



**DRAFT MINUTES**

February 25, 2010

1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

President Abraham Lincoln Hotel & Conference Center, 701 E Adams, Springfield, IL

**I. ROLL CALL**

*Board:* Cameron Moore, Champaign County Regional Planning Commission; Terry Kohlbus, 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; Brian Dickson, DeKalb-Sycamore Area Transportation Study. *Teleconference:* Don Kopec, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning; Jennifer Sicks, McLean County Regional Planning; Angie Stenson, Danville Area Transportation Study.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chairman Moore entertained a motion to approve the minutes of December 10, 2009. Mr. Lammey motioned to accept the minutes, seconded by Mr. Sims. All members voted aye.

**III. TREASURER'S REPORT**

Chairman Moore entertained a motion to accept the financial papers prepared by ILARC. Mr. Sims moved to accept the financial paper and seconded by Treasurer Kohlbus. All members voting aye.

**IV. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

Chairman Moore introduced Mr. Keith Sherman the new Bureau Chief of Urban Program Planning. Mr. Sherman has been at IDOT for 35 ½ years and has worked in virtually every mode of transportation. For the past ten years he worked in highway planning with a focus on revenue and resources. Mr. Sherman stated IDOT is working to find the right way to fund the comprehensive regional planning funds. He advised members to contact the Governor's office and their legislature to express their concerns.

Mr. Sherman updated members on the scope of services for the ILMPOAC. Ms. Stitt stated that the contract is with the Bureau of Business Services and will be forwarded to their legal counsel for final review within the next two weeks. In a recent meeting with Ms. Perales, Mr. Sherman supported the idea of sustained training efforts for staff and MPOs and he also was supportive of the initiatives outlined in the new UWP.

Mr. Sims asked about the status of the IDOT fall planning conference. Mr. Sherman stated this year's conference will be in Chicago at the same location due to a contractual obligation. Ms. Stitt further stated that they would like to get back to working more closely with the MPOs and staff to plan the conference to best meet their training needs.

Mr. Sherman informed members districts want to improve their relationship with MPOs. A primary example discussed at the meeting was the assumption of a second stimulus package. IDOT's goal is to get people under contract within a limited time period and they are out in advance to help meet some of these requirements. The Secretary of IDOT has expressed an interest in MPOs to provide comments on other state projects and they will have a letter to the MPOs about this matter soon.

Chairman Moore, Treasurer Kohlbus, Ms. Bulat, Mr. Soltau and Mr. Sims expressed the need for additional communication. Ms. Stitt reaffirmed IDOT's commitment to improve communication between IDOT and the MPOs. Mr. Sherman declared the state transportation plan sponsored by State

Representative Kathy Ryg last year emphasized the need to improve the transportation process with MPOs. One of the initiatives they are considering is an outreach to MPOs in September or October for program development to gather input.

Mr. Sims recommended a working group with the district people as a comprehensive approach to the next stimulus bill. He asked; what at the barriers that we collectively had previously and how can we improve the process? Mr. Soltau stated we recommended coordination meetings last year. Ms. Stitt suggested it as an agenda item for the Technical Committee to bring together programming folks together with the MPOs. Chairman Moore welcomed the opportunity to improve communication system wide.

Ms. Bulat pointed out some of the push back at the production level on what was eligible with STP dollars and discussed the need to have a multi-modal approach on this topic. Chairman Moore asked if anyone would have an interest in working with the central office to enhance the communication process to let Ms. Perales know.

#### **V. STAFF REPORT**

Ms. Perales provided a brief update to members on the revised 2010-2011 UWP. Upon recommendations from IDOT, there was a breakdown of staff hours for each particular task in the UWP and also included teleconferences and other administrative costs which will come out of the local match. Chairman Moore reiterated one of the main changes was defined expectations in the document. Chairman Moore entertained a motion to approve the revised 2010-2011 UWP. Mr. Lamney motioned and seconded by Mr. Soltau. All members voting aye.

#### **VI. OLD BUSINESS**

##### **PRINCIPLES FOR TRANSPORTATION REAUTHORIZATION**

Chairman Moore stated the second stimulus bill also extends reauthorization. Mr. Kohler informed members the House version extends it until the end of the federal fiscal year, while the Senate version extends it until the end of the calendar year. Mr. Sims was not favorable to establishing new Regional Planning Organizations if the size of the pie remains the same. He was concerned that MPOs lack sufficient resources for what they do now. At the federal level, they are talking about using transportation to fix everything from housing to brownfields. He questioned whether we should take a position on increasing the motor fuel tax. He would prefer that we strengthen the MPO role in the transportation process and not necessarily stretch ourselves so thin that we cannot do our jobs effectively.

Ms. Bulat stated with the ratcheting down of the ozone layer, industries will not be able to remain in Illinois or Iowa if we can keep on lowering the standard. Diesel engines in the next 5 or 10 years will be much cleaner. It's the trigger and not what was the cause which could be the lack of immunity of a person or plastics containers food is contained in. My concern is that it appears the enemy is transportation that causes these problems and there are other things are going in the environment that are being ignored. She has an environmental background with an ecology degree and a master's degree in environmental engineering.

Mr. Kopec questioned if they should comment on keeping the 50,000 population threshold. He further questioned why are we dealing with rural issues? Mr. Sims stated for many of us the break for what is metro and what is not metro is not a smooth break; we do have issues that come up that are inter-related. Ms. Bulat suggested the greater metropolitan area that we serve in the document. We have to look at the external attractions and we do not plan in a microcosm. MPOs have to focus on the metropolitan but we have to recognize the rural communities around us.

Mr. Kopec further suggested the third and fourth principle be combined into a single principle that addresses the need for additional planning resources for MPOs to handle such things safety and security, better modeling techniques, and the environmental work that we now have to do. He suggested a principle to reduce the number of federal funding programs and permits us a little more flexibility among those programs. He recommended a principle that looks at planning factors beyond transportation; such as integrating land use and transportation planning.

The fifth principle should be condensed and say that we need sustainable funding source and not list all the funding sources. Ms. Bulat stated any additional modal applied dollars don't recognize the fact that we still need to maintain the national highway system. AASHTO and other organizations are will support a rail funding stream in the next transportation bill only if is new dollars and are sustained from their sources and do not take away from the highway sources. We can't just give more for transit if the buses won't have anything to run on because the roads will be on a very poor repair. AASHTO is weighing on this issue.

Chairman Moore stated if we feel over the next few years that we need more road money than transit, or vice versa we must do so as long as critical decisions are able to be made. AMPO was promoting the 250,000 threshold and this bill will decide on whether to maintain the threshold of 50,000. Almost every MPO in Illinois will be out of business if the threshold is raised and a statement about that is fundamental to what we do. He further encouraged members to provide additional comments as soon as possible and to reserve the right to possibly have a vote prior to the next meeting and it will be predicated when the discussions really heat up in D.C. regarding reauthorization.

## **VI. NEW BUSINESS**

### **AMPO MEMBERS JOBS 2 – ARRA SUPPORT LETTER**

Chairman Moore opened the floor up for discussion to support the AMPO jobs letter. Ms. Bulat asked the FHWA and IDOT whether the legislation will be passed soon. Mr. Kohler stated the House version passed by 5 votes and the Senate version doesn't have a transportation funding element at this time. Mr. Kohlbus stated he would need support from his MPO before voting. Chairman Moore stated the passage of the bill is unpredictable at this point and we may have time to make a statement. No motion was made to approve the letter at this time.

### **NARC MEMBER LIVABILITY SUPPORT LETTER**

Chairman Moore opened the floor up for discussion to support the NARC livability support letter. Treasurer Kohlbus stated there is \$100 million in the HUD budget that will probably go to MPOs. \$25 million of it will be set aside for MPOs under 500,000 populations. In a recent conversation with HUD, they have yet to see much interest from smaller MPO's so the competition for these monies might not be all that great. This legislation is dealing with comprehensive coordinated planning and they are trying to break down silos from DOT, EPA and HUD by focusing on environmental issues and the interrelationships with streets and transportation. Treasurer Kohlbus motioned to support the letter and seconded by Mr. Sims. All members voting aye.

### **OZONE BRIEFING**

Mr. Kaleel from the Illinois EPA Air Quality Planning Division provided an overview of the proposed changes to the ozone standards. He further stated that Tri-County has an ozone fact sheet which lays out the health effects. Environmental groups have been more active on bringing USEPA to court to force these decisions on a more frequent basis. Under the prior administration, they set the quality of the level of the ozone at 75 pbb in 2008, which was higher than what health studies indicated was helpful.

The new EPA administrator felt it as necessary to change the standard between 60 to 70 pbb. ILEPA has a very open format and we would be happy to work with the MPOs when we get to that point. The State will produce its recommendations by September or October 2010 with a visit to MPOs impacted by the change to hopefully shape where those boundaries should be. The Illinois EPA will finalize the document by January 2011 with the USEPA making its decision in August 2011.

If the standard is set at 70 pbb, St. Louis and Chicago remain in nonattainment but we're also picking up Decatur, Bloomington and Peoria. If the standard is set at 65 pbb, we would be picking up Quad Cities, Champaign, Effingham and Rockford with three other rural monitors located in the State. If the standard is at 60 pbb, it is every place in the State of Illinois where we have monitors including rural areas in nonattainment will be in nonattainment. ILEPA will focus on the metropolitan statistical areas and in most cases these are multi-county areas. The presumptive boundaries are fairly large and the boundaries do not necessarily coincide with the MPO jurisdiction.

Treasurer Kohlbuss briefed members of the Peoria Air Quality Forum with lessons learned. In particular, non-transportation factors are significant. Some of it has to do with continuing equipment installation by industry and weather outside the region. There is a clear relationship between ozone and public health. If they set the standard to 70 pbb, Peoria may be able to dodge the bullet this year. Automobiles are getting better and cleaner along with changes in fuel. USEPA has flexibility, if you're over a little versus over a lot. Life can be real different based on the implementation strategies. The Tri-County policy committee will make a statement for which standards are obtainable for their area.

Ms. Bulat states their MPO area has been on the cusp for many years. ILEPA and Iowa DNR have been instrumental. Something is happening in our environment beyond air quality that is causing people to be more susceptible. They have a meeting where they will discuss their comments toward their standard. She questioned what is the economic reality of reaching this threshold? The Clean Air Act tells them they must ignore this. With 60 pbb every monitor in the State of Illinois as well as the Midwest will be in nonattainment. This will have an unfortunate negative impact on mid size metropolitan regions. St. Louis and Chicago are used to living with nonattainment. Rockford, Peoria, the Quad Cities, Beloit, the Cedar Rapids are not used to dealing with those ratcheting thresholds. Diesels and vehicles are going to be cleaner. Alternative modes will continue to be promoted. Energy productions and coal fire plants are all going to make a difference.

Mr. Soltau agreed that most of the country will be in nonattainment. Mr. Sims hears that the 60 standard that more than 80% of the United States would be in nonattainment. Ms. Bulat advised in a recent NARC teleconference, many members across the country felt it was necessary to look at reopening the Clean Air Act. MPOs may need to drive that discussion. Mr. Sims advised that our congressional districts may help to drive it if we cannot be competitive.

Mr. Stitt asked ILEPA once we know which areas will be impacted and what is the process after that? Mr. Kaleel responded nonattainment triggers their whole planning process and states are required to develop a plan to reach attainment in 3 years. However, depending on what the level of nonattainment, there are different levels and different classifications. He reaffirmed cars and fuel are getting cleaner and does reinforce the notion, the Clean Air Act is working in that respect. He also advised members of LADCO, the Lake Michigan Air Director's Consortium. There are similar organizations in the southeast. These groups are telling the USEPA to set national levels of controls and not create markets of advantaged or disadvantaged economic pockets. National levels should be set for fuel, power plants versus local levels.

Mr. Kaleel also stated that by the time you put together a plan and before it is barely implemented it is lowered again. He reaffirmed that there are huge improvements in vehicular technology. There is

probably a global background out there somewhere. Mr. Sims wondered what the background level would be. Ms. Stitt asked with the development of the plan would they also be setting a budget. Mr. Kaleel advised that it is not a real hard budget. There are admissions for power plants.

Mr. Kohlbus advised the next milestone is this summer. Mr. Kaleel confirmed ILEPA uses three years of data . By the time next January rolls around, we will be looking at 2008, 2009 and 2010. Ms. Bulat stated last year we had a fair year because it was a little cooler. Mr. Kaleel stated that 2009 was the cleanest year so far and they have measurements from the 1970's. Air quality data will be submitted this August and we will include this summer's data. The ILEPA will forward the recommendations in the fall. Ms. Bulat reiterated Treasurer Kohlbus's comments on areas of advantage and disadvantage. She further stated, the whole state is not monitored. In Iowa, not every MPO is monitored for particulate matter let alone ozone. Those that do not have a monitor are at a vantage point.

Betsy Tracy from the FHWA and commended Terry Kohlbus and the Tri County folks for their air quality forum. Chairman Moore stated there will be 4 or 5 training sessions this year and transportation conformity will be a topic. Mr. Kohler welcomed Betsy Tracy in her new position at the FHWA. She previously worked for IDOT. No further updates from the FHWA.

Mr. Sims advised that the ILMPOAC should consider providing guidance or policy advice to the Governor. Next January we will have either a have new Governor or a relatively new Governor and ILMPOAC should provide briefings regarding metropolitan planning issues such as the transportation plan which is developed every four years.

#### **IX. CALENDAR**

The next meeting is scheduled on Thursday, April 29, 2010. The next Illinois Association of Regional Councils meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 20, 2010.

#### **X. ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Moore entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Lammey motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Sims. Chairman Moore adjourned the meeting at 3:04 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Marta Perales

In attendance:

*Others:* FHWA, John Donovan, Betsy Johnson and Jon-Paul Kohler; Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, Maggie Martino, and Deb Spencer; CMAP, Doug Ferguson; IDOT, Tom Kelso, Keith Sherman and Susan Stitt; ILEPA, Rob Kaleel and Mike Rogers; USEPA, Douglas Aberano, Gilberto Alvarez, and Michael Leslie; and Marta Perales, Illinois MPO Advisory Council.