MICHIGAN PLANNING COUNCIL REPORT
- APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE OCTOBER 27, 2021 MEETING

MOTION by Johnson, SECOND by Daly, ***“to accept and approve the items on the Consent Agenda.”*** MOTION APPROVED.

CONGESTION MANAGEMENT PROCESS DRAFT

Steppek reiterated the Congestion Management Process (CMP) Draft has been out for comment for several months. The Process is a regionally accepted, systematic approach for addressing and managing congestion. Overall, it is a minor update to the 2013 CMP incorporating recently adopted performance measures. The Technical Committee and KATS staff recommend adoption as presented.

MOTION by Drouin, SECOND by Johnson, ***“to approve the Congestion Management Process Document.”*** MOTION APPROVED.

2050 METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN DRAFT

Similar to the Congestion Management Process, Steppek explained the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) has been on the agenda and out for comment for several months. Several pages of comments are included in the link to the document. After robust discussion at the November Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) Technical Committee meeting, the Technical Committee and KATS Staff overwhelmingly supported the adoption of the plan as presented, but requested the non-motorized subcommittee meet in the first quarter of 2022 to discuss the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County’s (RCKC) non-motorized concerns. Steppek elaborated this is a living document that gets amended and is under a one-year extension from Federal Highway.

MOTION by Johnson, SECOND by Janssen, ***“that the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan be adopted with the stipulation that the Non-motorized Subcommittee meet as a Committee, the first quarter of 2022 to discuss concerns of the Road Commission.”*** MOTION APPROVED.

Steppek reminded attendees of the previous committee discussion to continue the Non-Motorized Subcommittee as a standing committee. Franklin added the Michigan Department of Transportation Statewide Planning has been and will continue monitoring the KATS MTP process, enjoyed the abundant public comment, appreciated the robust discussion on the plan, and looks forward to communicating the merits of the plan to Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration. Aardema asked who currently serves on the Non-Motorized Subcommittee. Steppek and Mickelson answered Mark Worden, Kathy Schultz, Kathleen Hoyle, Jamie Harmon, Paul Sotherland, Paul Selden, Jesse Morgan, as well as many others. The Subcommittee is open to all who want to serve. After expressing an interest in attending, Mickelson added Aardema to the Subcommittee list. Heiny-Cogswell thanked KATS Staff, the Non-Motorized Subcommittee, KATS Citizens Advisory Committee, the Disability Network of Southwest Michigan, Bike Friendly Kalamazoo, and all others who worked on the plan. Public input is very much appreciated. Oshtemo Township looks forward to participating on the Non-Motorized Subcommittee. Johnson appreciated the robust plan discussion at the recent Technical Committee Meeting and clarified the Non-Motorized Subcommittee is a subcommittee of the KATS Technical Committee meaning it will be up to the Technical Committee to address nonmotorized issues according to Technical Committee bylaws.

TRAFFIC DATA COLLECTION CONTRACT

Steppek reported KATS posted a request for proposals for traffic data collection during the month of September. Although this contract poses a substantial increase in cost from the prior contract, it is still less than the second highest bid obtained in 2018. The City of Kalamazoo, City of Portage, and the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County have agreed to the contract. This contract continues with the current traffic consultant who has been working well with all agencies. KATS Staff recommends approving the contract and authorizing the Chair to sign the document. Johnson

appreciates the partnership for the traffic data collection work and pointed out the need to research other options for who can assist with this activity in our region.

MOTION by Sorensen, SECOND by Aardema, *“to approve the Traffic Data Collection Contract.”*
MOTION APPROVED.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION UPDATES

Aardema reported the Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority (KCTA) county-wide, millage was approved with roughly 72 percent approval or 25,000 votes in support. Everyone’s effort and support in that process is appreciated. The Central County Transportation Authority renewed the agreement with Van Buren Public Transit Authority to service the western portion of our metropolitan area. Although some hiring is taking place, challenges continue due to the lack of bus drivers.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Stepak stated the Prioritization Subcommittee met and plans to send out the entire list of prioritized projects in December. The Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) Ozone Conformity Report draft, a Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration requirement, has been up on the katsmpo.org website for a couple months. The report outlines the process for air quality and will be presented next month for approval as required by the Michigan Department of Transportation. TIP Amendments will also be presented at the December Policy Committee meeting making quorum important. Dues invoices have been sent. Contributed Service Letters will be mailed the first week in December. The KATS fiscal year-end 2021 financial audit is underway with draft financial statements expected mid-December.

NEW BUSINESS

Chair Thompson expressed the previous intent to create a nomination committee to determine recommendations for the three committee officer positions for calendar year 2022. Sorensen volunteered to serve on the Officer Nomination Subcommittee and provided information that he has spoken to all three current officers. There is a need to fill the Treasurer Officer position while the Chair and Vice-Chair Officers volunteered to continue. Any member is welcome to volunteer for an officer position or to serve on the Subcommittee. Current Treasurer Drouin agreed to serve with Sorensen on the Officer Nomination Subcommittee. The Subcommittee will meet and present recommendations at the December Policy Committee Meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Selden of Bike Friendly Kalamazoo and the Kalamazoo Region Bike Route Committee invited attendees to tomorrow’s Michigan Department of Transportation Bike and Pedestrian Committee meeting at 1:30 p.m. under the direction of Sanada. The committee will explore regional bike routes connecting the KATS Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) region to other municipalities in the region. Selden added on to his previous comments that potential bike mural sites can extend across the entire KATS MPO area which includes a portion of Van Buren County.

Michigan House of Representative Rogers thanked KATS Staff and all agencies and committees for efforts to prioritize non-motorized planning in the region. Representative Rogers and Senator McCann secured an earmark of \$3 million dollars for the US-131 Business Loop Interchange. In partnership with Congressman Upton, work continues to obtain bipartisan support to secure smaller infrastructure bills and earmarks that would benefit southwest Michigan since the region will not benefit from the recently passed infrastructure bill.

MEMBER COMMENTS

Franklin of the Michigan Department of Transportation stated the 2022 Safety Targets should be heard by the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study Policy Committee no later than the February 2022 meeting.

Praedel recognized Aardema and the team for effort on the successful passage of the KCTA millage and numerous presentations and outreach in the region. The City of Kalamazoo Portage Road project continues with delays around Walnut Street. From the recent election, the City of Kalamazoo has four newly elected commissioners including Don Cooney the new Vice Mayor, Stephanie Hoffman the Executive Director of Open Doors, Estevan Juarez from Urban Alliance, and Qianna Decker who serves on a land bank board and works at Ameriprise Financial.

VanderRoest asked for a status update from the Michigan Department of Transportation on the half-a-million-dollar project on I-94. Pfeiffer responded the tree clearing from Sprinkle Road to Exit 88 may be behind but will follow-up with VanderRoest on details.

Heiny-Cogswell reported Oshtemo Township adopted the annual budget for 2022 with unprecedented recent changes due to the incorporation of the USDA Sanitary Sewer Project- Phase 1. Due to that project, many local roads will be under construction in 2022. Project permit approval was received yesterday. The project will go out for bid in a few weeks. The Oshtemo Township previously adopted 2022 Capital Improvement Plan will need to be amended due to the sewer project. The township is hiring a Public Works Project Manager to replace the retiring Marc Elliott.

Drouin thanked the Michigan Department of Transportation, Consumers Energy, and the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County for the successful Richland Township roundabout project. No problems or complaints have been received.

Daly corrected that one of the newly elected City of Kalamazoo City Commissioners, Qianna Decker, works for Amerifirst and not Ameriprise.

Olson stated the Village of Vicksburg sewer project is going well with most of the paving expected to be complete this week. The village Christmas parade is being planned but the date is not confirmed yet.

Gisler reported Kalamazoo County passed the County Budget on November 3, 2021. The county is deciding between two search firms to assist in the search for a new administrator. The final choice will be made by the full county board on November 30, 2021. Applications to apply to the county Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Director position are due Friday, November 19, 2021.

Johnson stated the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County approved the budget and Five-year Primary Road Capital Improvement Program as well as the Nonmotorized Master Plan Map. Winter maintenance began last weekend with downed trees. The Road Commission continues to hire CDL drivers.

Williams provided information that the Kalamazoo/Battle Creek International Airport has the option for passengers to enroll in the expedited TSA PreCheck program. Plan to arrive early and wear a mask.

Sotherland of the KATS Citizens Advisory Committee gave a shout-out to everyone for efforts on the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan and looks forward to working on the Non-motorized Subcommittee to implement the plan.

ADJOURNMENT

Following a motion by Britigan and a second by Janssen, Chair Thompson adjourned the November 17, 2021 Policy Committee Meeting at 9:47 a.m.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, December 15, 2021 - 9:00 a.m.