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Transportation Policy Coordinating Committee Minutes

January 21, 2020, 1:30 PM
City Council Chambers
140 W. Pine Street, Missoula , MT

Voting members present: Mirtha Becerra, City Council, Peter Bensen Planning Board, John Engen, Mayor, Don MacArthur, MUTD, Josh Slotnick, Missoula Co. Commissioner, Dave Strohmaier, Missoula Co. Commissioner (vice-chair), Bob Vosen, MDT-Missoula

Non-Voter(s) present: Brian Hasselbach, FHWA-Helena, Debbie Johnston, MCCHD

1. Roll Call and Introduction of Audience

Jordan Hess sat in as a proxy for Mayor John Engen.

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes were approved as submitted.

3. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

4. New Business

4.1 Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

The committee took up the election of a new Chair and Vice Chair for the Transportation Policy Coordinating Committee. Jordan Hess nominated Dave Strohmaier. The vote was unanimous.

Newly elected Chair Strohmaier asked for nominations for Vice Chair. Don MacArthur nominated Mirtha Becerra. The vote was unanimous.

Elect _____ as Chair of TPCC: Elect _____ as Vice-Chair of TPCC.

4.2 Presentation on draft CMAQ project evaluation and selection criteria (Tara Osendorf)

Aaron Wilson, Transportation Planning Manager, presented on draft Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) project evaluation and selection criteria (PowerPoint presentation available on eScribe). A subcommittee was convened to develop a way to evaluate projects for CMAQ funding. Background was given on CMAQ funding and how it

has been used previously. Mr. Wilson stated that there are two ways to look at CMAQ: the current Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) which will have just under \$4 million after five years, and CMAQ funding for the long range transportation plan which covers a thirty year planning horizon. Through the long range planning prioritization process, projects that are eligible for CMAQ funding will be identified and prioritized over the 30 year horizon. The kinds of projects CMAQ is currently used for and funded in the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) include street sweepers, intelligent traffic control systems, and bus purchases, among others.

The presentation showed the CMAQ funding outlook, an example of the scoring process, and CMAQ requirements. Eligible projects must be a transportation project, located in or benefit a nonattainment or maintenance area for ozone, carbon monoxide, and particulate matter, able to exhibit capacity to reduce emissions and congestion/improve air quality, and included in the LRTP and TIP.

A summary of the subcommittee discussion on the potential criteria for projects is included in the presentation. The committee recommends putting the project on hold until it can be identified how it will fit into the long range plan update currently underway.

The Committee asked about weighing the criteria and how the projects will be divided between operations and capital improvements, and how the projects are publicly noticed. In addition, the Committee asked how they might make recommendations for projects. Mr. Wilson explained that an immediate request could be made, MPO staff could put out a call for projects, or the project may be included in the long range plan update. The long range plan is where projects will be evaluated, including the funding options and requirements. There was further discussion regarding why and how Missoula receives CMAQ funding. The Committee concluded it would be of benefit to engage the Congressional delegation for continued support.

4.3 Presentation and review of the 2020 Long Range Transportation Plan project schedule and draft public involvement needs assessment results (Aaron Wilson/ Katie Kleitz, Big Sky PR)

Aaron Wilson, Transportation Planning Manager, and Katie Kleitz of Big Sky PR, presented on the 2020 Long Range Transportation Plan project schedule and draft public involvement needs assessment results (report available in eScribe).

The work plan, which has been created in conjunction with Nelson Nygaard, involves working with consultants to sketch out a work plan for the year and strategies to encourage public involvement. It involves three main components, which are not necessarily sequential and may overlap. The first is framing the challenge and establishing outcomes. The second is creating and evaluating solutions. The third is reviewing priorities and recommendations. A proposed timeline is included in the provided report.

The final target dates include reviewing the proposed plan in January 2021 and then reviewing it in TPCC for adoption in March 2021.

Katie Kleitz of Big Sky PR spoke on Big Sky's role in the project. She said that each part will involve public involvement, and that she's hoping to work through a needs assessment alongside meetings with agency representatives in the hopes of developing a number of prompts to learn where the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is

currently, how it sees itself, and how the community sees the MPO. The plan is to include focused messaging using graphics and stories, as well as going out into the community to engage the public in their respective neighborhoods.

The Committee asked various questions for clarification and offered suggestions, including having a citizen's guide, asking constituents for their perspectives, explaining the MPO process, and contextualizing what the Long Range Plan can do for people in their everyday lives.

4.4 Discussion of future topics for committee presentations or consideration (Aaron Wilson)

Aaron Wilson, Transportation Planning Manager, solicited suggestions from the Committee in regards to what they would like to see and hear at the Committee throughout the next year. The Committee offered several, including a presentation on what other communities are doing in regards to their MPOs, an explanation of the legislative process, and updates on a passenger rail train, as well as periodic updates from Mountain Line.

5. Old Business

6. Announcements and Closing Comments

Aaron Wilson, Transportation Planning Manager, offered an update on Reserve Street, stating that there will be a community forum at the Best Western on Grant Creek Road on January 29, 2020, at 5:45-8:00 PM. The forum will focus on gaining a better understanding of the community's experience with Reserve Street, as well as educating the public about how the Transportation division is approaching some of the problems and how they plan to work through specific projects.

In addition, Mr. Wilson provided an update on the Highway 200/East Missoula corridor. He said that the first open house will take place on February 6, 2020, at the East Missoula firehouse.

Mr. Wilson further stated that there will be additional updates in the coming months regarding the passenger rail.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:58 PM.