



Minutes from the June 6, 2023
Middle Tennessee Rural Planning Organization meeting
Joint Meeting of the Executive Board and Technical Committee

The Middle Tennessee Rural Planning Organization met on Tuesday June 6, 2023 at 10:30am at The Dickson County Government Building located at 303 Henslee Drive in Dickson, TN 37055. Those in attendance were as follows: Cheatham County Mayor Kerry McCarver, Dickson County Mayor Bob Rial, Ashland City Mayor J.T. Smith, State Representative Mary Littleton, City of Dickson Chris Hooper (*proxy for Mayor Don Weiss*), Charlotte Jennifer Carlew (*proxy for Mayor Garland Breedon*), and Waverly Mayor Buddy Frazier; Jackie Hodges, Robert Hester, Rachel Dutton, Jason Pilkinton, Terry Malone, Jane Hamrick, Jerome Terrell, Ted Moore, and Amanda Harrington (*proxy for Michael Skipper—GNRC*). TDOT was represented by Stacy Morrison, Lisa Dunn, Jonathan Russell, Herman Wright, Andy Barlow, Pete Smith, and Steve Bryan. Star Moore, Kevin Rye, Brian Armstrong, Jessica Hill, Ian Preston, Deborah Rosenthal, RJ Comer, and Bryan Collins RPO Coordinator were also in attendance.

Call To Order:

The meeting was called to order by County Mayor Kerry McCarver. Bryan Collins, RPO Coordinator reviewed the sign-in sheet for attendees present, including the three proxy members, and recognized to Executive Board Chair Kerry McCarver and Technical Committee Vice-Chair Rachel Dutton that a quorum for both the Executive Board and Technical Committee were present to conduct business.

Approval of previous Minutes:

County Mayor McCarver presented the minutes from the December 8, 2022 meeting and requested a call for vote to approve the minutes. A motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Chris Hooper and was properly seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

State Aid and Bridge Grant programs:

Lisa Dunn, State Aid Manager, gave a presentation on the State Aid and Bridge Grant programs. Ms. Dunn elaborated on the funding sources for the off-system bridge inventory for the MT RPO region, engaging the audience with some questions to test their knowledge, including how bridges are defined, the number of bridges statewide and the ones included in the IMPROVE Act. Ms. Dunn elaborated on the state-aid highway system program, how much allocated towards counties and eligibility requirements, and took some questions from the audience.

NEVI, Carbon Reduction, and PROTECT programs:

Stacy Morrison, TDOT OCT Manager, gave a presentation on behalf of Andrea Noel (who could not attend) regarding the Infrastructure Investments Jobs Act (IIJA) program and updates on progress with the State's NEVI and Carbon Reduction Program. \$88 million in federal funding will be allocated to Tennessee over the next 5 years for the State NEVI (TEVI) deployment plan

for electric vehicle charging stations along the I-40 and I-24 corridors was also elaborated on the NEVI overview. For the Carbon Reduction Program, of \$6.4 billion in federal funding for the next 4 fiscal years, \$139,172,276 will be allocated to Tennessee to reduce transportation emissions and formula based on population within each MPO and non-MPO areas. Additionally, 17 MT RPO survey results from a Statewide survey for carbon reduction was shown, which demonstrated that Transportation Systems Management & Operations (TSMO) and Transit were ranked the highest. Traffic Demand Management was a third high-ranking result with walking/biking facilities and regional commuter bus projects were prioritized for strategies to improve transportation in the RPO region. Lastly, the PROTECT (Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation) program was elaborated, which of \$8.7 billion in federal spending for the next 4 fiscal years, Tennessee will be allocated \$158 million in resiliency planning and grant program funding. The competitive grant opportunity will begin this Fall.

Transportation Modernization Act (Build With Us program):

Jonathan Russell, Region 3 OCT Planner, gave a presentation on the Build With Us program recently signed into law by Governor Bill Lee. Much of the presentation demonstrated kinship with the previous State-Aid, NEVI and Carbon Reduction presentations, and accompanied by a short video elaborating on the ‘Choice Lanes’ program the State will be commencing with. Tennessee will be investing \$3 billion in transportation investments statewide, with about \$750 million for each of the 4 regions, plus \$300 million for the State-Aid Program. State-Aid proposed funding for FY-24 was shown for each of the 5 counties in the RPO region, along with a general fund investments timeline including implementation schedule.

MTRPO Updates:

RPO Coordinator Bryan Collins yielded some of his time for activities in the Middle TN RPO region to allow Steve Bryan, TDOT Traffic Operations Division, to give an update on the current signalization projects in the RPO region. Mr. Bryan highlighted the new signal and existing signal upgrades and pedestrian accessible signals and crossings for two locations in Charlotte; Ashland City’s improvements along N Main Street (encompassed by the 2021 multimodal access grant funding); Kingston Springs signal improvements on SR-249 at Harpeth High School; the RAISE grant application for two traffic signals in Erin on E Main Street near the Courthouse Square; Traffic Signal Maintenance and Modernization and Preventative Maintenance Inspection & Inventory efforts (which includes about 19 intersections within the MT RPO region); and Traffic Signal Modernization Program (TSMP) grant application with Charlotte being the winner in the MT RPO region for this year.

Collins followed with other RPO Updates including grant applications progress in the City of Dickson, Ashland City, Erin, White Bluff, and Houston County for multimodal access grants, Healthy Built Environment grants, CDBG grants, and the National Scenic Byways Program grant. Additionally, Collins provided the website link for the now-active MT RPO website, and resuming of the Rural Regional Transportation Plan for the RPO region.

Collins recognized Ian Preston with AECOM for additional thoughts on White Bluff’s Safety Action Plan initiative with the Safe Streets for All grant application.

Other Business:

County Mayor McCarver opened the floor for nominations for the Technical Committee Chair. Hearing no nominations, Mayor McCarver suggested the members consider a candidate for future election at the next meeting, or wait until next Spring for elections of all officers. Also, Mayor McCarver, at Collins' request, presented a revisit of the current bylaws for adjustments to organizational rules, and essential cleanup of the current document. After a brief overview by Collins of the minor changes, a motion was made and seconded to adopt the new bylaws as mentioned. A motion was made by Chris Hooper to adopt the new bylaws and was properly seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments:

County Mayor McCarver None. However, prior to the meeting, Jonathan Lifferth, a citizen who uses the Dickson Express for public transit needs, inquired about attending the meeting to speak to the RPO. He did not show up, however, he passed along his thoughts for improvements to the bus stop in the Dickson Walmart parking lot. Collins shared this suggestion to WeGo Transit and subsequently mentioned it to Mayor McCarver after the meeting adjourned.

As there was no other business, the meeting was adjourned at about 12:15pm. Lunch and fellowship followed.