

# KALAMAZOO AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY POLICY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the June 29, 2022 Meeting

## CALL TO ORDER

The June 29, 2022 Policy Committee Meeting was called to order at 9:04 a.m. at Robert Morris Park, Kalamazoo, by Chairperson Randy Thompson.

## INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions were made by all present.

## ROLL CALL

Meeting attendance was recorded on the sign-in sheet.

## MEMBERS PARTICIPATING

Curtis Aardema	Central County Transportation Authority
Rob Britigan, Treasurer	City of Parchment
Marsha Drouin	Richland Township
John Gisler	Kalamazoo County
Todd Hackenberg	Village of Lawton
Jeff Heppler	Village of Augusta
Martin Janssen	Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority
Sarah Joshi	City of Galesburg
Greg Kinney	Van Buren County Road Commission
Judy Lemon	City of Galesburg
Sherine Miller	Kalamazoo Township
Chris Praedel	City of Kalamazoo
Brian Sanada	Michigan Department of Transportation, TSC
Jeff Sorensen	Cooper Township
Paul Sotherland	KATS Citizens Advisory Committee
Randy Thompson, Chair	Comstock Township
Don Ulsh	Schoolcraft Township
Terry Urban	City of Portage
Jerry VanderRoest	Charleston Township
Mark Worden	Road Commission of Kalamazoo County

## MEMBERS ABSENT

Jeff Franklin	Michigan Department of Transportation, Planning
Tim Frisbie	Village of Vicksburg
Libby Heiny-Cogswell	Oshtemo Township
Robert Henderson	Van Buren Public Transit
Tracy Locey	Brady Township
Nick Loeks	Texas Township

## OTHERS PARTICIPATING

Sean McBride	Metro Central/Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority
Megan Mickelson	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Fred Nagler	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Elizabeth Rumick	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Steve Stepek	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Thom Brennan	Road Commission of Kalamazoo County
Ali Townsend	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study

## CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were no changes or additions to the agenda.

## APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Heppler moved, and it was duly seconded by Drouin, **“to approve the agenda of the June 29, 2022 Policy Committee Meeting.”** MOTION CARRIED.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

Gisler representing Kalamazoo County, remarked the State Supreme Court Administrative Office may be adding an additional circuit court judge to Kalamazoo. However, the 90-percent-complete, new Kalamazoo Justice Center only has space to accommodate the current number of justices. This year’s Kalamazoo fair has been reimagined. It will be called The Kalamazoo County Youth Fair and Family Festival. The fair will highlight 4-H programs and youth and agricultural education. Carnival Midway rides will not be offered. It will be open to the public August 10 – 13, 2022.

## CONSENT AGENDA

-ACCEPTANCE OF THE TREASURER’S REPORT  
-ACCEPTANCE OF THE SOUTHCENTRAL MICHIGAN PLANNING COUNCIL REPORT  
-APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE MAY 25, 2022 MEETING

Sorensen moved, and it was duly seconded by Heppler, **“to accept and approve the items on the Consent Agenda.”** MOTION CARRIED.

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ANNUAL REVIEW DISCUSSION

As a member of the Financial and Personnel Subcommittee, Sorensen reported positive feedback was received on Stepek’s performance from KATS Staff and others. The Subcommittee recommends approval of a 5.8% pay increase broken down as a 3.3% cost of living adjustment and a 2.5% merit increase.

Sorensen moved, and it was duly seconded by Heppler, **“to approve the Finance and Personnel Subcommittee recommendation of the Executive Director’s Rate Increase of 5.8% effective October 1, 2022 .”** MOTION CARRIED.

## DRAFT FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES

Included in the meeting materials is a draft of updated Financial Management Policies with proposed changes highlighted. Stepek explained proposed revisions include:

- Updates for Purchasing Policies

- Addition of Lease Policy
- Addition of Subscription Based Information Technology Arrangement Policy

The Policies are out for comment and will be presented at the next meeting for adoption.

### **PROPOSED MEMBER DUES INCREASE**

Steppek provided information that due to an increase in the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) approved audit contract fees, a dues increase is needed. Audit fees in the approved 3-year contract are increasing 6.93 percent through Fiscal Year 2025. Since the audit is fully funded through member dues, KATS Staff and the Finance and Personnel Committee propose increasing member dues for the first time since the adoption of the fee structure in 2014. The proposal outlining the 6.93 percent increase is attached. The proposed increase will be presented at the next meeting for adoption.

### **CONTRIBUTED SERVICES FISCAL YEAR-TO-DATE THROUGH MAY 2022**

Steppek explained a summary of the fiscal year to date contributed services is included in the packet for your review. We have met the minimum requirement for the fiscal year, but please continue to turn in timesheets.

### **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION UPDATES**

Janssen reported the Central County Transportation Authority (CCTA)/Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority (KCTA) board approved an extension of the contract for \$1.2 million dollars to provide Western Michigan University bus service. CCTA/KCTA has experienced significant increases in costs of its janitorial contract. Metro's Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA) public survey is still available online. The idea of Micro transit is gaining more attention. This would allow riders to use Uber or Lyft to hail a vehicle to transport them to a connection point of the fixed route bus system or their destination. Metro's job fair was well attended. Metro continues to face the challenge of skyrocketing fuel costs. Bus shelters will be rebranded over the summer to match the current red and grey branding on the buses. Aardema added Metro is reviewing and modeling successful Micro transit programs currently being used in Grand Rapids and Muskegon. The service would be concentrated in specific sections of a community that cannot have a fixed route while not competing with private sector transportation offerings. Aardema encouraged attendees to express any thoughts or ideas for Metro now during the COA which is expected to wrap up in August. Detailed discussion ensued on Micro transit. McBride mentioned Metro attempts to continue to meet the public's evolving transportation needs. Any proposed changes resulting from the COA will take two years to fully implement. McBride reiterated the significant impact inflation has had on Metro, not only for fuel cost, but for new vehicles. Some vans have been on order for two years and still have not been received. The final vehicle cost is expected to be 75 percent higher than the contract amount.

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

In addition to what is included in the Executive Director's Informational Memo in the meeting materials, Stepek elaborated the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act bill creates opportunities for different grants. One is the Safe Streets and Roads for All program for safety projects. Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study met with the region group Southcentral Michigan Planning Council yesterday to discuss interest in this grant opportunity. The City of Kalamazoo and the City of Portage have expressed interest. A Comprehensive Safety Action Plan must be in place for the MPO area

before local agencies can apply for funding. Since the minimum anticipated amount is \$5 million dollars, larger safety projects will be considered. Discussion will continue on funding sources for the required 20 percent match of the federal grant. KATS Staff has started work on gathering data elements and will provide an update of the application process at the next meeting. Grant applications are due by September.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

VanderRoest asked for an update on the high speed rail crossing project in Galesburg. Stepek responded the Michigan Department of Transportation Office of Rail, and the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County (RCKC) consultant are meeting soon with Amtrak. RCKC is proposing a design to eliminate the need or requirement to partner with Amtrak since Amtrak is causing the delay.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No public comments were made.

## **MEMBER COMMENTS**

Sanada announced the Michigan Department of Transportation Region Planner Amy Lipset's last day is July 6, 2022 as she has accepted a position in the private sector.

Urban reported Pat McGinnis from Grand Haven will start July 12, 2022 as the City Manager of the City of Portage.

As an airport board member, Aardema provided an update on the Kalamazoo/Battle Creek International Airport. Demand for air travel is strong and planes are full. Since airlines are facing pilot shortages, they are unable to add capacity. The 2025 runway extension project, primarily on the south end and a small area of the north end, is in the planning stages.

Britigan reported the City of Parchment is a recipient of a U.S. Department of Agriculture Water and Waste Disposal loan and grant to improve the city's wastewater collection system. The annual Kindleberger Festival will be held July 6, 2022 through July 11, 2022.

Heppler reported the Village of Augusta Washington Street project will begin soon. The Village of Augusta continues work on its 5-year road plan. The Village is partnering with the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County to perform local chip seal projects. Sewer mapping started this week to assist in potential maintenance requirements since some lines are approaching 40 years old. The Village applied for over \$1 million dollar grant for a water project targeting the south-side. Traffic delays are anticipated during the Field of Flight air show and hot-air balloon festival beginning Thursday July 2, 2022.

Drouin announced Richland Township is pleased to have a meeting scheduled with the Michigan Department of Transportation regarding the Gull Road Pathway project.

Praedel reported the City of Kalamazoo City Commissioners passed a 10-year Sustainability Plan. Chip seal is planned on South Burdick this week. Praedel gave a shout-out to Metro for visiting the Oakwood and Parkview Hills neighborhoods in person to listen to their concerns and gather input.

Ulsh from Schoolcraft Township complimented Metro's organized and orderly running of the Transportation Center.

Worden echoed the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County (RCKC) continues to face long delays for vehicle orders, and material cost increases. Annual fuel cost is anticipated to be double or triple over budget.

VanderRoest is pleased with the Charleston Township \$1.2 million dollar upgrade to the secondary road off I-94 at Exit 92. An addition to the Charleston Township Hall was approved. In response to VanderRoest's request for an update on the I-94 widening project, Sanada stated the beams for the Portage Road Bridge are in place. Westbound beam installation is underway. The project should be wrapped up by the end of the year.

Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study staff Mickelson provided an update that she and Townsend are in the process of riding bicycles about 15 miles a day to collect non-motorized facility data using the GIS app.

Thompson reported Comstock Township continues work on plans for the new township office.

In response to Kinney's inquiry, Stepek announced the July Policy Committee meeting is cancelled.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Chairperson Thompson adjourned the meeting at 10:10 a.m.

*The next meeting of the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study Policy Committee will be held on  
Wednesday, August 31, 2022 at 9:00 a.m.*

*Approved 09/28/22 (er)*