

Minutes
of the
Mid-East Rural Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
held
Wednesday, November 16, 2011

The Mid-East Rural Technical Advisory Committee held its meeting on Wednesday, November 16, 2011 at 10:00 am at the Mid-East Commission in Washington.

Those in attendance:

TAC: Robert Cayton, Derek Price, Ephraigm Smith

MEC Staff: Bryant Buck, Justin Oakes, Linda Roberts

State Staff: Muhammad Saeed

Guest: Daryl Vreeland, James Rhodes

Chair Cayton called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Agenda

Mr. Buck stated that he would like to add the Resolution Endorsing the application for Pedestrian Planning Grant Funds by the Town of Farmville to the agenda.

Mr. Price made the motion to approve the agenda with the addition, and Mr. Smith seconded the motion. The motion carried.

There were no public comments.

Prioritization of Mid-East RPO Highway Projects

Mr. Buck reported that there are 1300 points to rank the 19 projects, which he presented. He stated that he attended a three hour meeting with DOT representatives, on the point scoring system, which totaled 1287 of the 1300 points.

The following projects had changes:

- Item 6 NC 903 Martin County to US Bypass North of Ahoskie in Hertford County (8 MERPO pts)
- Item 7 Crescent Road in Kinston in Lenoir County to US 64 at Tarboro in Edgecombe County (11 pts MERPO) (50 pts East Carolina RPO) (39 pts Upper Coastal RPO)
- Item 8 US 264 Bypass in Greenville to US 64 Southeast of Tarboro (65 pts MERPO) (35 pts Upper Coastal RPO)
- Item 9 US 264 Bypass in Greenville to US 64 Southeast of Tarboro (50 pts MERPO) (50 pts MPO)
- Item 13 US 264-NC 33 Connector (25 pts MERPO) (75 pts MPO)
- Item 15 NE Bypass (39 pts MERPO) (61 pts MPO)
- Item 16 Widen existing pavement to 32 ft. (four ft. widening either side to accommodate bicycles (2 pts MERPO) (98 pts MPO)

Mr. Vreeland asked the TAC members for the MPO to be allowed to use the leftover points for a MPO project (US264-NC33 connector).

There was a discussion concerning using the leftover points for a MERPO project. Mr. Vreeland asked if there was another project that could receive additional points. Mr. Buck pointed out that the leftover points could be allocated or transferred to another project, RPO or anywhere. Mr. Rhodes suggested foregoing sharing these points and next year look at sharing the leftover points.

Mr. Price made the motion to accept the TCC recommendation for the projects, and Mr. Smith seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Merger Resolution

Mr. Buck stated that the merger resolution basically provides a forum for USACE, NCDENR, FHWA and NCDOT to discuss and reach consensus on meeting the regulatory requirements of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act during the NEPSA/SEPA decision-making phase of transportation projects without any voting membership. He stated that the NCRPO Association has endorsed this resolution.

Mr. Smith made the motion to endorse the resolution, and Mr. Price seconded the motion. The motion carried.

MPO/RPO Coalition Resolution

Mr. Buck stated that on October 7 a coalition of MPO's and RPO's representing 13 counties within Eastern North Carolina came together and identified six key highway projects and one Urban Loop Project that will improve mobility and facilitate growth and prosperity through Eastern North Carolina. The resolution was mailed in the RPO package for review. On October 18 the working group met and discussed top highway projects in the resolution.

He noted that Pitt County was the only county that had a stake, and the TCC is recommending the adoption of the resolution because they agreed these projects would benefit growth in the counties.

After a discussion, Mr. Smith made the motion to adopt the resolution as is, and Mr. Price seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Freedoms Roads Endorsement

Mr. Buck reported that the NC African American Heritage Commission is seeking endorsement for a proposed "Freedom Roads" Trail to commemorate routes used by freedom seeking African Americans from the antebellum period to the end of the civil war. This would recognize roads, rivers and ports along North Carolina's scenic highways and promote tourism. There are eight RPO's and seven MPO's included in the "Freedom Road" Trail.

Mr. Smith made the motion to endorse the resolution, and Mr. Price seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Minutes

Mr. Price made the motion to approve the May 11 minutes, and Mr. Smith seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Farmville Pedestrian Planning Grant Resolution

Mr. Buck stated that the Town of Farmville is seeking support of a resolution to accompany its planning grant.

Mr. Oaks reported the town is seeking a grant for expanding sidewalks/routes to get to schools and downtown. He stated that he helped write the grant and there is a local match of \$5,000.

Mr. Buck announced that the town has applied a couple of times, and he has been in contact with DOT and there is a good chance it will be funded.

Mr. Smith made the motion to support the resolution, and Mr. Price seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Rural Transportation Organization/Rural Transit Providers Workshop

Mr. Buck announced that the staff with Mid-East RPO, Peanut Belk RPO, and Albemarle RPO held a workshop with local transit providers to receive input and ideas on coordination of a regionalized transit system. A map of the area with proposed connecting points was provided at the meeting. He stated that small steps are being taken to help make this a reality.

Eastern NC RPO/MPO Meeting

Mr. Buck informed the TAC that the Mid-East RPO staff along with TAC/TCC representatives attended two meetings regarding prioritization of NC eastern regions top five regional projects.

Beaufort County Comprehensive Transportation Plan

Mr. Buck stated that the development of the boundary area for Washington Model with Chocowinity included needs and goals survey distributed at strategic locations throughout Beaufort County. Next step will be sidewalk/pedestrian facility needs identified based on survey and municipalities input.

Southern Albemarle Association Update

Mr. Buck stated that the 76th Annual Southern Albemarle Association meeting was held on October 20, 2011 and was well attended. Matt Wood, new Division One representative, talked about ferry toll and that Senator White has asked for a delay until the residents get over Hurricane Irene.

Mr. Buck stated that public meetings will be held on the ferry toll.

NC Association of Rural Planning Organizations Conference Updates

Mr. Buck informed the TAC that at the conference the association passed a resolution opposing the vehicle tax as one of the topics. Other topics were the Freedom Roads Endorsement and a handout about DOT trying to increase revenue.

East Coast Greenway Update

Mr. Buck stated that he was selected to sit on a subcommittee to look at the routes.

NC Maritime Strategy Update

Mr. Buck announced that currently DOT is looking at strategies for ports and will hold several public meetings. A survey will be circulated in the future.

NC DOT Updates

Mr. Mohamed stated that the evaluation process is going well and looks good. The first invoice has been received. He asked if there were any concerns to contact Mr. Buck

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.