# **DOVER/KENT MPO COUNCIL**

# **MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 2, 2015 MEETING**

**Dover/Kent MPO Council Members and /or Representatives thereof attending:**

**Brad Eaby, for Brooks Banta, President, Kent County Levy Court, Chairman**

**Robin Christiansen, Mayor, City of Dover**

**Don Tinari, Mayor, Town of Cheswold, for Kent County Municipalities**

**John Sisson, Executive Director, Delaware Transit Corporation**

**Drew Boyce, for Jennifer Cohan, Secretary, Delaware Dept. of Transportation**

**Mary Ridgeway, Division Administrator, Federal Highway Admin. (FHWA)**

**Members not attending:**

**Terry Pepper, Dep. Dir., Safety & Homeland Security, for Governor Jack Markell, State of Delaware**

**Terry Garcia Crewes, Regional Administrator, Region III, Federal Transit Admin. (FTA)**

**Non-members attending:**

**Bill Geronimo, DelDOT Finance Marc Dixon, FHWA**

**Rich Vetter, MPO Staff Kate Layton, MPO Staff**

**James Galvin, MPO Staff Catherine Samardza, MPO Staff**

1. **Introduction of Members & Guests**
2. **Public Comments**
3. ***ACTION ITEM*: Approval of Agenda (enclosure)**

MOTION By Mayor Christiansen to approve the agenda. Seconded by Mr. Sisson. Motion carried.

1. ***ACTION ITEM*: Approval of Minutes / July 8, 2015 (enclosure)**

MOTION By Mayor Christiansen to approve the minutes. Seconded by Mr. Boyce. Motion carried.

1. ***ACTION ITEM*: FY 2016 CMAQ Project Request - DelDOT Finance (enclosure)**

Mr. Geronimo reviewed the materials detailing the projects for which CMAQ funds are being proposed. He noted that there is additional Statewide funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects.

Mayor Christiansen asked about the Crawford Carroll Boulevard extension; Mr. Geronimo said there is money for preliminary engineering for that project. Mayor Christiansen reported that the City of Dover is negotiating with Delaware State University regarding the procurement of land for the convocation center, and asked if DSU should be contacted about this project. Mr. Boyce said that DSU would definitely be a partner, and that if Dover brokers a deal with DSU, DelDOT should be a party to the discussions, all should sit “at the table.” Mayor Christiansen suggested DelDOT contact Scott Koenig, to make things easier.

MOTION By Mayor Christiansen to concur with DelDOT’s use of CMAQ funds. Seconded by Mr. Boyce.

 Motion carried.

1. ***ACTION ITEM*: FY 2016 - 2019 TIP Amendments - Jim Galvin (enclosures)**

Mr. Galvin reported that these amendment reflect the changes that occurred between the May TIP approval and the State’s budget process. The three amendments provided are for the following projects:

1) US13 Walnut Shade Road to Lochmeath Way – southern half of US13 expansion

Funding was added to this project - $250,000 for PE in an out-year.

2) Walnut Shade Road – US 13 to Peachtree Run Road – improvements

This is a new project, funding for PE in FY2019 (near Poly Tech High School)

3) Camden Bypass – South Street to Rising Sun Road – new alignment

Money was added to this project in FY2019 for the southern portion

Mr. Galvin reported that the MPO was informed that the Smyrna project for Glenwood Avenue is being dropped at the Town’s request. Since no amendment form has been supplied to the MPO for this project yet, it will come before Council for the next (November) meeting.

Mr. Boyce expressed concern that approval happen in time for the FHWA approval process, and asked that the process for the Smyrna amendment be done as quickly and efficiently as possible. He said that no new phases could begin until the federal approval. Mr. Vetter reported that only the first three amendments had been through the public process. Mr. Dixon said that as long as the documents has been through the public process by the time FHWA gets the information, it should be okay. Ms. Ridgeway said that a conditional approval could be given, based on the timeline for the public comment period.

Council agreed to vote on all four amendments in two separate actions.

MOTION By Mayor Tinari to approve the three documented amendments as presented. Seconded by

 Mayor Christiansen. Motion carried.

MOTION By Mr. Sisson to approve the amendment removing the Glenwood Avenue project in Smyrna at

 the end of the public comment period if there is no substantive public response. Seconded by

 Mr. Boyce. Motion carried.

1. **DISCUSSION ITEM:Project Prioritization Working Group - Jim Galvin**

Mr. Galvin reviewed the process the Working Group used to develop the criteria and weighting for projects using DecisionLens. He reported that the project list that came out of that process would be reviewed by the Working Group, which may make some recommendations for minor changes. He expects to bring the results to the TAC in October. Mr. Galvin explained that he would like to take the TAC members through the entire process, to see if the pairwise comparisons change the project ranking. He also said that he would like to bring this to the PAC and Council as well, noting that it is a lengthy process, but he felt it would be good to see if there are any substantial changes in the rankings.

Commissioner Eaby felt it was a good idea to have knowledge as to how DecisionLens works. Mr. Boyce said there is value in knowing how it works. He said that he felt having the TAC recommendations, based on their technical knowledge, was good, but felt that the PAC should not participate, that the Council should rely on the TAC’s technical knowledge. He advised against considering PAC input in any way. Mr. Boyce felt that the PAC should understand the process enough to disseminate information but the technical nature of the process should be left to the TAC. Ms. Layton noted that the PAC’s role is to provide a lay person’s point of view to the TAC and Council. She said that the members of the PAC are a savvy group, and as PAC liaison she disagreed with Mr. Boyce’s recommendation.

There was no further discussion concerning Mr. Boyce’s recommendation, and subsequently no consensus or direction from Council to staff.

1. **DISCUSSION ITEM: Draft Public Participation Plan - Kate Layton (enclosure)**

Ms. Layton noted that the Public Participation Plan is updated every two years. This year she has reviewed the document and removed extraneous texts and updated required federal language with Mr. Dixon’s assistance. She reviewed changes made to update the document regarding the evolution of electronic and social media and reported on recommendations from the PAC and TAC. Mr. Sisson said that social media is not a way to be sure information is seen, and Ms. Layton noted that social media is only one component of the MPO outreach. Consensus was that every two years was adequate for updating the document.

Mr. Boyce referred to Table 10, asking for a clarification on the role of the Public Advisory Committee. The document notes that the PAC participates directly. Ms. Layton reported that the PAC had discussed this. The PAC participates in the review of the TIP during development, and participates in the joint public hearing with the Council on Transportation. Mr. Boyce said that sounds appropriate. It was also noted that the PAC assists in dissemination of information regarding TIP projects. Final changes to the document will be made pending any public comment.

There was discussion concerning developing an MPO “hashtag,” and the MPO “tag lines.” Ms. Layton asked if Council members were satisfied with “tag lines” currently in use: “Getting to know your MPO” and “Planning transportation for everyone.”

There was further discussion concerning the use of social media, particularly FaceBook and Twitter.

Mr. Boyce referred back to Page 10, again questioning the PAC’s role in developing the TIP. He felt that the TAC should guide the PAC through to effectively understand the process. Ms. Layton asked him to clarify, and he said that the PAC should be fully informed of the process, and have a knowledge of the process, but they should not make recommendations concerning the process or the projects. There was no discussion or consensus by Council members concerning his recommendation.

1. **COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS**

Mayor Tinari reported that discussion concerning annexation of Nobles Pond has been in the newspapers. The vote has been tabled pending further meetings. He felt that poor communication was the problem – people were reacting to rumors they heard rather than talking to those who are knowledgeable. He noted that most Nobles Pond residents have never been through Cheswold. The Mayor also said that the Town has a new traffic device through a grant. The device takes photos, monitors speed and traffic counts. Ms. Ridgeway asked if tickets were issued from the photos, but Mayor Tinari was not sure.

Commissioner Eaby reported that 85 applications were received for the position of director for the Sports Complex. He said they were close to hiring someone. The developers are still working on private financing. The Civil Air Terminal is moving forward. DelDOT is working with Dover Air Force Base. The study previously completed is being updated to determine the viability of the project. The goal is to be “shovel ready” if and when easements are acquired.

Mr. Boyce reported that the DelDOT US 301 project finance plan is independent of the Transportation Trust Fund revenue. Financing is based on conservative numbers and federally loaned monies. He noted that the CTP Public Hearing in Kent County was hosted by the MPO at the Camden Town Hall. About 30 people attended, which was a pretty good turnout.

Mr. Sisson reported that the Origin/Destination Study will be collecting data at the end of September. Dover Air Foce Base and Perdue in Milford will be participating – the data collection is timed to get response from shift workers. DTC has been talking to major employers Statewide, resulting in a new route for Amazon in Middletown.

1. **TAC Report – Rich Vetter**
2. **PAC Report – Kate Layton**

Ms. Layton reported that the PAC held annual elections. Mr. Michael Gumrot was re-elected chair, and Mr. Jayce Lesniewski was elected Vice-Chair. She also reported that PAC members live in the Thompsonville Road area, and have concerns regarding the traffic light coming down before the interchange is completed. They wanted to know what could be done to help the residents, since the interchange will take a year-14 months to finish. A PAC member who is also a resident of the area intended to contact the legislators. In particular, there were questions concerning getting on, off or across Route 1. Mr. Boyce said he would take this back to DelDOT; he said he was not sure if there were any plans to monitor traffic once the detour was in place.

1. **Staff Reports –**

 **12.1 Outreach Activities – Kate Layton**

 **12.2 UPWP Progress & Financial Reports – Rich Vetter (enclosure)**

 **12.3 Other MPO Projects & Updates – Rich Vetter**

Ms. Layton reported that the MPO participated in the Wyoming Peach Festival, and the Kent Kids Back to School event. She is working on the next MPO newsletter and is assisting the Delaware APA with its newsletter.

Mr. Vetter reported that there is about $185,000 left from FY15 and FY14, and that money will be rolling over to the FY16 UPWP. He said that staff would be soliciting suggestions from the municipalities for transportation projects. Mr. Vetter also reported that Whitman Requardt has been selected as the consultant to assist with the Capital Gateway study. Public workshops are planned for before Thanksgiving.

Next Meeting: November 4, 2015

MOTION By Mr. Boyce to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Sisson. Motion carried.