



DRAFT MINUTES

December 10, 2009 – 1:30 p.m.

The Inn at 835, 835 South Second, Springfield, Illinois 62704

I. ROLL CALL

Board: Cameron Moore, Champaign County Regional Planning Commission; Terry Kohlbuss, Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, Norm Sims, Springfield Area Transportation Study; Denise McCullough, Bi-State Regional Commission; Mike Lammey, Kankakee Area Transportation Study; Bob Soltau, State Line Area Transportation Study; *Teleconference:* Gordon Smith, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning; Steve Ernst, Rockford Metropolitan Agency for Planning; Jennifer Sicks, McLean County Regional Planning; Brian Dickson, DeKalb-Sycamore Area Transportation Study; Adam Aull, Danville Area Transportation Study. *Others:* FHWA, Jon-Paul Kohler and JD Stevenson; Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, Maggie Martino, Lindsay Wallace and Deb Spencer; IDOT, Curtis Jones, and Tom Kelso; and Marta Perales, Illinois MPO Advisory Council.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Moore entertained a motion to approve the minutes of October 15, 2009. Mr. Sims motioned to accept the minutes, seconded by Treasurer Kohlbuss. All voted aye.

III. TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Kohlbuss reported the IDOT grant balance is \$8,736 as of October 31st which should get us through the remainder of 2009. Chairman Moore stated there is consensus for a renewal of the agreement that would put the ILMPOAC on a new fiscal cycle, beginning January 1, 2010 with an 18 month agreement. He will follow up with IDOT. Ms. Perales informed members there is \$12,500 available from the local match. The Chair entertained a motion to accept the financial papers prepared by ILARC. Mr. Soltau moved to accept the financial paper and seconded by Mr. Sims. All voting aye.

IV. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT REVISED DUES STRUCTURE

Chairman Moore informed members as a result of revised dues structure, Dubuque MPO has opted out of the council. Their board did not approve the dues and their Illinois MPO region has a small population of 2,000. Mr. Soltau indicated they may potentially have a Mississippi River bridge coming up and suggested looking at their CRP funds and the local match. Mr. Sims questioned whether there should be some differentiation for multi-state MPOs.

ARRA FUNDS

Chairman Moore stated some of the ARRA transportation projects will not utilize all the monies that were appropriated for the project. He asked the FHWA for guidance for these situations. Mr. Kohler indicated that all funds need to be obligated by midnight, March 1, 2010. They do not want to risk leaving money at the table. Mr. Kelso asked who is control of extra monies, MPOs or IDOT? Mr. Soltau and Mr. Stevenson stated they should be working the state to get it obligated. Chairman Moore stated it should be the MPO decision on where to shift those funds and apply it to a different project.

Treasurer Kohlbuss further asked if there is any movement about the White House spending another \$50 billion on infrastructure. Chairman Moore stated in recent conversations with Senator Durbin and several influential senators, reauthorization will be in the \$400-\$500 million range with a multi-year bill and they are requiring \$150 billion be spent in the first year. They are basically trying to frontload the reauthorization process to put monies into the street. There are other conversations on how to increase infrastructure investments.

Mr. Kohler stated FHWA is encouraging them to work with state DOT's to start generating another list of shovel ready projects, roughly in the same ballpark that we received from ARRA. The White House may be pushing this issue soon. However, the form may be in a standalone recovery act, or a front loaded reauthorization, but we could very well see a sizable increase of transportation over the next several months. Treasurer Kohlbus stated the form is important, and there will be a desire to hit construction hard, than we need to get plans approved and a couple of months could make a world of difference. Gordon Smith will have further discussions with Mr. Blankenhorn on this issue.

Ms. Bulat informed members that Iowa DOT has already requested the next list of shovel ready projects and their list was turned in a couple of weeks ago. Chairman Moore stated, the House and Senate leadership, the Chairman of the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee and the White House are all in a different place. There is no sense of agreement other than something needs to happen. He advised members there may be not any substantive discussions into this issue until late January. Mr. Soltau advised that this is the time to start talking to city, county and highway engineers; and not to focus just on resurfacing projects. Treasurer Kohlbus believes we should put together a position paper; this is how you can do it better this time. Mr. Smith concurred and Ms. Perales will be working with Tri-County and CMAP on drafting a position paper on what the second stimulus package should include.

Ms. Spencer stated Congress was trying to pass two \$100 billion omnibus appropriations bills soon. The \$200 billion is coming from unused or paid back TARP funds. Mr. Sims stated the Republican Caucus is arguing that it is not legal under the language that it was passed. Chairman Moore stated the minority caucus is urging the funds be put back into the general revenue.

V. STAFF REPORT
UWP UPDATE

Chairman Moore informed members that the current contract with IDOT runs through June 30, 2010 but the contract will be terminated as of December 31st with a new contract to begin January 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011. Ms. Perales met with the Technical Committee in November and reviewed the UWP. They requested the training topics be incorporated in the UWP. Mr. Sims indicated ILMPOAC needs to start to look at outcomes and the UWP really needs to be the MPO directors work plan, not just staff's work plan. Mr. Soltau moved to finalize the UWP by the next IMPOAC meeting.

USEPA – ILEPA STATE OUTREACH

Ms. Perales briefed members of a recent meeting with USEPA, ILEPA, Illinois Resource Net and CMAP. The Region5 USEPA office wants to increase the federal funds for brownfields in Illinois by creating a state outreach plan and assisting MPOs and RPCs in their next phase of Brownfield grants. They are going to be providing webinars and conduct a series of outreach meetings. The University of Illinois Extension briefed members of ILARC earlier that day.

Ms. Bulat asked FHWA if brownfields will be a requirement in the MPO process. Mr. Kohler indicated the buzzword is sustainability, and the coordination between USDOT, USHUD and USEPA. However, the FHWA hasn't seen any regulatory information on how this will unfold. Chairman Moore stated one of their communities did not approve the plan, because it is mostly geared towards roads and some of the roads in the plan are going to contribute to urban sprawl. He suspects next time given where this administration wants to go, and some members of the public; we may begin to look at density, infill, etc. The next reauthorization could make a fairly significant change from past policies. Mr. Sims stated they want sustainability, housing development, etc. but we are struggling with the mandates we have now. He questioned how can we adequately accomplish our task now and then try to fix a whole bunch of other problems.

Treasurer Kohlbus stated Tri-County conducted a transportation symposium and very deliberately introduced new concepts as a way of gathering public and agency input. Specifically in addition to the transportation values, we asked people to take into account balanced growth, natural resources and economic development. He indicated he was modestly terrified at how the public would absorb these terms. Ms. Sims states if an MPO wants to voluntarily include these factors that is far different than establishing performance criteria in a long range plan. Ms. Bulat stated we have always been required to consider land use, environmental issues, and other modes. There are specific housing plans that are required as their block grant programs, it would be duplicating work that are required to be done by other federal agencies. Chairman Moore indicated Champaign MPO staff was surprised at the feedback, and had to go back and rethink some of the elements in the plan.

OZONE LEVELS

Treasurer Kohlbus expressed his concern over the USEPA plans to announce a new ozone standard proposal this month. Tri-County policy makers would like a better understanding as to the pluses and minuses and they will work together to get consensus on this issue. He questioned if ILMPOAC should be trying to influence the state or federal level on this issue? Mr. Soltau indicated transportation conformity is a training topic for the Technical Committee. Mr. Kohlbus asked if would be feasible and helpful for the ILMPOAC to call together a small conference, folks from EPA, the Governor's Office, the Health Department, and other local MPO policy members for a gathering in Springfield. Ms. Sicks from Bloomington concurred it was a really good idea and thinks many MPOs will be struggling if this comes into fruition.

Ms. Bulat advised members Iowa DOT had a training session on conformity. In Iowa about 5 or 6 would be out of conformity. We tried to take a balanced approach, the USEPA is not concerned about economic development, by law they are only concerned about public health. Ms. Bulat indicated there are copies of letters that she can share with members. She advised asking them to make a tempered changed. Mr. Sims concurred a round table symposium was a good idea. Motion made by Chairman Moore to pursue the symposium and seconded by Treasurer Kohlbus. All voting in favor of the motion.

Ms. Bulat further stated Gena McCullough is the Chair of the Technical Committee. She expressed her concern over putting monitors next to roads, and usually you avoid where it is not ambient levels. One could take any highly congested area and you are immediately in non-attainment. Mr. Kohlbus asked what the difference is between carbon and dust. Mr. Sims stated this may be a reaction to cap-n-trade. Springfield MPO has a million dollar coal burning facility in Sangamon County. Mr. Kohlbus stated suggested MPOs read the summary and its influence on transportation planning. Ms. Bulat encouraged the Technical Committee needs to be steering the conversation on this issue and to educate their executive directors and other policy makers. Chairman Moore welcomed the discussion in this topic and looking to put something together by April 2010.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

PRINCIPLES FOR TRANSPORTATION REAUTHORIZATION

Chairman Moore opened the floor for discussion of the draft planning principles. Ms. Perales utilized the CMAP policy paper and looked for commonalities and outlined them in the draft. Mr. Smith indicated the CMAP Chief of Staff has reviewed the documents and will forward her comments to Ms. Perales. Mr. Kohlbus asked if they can take the position paper back to their policy committee. Chairman Moore stated some of the statements are so broad that we may lose middle ground in the future. Most felt that the principles needed to be clearly defined. Mr. Soltau indicated that major metropolitan areas and rural areas in terms of their focus on programs and their interests vary. Congestion pricing does not apply to the Beloit Metro area; in Chicago region it would make a lot of sense.

STATE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Ms. Perales prepared a synopsis of the state transportation plan to easily digest the bill itself and does not speak in favor or against the legislation. Chairman Moore stated the initial bill raised some serious concerns with IDOT and modifications were made. Mr. Kohlbus stated Secretary Hannig was supportive of the legislation. Mr. Ernst stated that the bill in its current form is going to be resubmitted in 2010 by State Representative Elaine Nekritz. Some of the bullet points would lead you to believe there is a change in the legislation but the bill reinforces that. There is not 100% agreement on this is the vehicle that gets us accomplished.

Mr. Smith stated CMAP's concern is passing a bill that doesn't do what we really need to do it do and for us to come back to the General Assembly within months possibly with something that is stronger. Mr. Sims met with Loretta Durbin, and asked if she was hired to lobby for the bill. Mr. Sims stated it was a benign bill at this point. He expressed the MPOs need to look at it because the last thing they need to do is respond to new mandates if we don't have the resources to do it. IDOT is supposed to provide resources for the committee but not for the MPO performance measures.

Mr. Ernst indicated their policy committee is looking to have a more transparent process that is performance driven with a measurable matrix. He concurred with CMAP assessment of the legislation. Mr. Sims stated he is supportive of MPOs having their own performance measures; but he is concerned that future amendments to the bill may make it weaker in the future. Mr. Ernst indicated the handout by Mr. Nunes had the district engineers reaching out to the MPOs in December. Ms. Perales asked if IDOT is prepared to make an administrative change or whether they would rather push the legislation. Mr. Soltau expressed the need for someone to follow up with IDOT on whether that administrative change proposal still stands. Chairman Moore indicated he will follow up with Les Nunes regarding this issue. No action taken.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

STP RESCISSIONS

Mr. Ernst indicated the RMAP policy members were asked to approve amendments to their TIP because of ARRA and they requested clarification on STP rescissions. Mr. Ernst would like to know how much of it came from the MPO balance and how much comes from the state balance. We received a letter from the district office to give us the go ahead on our next project in 2010 and it is tough to put together a cash flow analysis when you don't know what your net allocation will be; some of it or all of it could be rescinded. We need information as soon as it is available. He believes IDOT thinks the second stimulus takes care of the rescissions and it may become a moot point. IDOT and FHWA were not able to provide an update.

IDOT FALL PLANNING CONFERENCE

Les Nunes requested the MPOs discuss the possibility of the ILMPOAC taking responsibility of the IDOT fall planning conference in October 2011. Ms. Perales informed members the next IDOT conference has been scheduled for October 2-3, 2010 at the Allerton Hotel in Chicago. Chairman Moore stated there was a discussion between Dick Smith and the next contract will be from January 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011; so there is a good chance that there will be another contract starting July 1, 2011. Chairman Moore motioned to table this agenda item until it is determined the status of the contract extension, seconded by Mr. Soltau. Mr. Sims concurred this is the type of items the MPO Advisory Council should take on. All voting aye.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

HIGH SPEED RAIL THROUGH SPRINGFIELD

Treasurer Kohlbuss asked is there any reason to believe that anything in Springfield could deter high speed rail in Peoria? Mr. Sims indicated because the city and the county were not opposed to high speed rail that goes but whether that line should be 10th street corridor and the 3rd street corridor; which by the way of the larger plan that affects Champaign is real high speed rail using the 10th street corridor. It was a no win situation based and they were told this was a done deal. Senator Durbin brokered to the deal and the state will provide an impact study; for the 19th street line, the 10th street line, and the 3rd street line. The results of the study will be presented and they could select the corridor with the less impact; with no promise on which would be chosen. However, they felt comfortable enough that the 10th street may wind up being the route used. There is a down side. If federal funding to the state is less than \$1 billion than the whole deal is off. The other point is that there is a period of time is 16 or 18 months from the date of announcement, when the EIS response comes back. Mr. Kohlbuss stated that he felt that the statewide interests were considered as well as the local needs. Mr. Sims believes the leaders this is a century problem and this opportunity only comes up every 100 years; but they didn't want the local people to be negatively affected for the next 100 years.

COMPREHENSIVE REGIONAL PLANNING FUNDS

Mr. Kohlbuss stated that Dick Smith has told IDOT budgeters to put the CRP funds back into the planning budget. Mr. Sims thought it may be placed in the budget but at a lower level. He further stated when he was at DECA, millions of dollars were spent trying to make projects work if there had only been some local planning done. Mr. Kohlbuss expressed his concern that funds may be constrained in the future but would like to keep the funds flexible. Mr. Smith stated they have a meeting with David Vaught from the Governor's office in early January and will inform members of those discussions.

MPO POLICY OUTREACH

Mr. Sims stated the ILMPOAC to provide policy advice to the Governor and other policy makers. This is what you should be doing when it comes to planning in Illinois. Mr. Smith believes the administration look for that help and we need to be prepared to respond on policy matters. Chairman Moore stated it is a constant education process because many people don't understand planning. Mr. Sims stated there is some foresight in educating the Governor's office on the role of MPOs in their regions, to solve some problems, etc. Mr. Kohlbuss provided an example when Governor Edgar initiated Conservation 2000; it forced various natural resource in the state to come together and discuss matters; they would have these conferences for several years and an agenda was placed to the Governor and the General Assembly with some level of consensus. Mr. Sims concurred with the discussions.

IX. CALENDAR

The next meeting is scheduled on February 25, 2010. It is the same date as the Illinois Association of Regional Councils.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Moore entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Lammey motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Sims. Mr. Moore adjourned the meeting at 3:12 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Marta Perales