

MEETING MINUTES

Officials Committee Meeting
Thursday, November 21, 2013
1:30 p.m.
Mayor's Conference Room

Members Present: Mayor Beutler; Carl Eskridge, City Council; Brent Smoyer, County Board; Randy Peters, Nebraska Department of Roads.

Others Present: Lin Quenzer, City Ombudsman; David Cary, Mike Brienzo, Michele Abendroth, Planning.

The meeting was called to order at 1 p.m. The Nebraska Open Meetings Act was acknowledged.

1. Review and action on the draft minutes of the August 29 and September 27, 2013 Officials Committee meeting.

Smoyer moved approval of the minutes of the August 29 and September 27, 2013 Officials Committee meeting, seconded by Peters. The motion carried unanimously.

1. Review and action on revisions to the FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program.

- a) Nebraska Department of Roads
- b) Lancaster County

Brienzo stated that there are two State projects and one County project for inclusion in the FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program. The State projects are for an intersection improvement on Highway 6 at 40th Street and for rumble strips on I-80 at 27th Street. The County project is for pavement markings for paved rural roads.

Smoyer moved to approve the revisions to the FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program, seconded by Peters. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Review and action on the Lincoln MPO Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) *Project Prioritization and Selection Process* for developing a program of projects. This is to develop a TAP program and administer a call for project proposals to fund transportation alternative projects as defined by the federal regulations. The resulting program will enable projects to be implemented.

Brienzo explained that MAP-21 created a new Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) by consolidating several programs into one funding source. With that change, these funds were divided between the State and MPOs. Through the program, 50% is going to the NDOR, and the other 50% is divided up between Lincoln, MAPA and rural programs. This breaks down to 7% to of the total going to Lincoln projects. In order to use those funds, we have to set up a committee and a selection process to identify a priority listing of projects. The committee will have a call for projects, review applicants to see if they meet the criteria and develop a priority list. The question came up if we could combine funds to do a larger project or phase a project over several years. The benefits of combining funds is that you only have to fulfill the federal requirements once and get twice the project. So there is some savings and efficiency in how the funds are used. Projects need to be identified in the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) or need to be located in a community planning processes.

The committee will need to ensure that the scope of projects is well identified and the project can move forward in a timely manner. We don't want to have a delay of projects. Scoring criteria has been identified, and the scoring process will be overseen by the TAP Committee.

Peters asked if the smaller entities could be a responsible charge. Brienzo stated that NDOR is thinking of providing an in-house responsible charge to serve smaller entities. This would allow the smaller projects to move along quicker.

Brienzo stated that the TAP Committee has developed program criteria and they need to establish the application process. They will recommend projects to the Technical Committee, which will make a recommendation to the Officials Committee for action.

Beutler asked about the protocol and if they can recommend a large number of projects or none at all. Brienzo stated that they are limited to the available funding for Lincoln and projects will have to be in the LRTP. They are mainly looking at trails projects which are already in the LRTP. Brienzo stated that we are not required to approve any projects, but this funding can only be used on TAP. Peters added that you would not be required to select any projects, but there is some risk because congress has rescinded money in the past that hasn't been used.

Peters moved to approve the Lincoln MPO Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Project Prioritization and Selection Process for developing a program of projects, seconded by Smoyer. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Briefing on the 2013 FHWA/FTA Joint Certification Review of the Lincoln Metropolitan Planning Organization.

MPO Direction on the Certification Review Civil Rights recommendations and initiating revisions to the MPO Public Participation Plan.

Brienzo stated that our Certification Review took place in May of this year. In this review, there were no corrective actions were identified, but the reviewers did have 13 programmatic recommendations with 5 planning commendations. The main commendation was satisfying the 12 corrective actions from the 2009 Federal Review. All past of these have been satisfied. The FHWA/FTA concluded that the MPO is certified through September of 2017. Brienzo briefly reviewed each of the recommendations and commendations.

Cary noted that Brienzo and other staff have worked hard to ensure we are in compliance.

Brienzo stated that one of the recommendations is regarding Civil Rights compliance. He noted that there is a policy in draft form that will address the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) & Title VI requirements. Once this policy is in place, we will add that to the Public Participation Plan which will cover the MPO planning activities. He also noted that another recommendation is to provide a special accommodations notice as required under ADA. This is already a City policy, so we just need to make it more visible to the public.

Quenzer noted that all LEP & Title VI forms have been completed for StarTran and posted on their website.

Eskridge asked if StarTran's or the City's website is accessible for the blind community. Quenzer noted that Justin Kohmetscher, the City's web designer, is working on updating the design of the City's website so that it is accessible for the blind community. It was noted that if a document is in pdf format, then the readers are able to convert the file to be used for sight-impaired individuals. We did this during the Comp Plan process.

Brienzo reviewed the Title VI civil rights plan and Limited English Proficiency Plan. The next step is to add these to our Public Participation Plan which includes a 45 day public review process. Once that is complete, all comments will be forwarded to the Technical Committee for review, and will make a recommendation to the Officials Committee in February.

Peters moved approval of the public review process for the LEP and Title VI Civil Rights requirements, seconded by Smoyer. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Other topics for discussion.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:29 p.m.

*** Please note that these minutes will not be formally approved until the next meeting of the Metropolitan Planning Organization Officials Committee. ***

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