



## **DRAFT MINUTES**

February 11, 2010

Teleconference

### **I. ROLL CALL**

*Teleconference:* Gena McCullough, Bi-State Regional Commission; Bob Soltau, Stateline Area Transportation Study, Mark Smith, Decatur Area Transportation Study; Rita Black, Champaign Regional Planning Commission, Jennifer Sicks, Bloomington-Normal Area Transportation Study; Linda Wheeland, Springfield Area Transportation Study; Maggie Martino and Lindsey Wallace, Tri-County Regional Planning Commission; Joel Maurer, Brian Dickson and Steve Maney, DeKalb-Sycamore Area Transportation Study; Angie Stenson, Danville Area Transportation Study; Marta Perales, ILMPOAC and John Donovan, FHWA.

### **II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Ms. McCullough entertained a motion to accept the minutes of November 13, 2009. Ms. Martino motioned to accept the minutes, seconded by Mr. Soltau. All members voting aye.

### **III. AIR QUALITY BRIEFING**

Ms. Perales informed members that the MPO Advisory Council expressed the need for an air quality briefing. She also recommended putting together a white paper after those discussions. Ms. McCullough briefed members regarding the NARC teleconference on re-evaluation of the ozone standard. Those in attendance expressed concern for lowering the standard from 75 ppb to between 70 ppb and 60ppb, what is the impact on the planning process in general, and well as transportation conformity and economic development perspectives. The economic criteria are not evaluated by the EPA. They base their information from a scientific committee that gives them advisory information based on health. Health based information is what they use to set the criteria. NARC felt they didn't have the ability to comment on the health base information. They also felt although EPA will not consider those comments, other people will. There were some recommendations to open up the Clean Air Act, because the standards will be lowered to a point where we can't impact change because of technology, etc.

Ms. Martino briefed members regarding the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission air quality forum. County Commissioners expressed the need to understand this topic and are considering whether to submit comments to the EPA before March 22<sup>nd</sup>. The forum lasted two hours and they had representatives from Illinois EPA, USEPA, a local doctor, allergists, industry representatives, and the local health department. Commissioners will decide at the next meeting whether to comment and what that comment will be. Most at the forum were in consensus to only reduce the level at 70 ppb, based on the background ozone that we don't have any control over.

Ms. McCullough asked if it is better to focus just on educating our staff right now, and going back to our individual communities, to do a forum, like Peoria. Ms. McCullough advised we can get an idea from EPA who the emitters are of 100 tons per year that are the major sources. Afterwards, get the information for each of the MPOs and maybe have their own forum on the air quality changes and the ozone standards review. Ms. Black, Ms. Sicks and Mr. Soltau supported this proposal.

Ms. Sicks further clarified the topic as two separate issues. The first issue is the impact MPO operations, should we fall into non-attainment and the second issue relates to public information and gathering affected parties from the communities. Management of non-attainment requirements is very cognitive, both technically and structurally which can be addressed internally at a later date. The immediate need is for information gathering, even before we know what the impact is.

Ms. McCullough recommended placing the ozone briefing onto the MPO agenda and invite the Illinois EPA to give an overview from a technical perspective related to ozone, what is ozone, what this standards review means and how it might impact MPOs in this state .

Ms. Perales asked members if any other MPOs were currently planning an air quality forum. There were no responses. Ms. McCullough advised since it is such a technical issue and that it does need to be on everyone's radar. She believes the development of the white paper, and presentation would be beneficial. MPO Executive Directors can present it at their board meetings and also help facilitate a mini forum in their local area. She further stated Dubuque his beginning to establish as an air quality task force. She believes it's better to work with small groups to bring them up to speed.

Lastly, there was some discussion into the economic development perspective. In some areas, site selection groups are asking if your area in attainment or not. If you say no, the group thanks you for the information and move on. Few businesses want to deal with the regulatory side of things. We need someone who is knowledgeable in that kind of economic development and most felt that it hasn't been strong in Illinois.

#### **IV. TRAINING SCHEDULE**

Ms. Perales met with FHWA officials regarding the training topics in the UWP for 2010-2011. She will have further discussion with IDOT since they will need to initiate the request, not the MPO Advisory Council. She further suggested a training component to be scheduled with each Technical Committee for the remainder of the year. Ms. McCullough reminded members of the February 23 webinar on performance measures.

#### **V. UWP 2010-2011 UPDATE**

Ms. Perales informed members that the draft 2010-2011 UWP was discussed in a recent meeting with the MPO Advisory Council Chairman and Treasurer with IDOT. At the request of new Bureau Chief and Department Director, the UWP was updated for measureable deliverables and a level of accountability. The document was resubmitted the week of February 8<sup>th</sup>. Upon submittal, the revised document was sent back for minor corrections. It is her understanding that IDOT is handling the UWP in an expedited manner. She will forward the updated document to members.

#### **VI. OTHER BUSINESS**

Ms. Black briefed members on the first modeler's group hosted by Champaign County Regional Planning Commission. The next meeting will be March 25 and hosted by McLean County Regional Planning Commission. An email was sent to participants asking for ideas and comments regarding goals. To date, she has received one email with comments and encouraged people to submit comments. Ms. Sicks felt that the workshop was enormously helpful.

Mr. Soltau stated there was already a violation in Rock County and nearly a fourth of the county was in violation. The air was really still up there and the air settled down. Ms. McCullough suggested it may be the fine particulates and not the ozone levels since the monitors are not turned on until May. She further

stated that on January 21, there was a regional event published by Illinois DNR that may have contributed to the increase. There have been some occurrences around Thanksgiving, Christmas and now here at the end of January. We may bring this up at a later point.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. McCullough adjourned the meeting at 9:46 a.m.

Respectfully submitted

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Marta Perales

*Marta Perales*