# **DOVER/KENT MPO COUNCIL MEETING**

# **MINUTES OF JANUARY 4, 2017**

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

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

**Michael Petit de Mange, for Brooks Banta, President, Kent County Levy Court, Chairman**

**Jamie Fenske for Justin King, Mayor, Town of Camden for Kent County Municipalities**

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

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

**Drew Boyce, Director of Planning, Delaware Dept. of Transportation, for Secretary J. Cohan**

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

**Members not attending:**

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

**Non-members attending:**

**Lainie Thornton, DelDOT Finance Mike Finney, DE State News**

**Mark Buckalew, DelDOT Michael McConnell, DelDOT**

**Don Tinari, Cheswold Town Council Rich Vetter, MPO Staff**

**James Galvin, MPO Staff Kate Layton, MPO Staff**

**Catherine Samardza, MPO Staff**

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

MOTION By Mr. Pepper to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Mr. Boyce.

Motion carried.

1. ***ACTION ITEM*: Approval of Minutes / November 2, 2016**

MOTION By Mr. Pepper to approve the minutes as presented. Seconded by Mr. Sisson.

Motion carried.

1. ***ACTION ITEM*: Long Range Transportation Plan - Rich Vetter (see Dropbox invitation)**

**5.1 TAC/PAC comments**

It was reported that both the TAC and PAC recommend Council approve and adopt the updated MTP. The Plan is currently in a 30-day public comment period, which will come to an end on January 6, 2017.

Mr. Vetter gave an overview of the final draft MTP, which has been presented to and discussed by Council previously. He reviewed highlights of the Plan, which had been discussed at prior meetings. He noted that the goals are consistent with all the MPO’s member agencies, and that the project list includes projects considered priorities by Kent County and the City of Dover. Additional projects were submitted by other Kent County municipalities. The public was given the opportunity to review and comment on the Plan. Mr. Vetter also noted that DelDOT uses the MTP project list to develop the Capital Transportation Program in conjunction with federal funding.

MOTION By Mr. Sisson to approve and adopt the updated MTP pending any substantive public

comment. Seconded by Mr. Pepper. Motion carried.

1. ***ACTION ITEM*: FY 2017 - 2020 TIP Amendments - DelDOT Finance**

**(West Dover Connector, Electric Bus Purchase, Electric Bus Charging Stations)**

**6.1 TAC/PAC comments**

The TAC recommended that Council approve the amendments as presented. Ms. Layton reported that the PAC members had issues with the high additional costs related to the West Dover Connector and wondered why it was not discovered sooner.

Mr. Buckalew reported that originally construction had been estimated at $1M for patch and overlay at West North Street. However, it was discovered that the condition of the road was such that it had to be taken off down to the subgrade and totally redone. The new cost is $5.8 M. However, there are two major employment centers – Proctor and Gamble and Kraft – and construction has to be scheduled when it is convenient for P&G and Kraft. He noted that Kraft is expected to be down for two weeks in April. The new road will cost $5.8M. The choice was to spend the money to fix it now, or later. It was also noted that West North Street is currently heavily used by tractor trailers, requiring new pavement every 30-40 years.

Mr. Buckalew said that the cost is a good price, and using pre-cast panels at the intersection will speed up the process. An aggressive construction schedule has been planned to keep detours down to a minimum. There will be a two-month period of detours, 2-3 weeks in each section, maybe four. There will also be a month of lane closures.

There was discussion concerning the electric buses and charging station. Ms. Thornton reported that $2M is from a grant for low-to-now emissions transit. The amendment is required because the opportunity and award of the grant happened quickly. She reviewed the financial information, noting that both amendments include both 70%/30% and 80% 20% Federal/State match funding programs.

Ms. Layton noted that the PAC would like more detailed information in the TIP amendments in future.

MOTION By Mr. Sisson to approve and adopt all three amendments as presented. Seconded by Mr.

Pepper. Motion carried.

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

**7.1 TAC/PAC comments**

Ms. Layton reminded Council that the updated Public Participation Plan has been presented and discussed before. All suggestions made by the committees and Council have been incorporated. There were no public comments during the 45-day comment period. Both the TAC and PAC recommend approval of the Plan.

MOTION By Mr. Petit de Mange to approve the updated Plan. Seconded by Mr. Pepper.

Motion carried.

1. **PRESENTATION: Downtown Dover Parking Study - Rich Vetter**

Mr. Vetter presented a map illustrating the 10-block area of the study. The four issues being considered are:

1. Is there enough parking to serve residents, employers and retail stores;
2. Is there enough signage directing visitors to parking;
3. Is the cost of parking consistent and adequate;
4. Is a parking garage warranted?

There was some discussion concerning ownership of parking lots, five (5) of which are owned by the City of Dover and some by private individuals or companies. It was noted that the permit-only parking lots are problematic, since some are empty most of the time, but no one can park there. Other parking lots are metered or free. The private lots are not available to the general public. It can be confusing; for example, on Bradford Street along there is permit, metered and free two-hour parking.

Public outreach includes a Steering Committee, three public workshops, meetings with business owners, and the Downtown Dover Partnership (DDP) Parking Committee.

There are concerns that with the development of a site plan for the Loockerman Plaza, there will be a loss of parking. In addition, future streetscaping along Forest Street and the planned Roundabout along Loockerman Street may also lead to a loss in parking spaces.

Alternatives being considered are smart meters, shared parking in private lots, a change in regulations and policies, reconfiguring of parking lots, zoning changes, and possible new lots or a parking garage. The study is expected to be finished in summer 2017.

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

Ms. Layton reported that Bruce Snow is the new agribusiness member appointed by Kent County Levy Court. Mr. Shaine Breakie is DTC’s new appointee. The City of Dover and the Governor’s Office are both working on filling vacant PAC positions.

1. **COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS**

Mayor Tinari reported that real estate sales in Cheswold are picking up. The Town is still facing issues with homes being outside of the Town water line if there is a fire. The Town is starting to have money again after paying off its debts.

Mr. Boyce reported that the Thompsonville Road interchange will be open in spring 2017. The West Dover Connector is expected to be complete in the summer of 2017, South Frederica interchange spring of 2018, and Little Heaven in the fall of 2018. He also gave updates on Voshell Mill Road sidewalks, the trail connecting Brecknock Park to Schutte Park and the Boys and Girls Club, and the West Street Trail.

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 she is working on the next newsletter, and that the MPO sent out congratulatory cards to PAC members who welcomed babies at the end of 2016.

Mr. Vetter reported that the MPO UPWP Agreement has not yet been amended. DelDOT has not yet added the FY2016 rollover money to the total amount available to the MPO.

Mr. Vetter also reported that the Regional Bicycle Plan Working Group is developing a priority list of projects for the updated Plan. Mr. Galvin reported that the MPO had hosted the Delmarva Freight Summit at the Duncan Center in December. Approximately 40 people from government and the private sector attended. The plan is to meet every six months or so and alternate between up and down state locations.

Mr. Tinari took the opportunity to say he wanted Cheswold to continue to have a presence at the MPO Council meetings, and explained that he had been unable to attend the last meeting due to illness. He also said that now that the Nobles Pond community is part of Cheswold, town meeting attendance has increased.

**NEXT MEETING: MARCH 1, 2017**