



Flint Hills Metropolitan Planning Organization

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**Policy Board Meeting Minutes
 April 20, 2022 3:30pm**

Via Zoom Only

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT		
x	Keith Ascher	Geary County Commission
x	Matt Messina	KS Dept of Transportation
x	Usha Reddi	Manhattan City Commission
	Dee McKee	Pottawatomie Co. Commission
x	Ronna Larson	Junction City Commission
x	John Ford	Riley County Commission
	Clifford Baughman	Wamego City Commission
NON-VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT		
x	Cecelie Cochran (Zoom)	Federal Highway Admin.
	Kelley Paskow (Alt)	Fort Riley Representative
	Eva Steinman	Federal Transit Admin.
x	Anne Smith	Flint Hills ATA

Staff Present		
x	Stephanie Peterson	MPO
x	Jared Tremblay	MPO

Guests Present	
Jeff Underhill	City of Manhattan

1. Welcome

- The Policy Board meeting was called to order by Chairperson John Ford at 3:30 pm.

2. Public Comment Opportunity

- There were no public comments.

3. Financial Update

- Stephanie Peterson provided an overview of the bank account balances (also included on the agenda). She stated that the MPO does not have a CPG contract from KDOT yet which means the organization cannot receive reimbursement from KDOT yet. Stephanie also mentioned that there is about \$50,000 in reimbursement expected, but that even with the delay, there are no cash flow concerns.
- Matt Messina mentioned that KDOT is working on the CPG contracts and those should be out soon. He mentioned that there is a delay due to BIL and trying to understand the apportionment of CPG funding under this new law.

4. Staff Updates

- Stephanie Peterson provided an overview of the five Transportation Alternative grants the MPO has provided letters of support for. Two projects in Junction City, two in Manhattan, and one for St. George.

5. KDOT Update:

- Matt Messina stated that KDOT has held three BIL local consultants around the state and the last opportunity to participate would be April 28th virtually. Stephanie Peterson stated that she would send the sign-up for this meeting out to the Board.

6. Action Item: Approval of the January 19, 2022 Meeting Minutes

- Usha Reddi motioned to approve the Minutes. Matt Messina seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

7. Action Item: Approval of the April 8, 2022 Meeting Minutes

- Usha Reddi motioned to approve the Minutes. Ronna Larson seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

8. Action Item: Approve MPO Operations Manual (IV. A. Internal Changes and VI. B. Onboarding New Employees)

- Stephanie provided an overview of the changes to the manual. Usha Reddi asked for clarification on how the current Executive Director position would be filled and noted concerns about not hiring an executive director.
- Stephanie Peterson explained that the accounting, payroll, and human resources responsibilities she was doing would be taken over by the MPO's contracted bookkeeper. The remaining of her duties would be completed by the person hired to fill the vacant position.
- Matt Messina stated that the MPO's first priority was finding someone to carry out the federal required documents and process for the MPO. Over time, the person filling the MPO Planning Manager position could take on more of the accounting, payroll, and human resources responsibilities.
- Usha Reddi motioned to approve. Matt Messina seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Stephanie Peterson stated that the next three items had been taken to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) at their April meeting, yet there was not a quorum for formal action to be taken. However, all TAC Members at the meeting voted to recommend adoption/approval of each document.

9. Action Item: Adoption of Amendment #2 to Connect 2040 (note, there are two public comments regarding the I-70 & Taylor Road Interchange)

- Stephanie provided an overview of the changes to Connect 2040 and the two public comments received. She stated that TAC had requested it be reflected in their meeting minutes that the last line in the third paragraph of Ben's comment they found to be deplorable. TAC also requested the

inclusion of the statement included at the top of the public comments page stating that the MPO does not discriminate.

- John Ford stated that he concurs with TAC's statements that these comments are deplorable and would like for that to be reflected in the Policy Board's Meeting Minutes. Ronna Larson and Usha Reddi agreed.
- Usha Reddi motioned to adopt the amendment. Ronna Larson seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

10. Action Item: Approval of Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment #2

- Stephanie Peterson provided an overview of the amended projects. There were no questions.
- Usha Reddi motion to approve. Keith Ascher seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

11. Action Item: Approval of Amendment #1 to the Unified Planning Work Program

- Stephanie Peterson provided an overview of the Summary of Changes. She also recommended to the Board that the jurisdictions not be sent a second local match invoice for 2022. Stephanie explained that the MPO would only need an additional \$16,000 in local match in 2022 and the cash reserves in the checking account are ample to satisfy this need.
- Usha Reddi expressed the importance of supporting staff development and conference opportunities. She asked if not sending the second installment would force the MPO to have to charge the jurisdictions more in 2023 to make up for not receiving all of the 2022 local match. Stephanie stated that the local match needs anticipated for 2023 would not be impacted by this and the MPO's federal funding should increase under BIL, reducing the amount of local match needed in 2022 and 2023.
- Usha Reddi motioned to approve. Ronna Larson seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Stephanie Peterson requested Item 13 on the agenda be discussed prior to Item 12. There were no objections.

12. Discussion Item: 2023 Local Match Estimates

- Stephanie presented the 2023 Local Match Estimates and explained that per the fiscal agreement, the MPO must provide the local jurisdictions an estimate of their local match share for the following fiscal year the May prior. The Board had no concerns with the local match numbers presented and was okay with staff sending the estimates.

13. Action Item: Approval of the Hiring Process

- Stephanie stated that no applications have been received so far. She then provided an overview of the hiring process that was included in the packet, acknowledging that if there aren't many applicants, the process could be simplified.
- Usha Reddi suggested that the Policy Board in its entirety serve as the hiring committee and meet via executive session when needed. If there are more applicants than expected, members from the TAC may be asked to participate in an initial screening process.

- John Ford asked if the Operations Manual would need to be updated in order to have the entire Board participate in the hiring. Stephanie Peterson said that the Operations Manual only outlines the participants at a minimum, so adding additional people is consistent. She stated that Anne Smith is both a non-voting Policy Board member and a member of TAC, so she could fulfill the requirement of having representation from TAC.
- There was additional discussion by the Board on the number of people on the interview committee and the format of which to hold interviews (in person or Zoom). The Board had no objections with having the interviews via Zoom.
- Stephanie Peterson noted that someone would have to collect the applications and provide them to the Board for review. She stated that Kristi Wilson, KDOT, was willing to monitor Stephanie's email to screen for applications.
- John Ford stated that he had no issues with Kristi Wilson serving in this capacity and he was willing to get the applications from Kristi.
- Usha Reddi motioned to have the Policy Board serve as the interview and hiring committee. Ronna Larson seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

14. Motion for Adjournment

- John Ford stated that the Board would meet on May 18, 2022 to discuss the status of the hiring process. Jared Tremblay will work with the Board to set up that meeting.
- Ronna Larson motioned to adjourn the meeting. Matt Messina seconded. Meeting adjourned at 4:42 pm.