

MINUTES
Of the
EXECUTIVE BOARD
of the
Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
April 19, 2017

Attendees: Mayor Rogers Anderson, Ms. Kim Ark (for Executive Anthony Holt), Mayor Bernie Ash, Mayor Megan Barry, Mr. Steve Bland, Mayor Howard Bradley, Vice-Mayor David Briley, Mayor Paige Brown, Mayor Ernest Burgess, Vice-Mayor Jill Burgin (for Mayor Regina Smithson), Mayor Pattie Carroll, Mayor Jamie Clary, Mayor John Coombs, Ms. Sabrina David, Mayor Bonnette Dawson, Mr. Gerald Herman (for Mayor Michael Arnold), Ms. Gina Holt (for Mayor Ann Schneider), Mr. Eddie Hood, Mayor Randall Hutto, Mr. Victor Lay (for Mayor Rick Graham), Mr. Ken Martin (for Mayor Ed Hagerty), Mr. Ken McLawhon (for Mayor Jimmy Alexander), Mayor Ken Moore, Mayor Charlie Norman, Mr. Toks Omishakin (for Gov. Bill Haslam), Mayor Mary Esther Reed, Mr. Michael Skipper, Mayor Ken Wilber

Mayor Hutto said that Cheatham County Mayor David McCullough has passed away after a courageous battle with cancer. There was a moment of silence after which Mayor Howard Bradley offered a prayer.

Approve March 15, 2017 Meeting Minutes

Mayor Randall Hutto, Chair, opened the meeting at 9:04 a.m. Mayor Charlie Norman moved to approve the March 15, 2017 meeting minutes with Mr. Eddie Hood seconding. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Creative Placemaking Symposium and Community Engagement

Ms. Rochelle Carpenter, MPO staff, gave a presentation to update the board on the MPO's recent creative placemaking activities. She said that one of the Core Strategies in the 2040 RTP is to "engage the public in new and innovative ways, including creative placemaking to enhance community buy-in and to minimize impacts of construction on neighborhoods," creative placemaking initiatives provide an avenue to increase community outreach in innovative ways. She said that there was a Creative Placemaking Symposium hosted by the MPO on March 1st, and staff has been participating in "Envision Nolensville Pike" imitative and engagement along Jefferson Street. Additionally, she has also worked with partners in Lebanon and Columbia.

Mayor Ken Moore asked what it takes to engage the MPO in this process in local jurisdictions. Ms. Carpenter said she was happy to connect with staff at the city of Franklin and assist with creative community engagement planning.

Ms. Michelle Lacewell, Interim MPO director, said projects already in process that could use this type of engagement, Ms. Carpenter can put you in contact with local artists that can help facilitate this activity.

Mayor Moore asked if Ms. Carpenter could come to meet with the engineering department to discuss roads. Ms. Carpenter said yes.

MPO/GNRC Joint Committee Update

Setting up the next agenda item for discussion, Mayor Hutto said that this Board has a tough job to do and motivation for the integration discussion needs to continue. He said that change is hard and scary because the outcome is not always known, but change is also good. As the board prepares for the adoption of a resolution in May, it is important to remember how we got here and the goals we are trying to achieve. He thanked Mayor Reed and Mayor McMillan for their work over the past eight months. We need to remind ourselves why we are talking about it. The bottom line is to improve regional coordination. In addition, if things cannot be done better by doing this, then it does not need to be done. He said that there have been concerns along the way, especially by TDOT and FHWA. He said that weighted voting will be addressed by this board over the coming months. He thanked the board for being a part of something that is different and new, stating there will always be uncertainty. He also said that this Board along with the GNRC Board will have the final call and will not make a step unless both boards, along with our partners TDOT and FHWA, approve.

Mayor Mary Esther Reed said that the Joint Committee met and voted to recommend integrating the MPO program into the GNRC and subsequent action necessary by both boards. She said that this would improve the regional coordination while continuing to address problems that everyone around this table faces. She said that it would also bring us in line with best practices across the county. For eight months, the committee has been working on this and the last two meetings focused on addressing questions from Metro Nashville, TDOT, and FHWA. Some of those specifics are a clarification that Clarksville MPO is not part of the discussion at this time. She said there will be numerous check points along the way for TDOT and the Feds to formally review the MPO documents to assure that we remain in compliance with planning regulations. She said that the XB Committee would convening in May to discuss weighted voting of the MPO board. She said that a joint resolution to adopt the committee's recommendation would be voted on in May. There is no action requested today. She said the committee meeting notes and staff analysis is available on-line at http://nashvillempo.org/about_mpo/MPO_GNRC.aspx

Mayor Moore, GNRC Board Chair, said that Mayor Reed did a good job outlining the work to date, details for consideration and concerns expressed. He noted that staff and the committee has been completely transparent and making sure that we are compliant with all the federal regulations as we move forward. He said that so far the process has demonstrated cooperation between a large group of

people and respect for concerns among all parties involved. He said that politics is part of the process – hashing out and challenging certain issues among ourselves but in the end there is respect for the staff of each organization and look forward to blending the staff into one organization for regional governance.

Mayor Hutto said that he has received emails from different organizations stating that they are encouraged by this merging. He said that if anyone has specific concerns that can be succinctly put on the table to please speak now. Mr. Michael Skipper thanked the Board for being open to change. He encouraged the members to speak to the staff members about their view of the change.

Mayor Ernest Burgess asked when in May the Executive Committee will meet. Ms. Lacewell said that it is May 16th at 1:00 at the MCC Meeting room. Mayor Burgess asked what issues would be on the agenda. Ms. Lacewell said that the issues of weighted voting, Bylaw changes related to integration would be discussed. All issues will come back before the Board for action.

Mayor Norman asked about differences in the Bylaws of each organization. Can these both be sent out? Ms. Lacewell said she would send them out.

Mayor John Coombs thanked the staff for the effort because integration of these two bodies is critical at this point. He said he is concerned by the large amount of increase in the dues of both organizations – they both almost doubled. He needs to have an understanding of why and, as integration is moved forward, will these fees be reviewed later and adjusted accordingly. He said that he thought that one of the reasons for integration was better efficiency and a cost reduction. Ms. Lacewell said that the MPO dues was intended to grow over time that this body would create its own local match required for the federal dollars we pull down for our planning work. She said that Metro has provided a significant amount of that money thus letting the dues remain low; however it is important for the board to understand that the relationship could change at time, and should not rely on Metro funding the region's necessary match with their in-kind contribution indefinitely. She said that it is unfortunate that the dues increase happened at the same time as the integration discussion. She said that the rate sent out was for budgeting purposes. She said that the Board would have to have a discussion in June on whether to keep the rate or move forward with the increase.

Mayor Megan Barry asked if there will be cost reduction overall with integration. Ms. Lacewell said cost reduction was not one of the outlined goals shared goals for integration, but efficiency could lead to internal cost reduction but the rate of dues is specifically to match federal dollars.

Mayor Hutto asked if the dues would increase if integration was not on the table. Ms. Lacewell said yes; an increase needs to happen over time to meet the match for federal dollars. Mayor Hutto said dues need to be addressed either way. Ms. Lacewell agreed.

Vice-Mayor David Briley said that he voted against the Joint Committee's recommendation because there are too many unanswered questions about how things are going to work. He said that the two largest partners are still not satisfied with the answers they have received. He said it is not clear who will be executive director of the MPO or will it be a program director at GNRC and it is not clear who will

select the director/program manager at the GNRC. He said that Metro Nashville's representation at the GNRC is not the same as it is here. This can be worked out but it needs to be worked out on the front end. He said that he does not understand what the urgency is to pursue integration. He said that the contract with TDOT does not end until 2018. He said that Nashville would not be left out of the coordination of the region. He said that it is not clear exactly what we are doing – we are not “merging” any more. He said that his constituents deserve answers prior to merging. Why as a region would we risk anything by proceeding prior to having all the questions answered?

Mayor Hutto said that unanswered questions are good but specific questions are needed. He said there is urgency. It will be done step by step.

Mr. Toks Omishakin said that TDOT is no way opposed to this. He stated the 3 C of transportation that MPOs work on are coordination, collaboration, and cooperation and that TDOT strongly supports and encourages these things. He said that TDOT feels there should be a timeline showing patience in how the end point is arrived at and there should be no sense of urgency at all. We need to make sure all questions are answered. He said that he didn't find out until two weeks ago that it was going to be an integration instead of a merger and that there is going to be a new transportation policy board made up of the Nashville MPO, Clarksville MPO and the RPO. So, how does integration work? With all of the development in Middle TN, this body is a key component to addressing the issues surrounding this development.

Ms. Sabrina David said that FHWA is a non-voting member of the Board and that FHWA is providing information throughout this process. She said that whatever decision is reached, FHWA's primary objective is to help make it be successful. She said that FHWA wants to make sure that this process is transparent and that the MPO is doing what they need to do and how would the day-to-day operation of the MPO work. They just want to understand the timeline and how it works. FHWA wants to make sure all questions are answered.

Vice-Mayor Jill Burgin said she appreciated Vice-Mayor Briley's concerns. She said that a goal needs to be known so that the details could be worked out by both Boards. She said that it is time to move forward and get all questions answered. This is why I voted for the recommendation.

Mayor Barry thanked Mayor Reed and Vice-Mayor Burgin and all of the others for the time they have spent on this. She said that this is not about taking vote today but just talking about continuing to move this process forward. She said that the answering of the questions is in the timeline, that is from May to October. She said that it is helpful to know TDOT and FHWA are willing to assist in moving forward. She said that at various points there is a stop and check to make sure we are on the right track. She said that we should to continue to move forward.

Mayor Moore said we are moving down a path to move forward to integration. He suggested that the XB committee bring forward recommendation on how the MPO director would be selected if this is a major sticking point for Vice-mayor Briley.

Mr. Gerald Herman has the same concerns as Vice-mayor Briley about the difference between merger and integration. Is there a reason for the different terms? Is the MPO becoming a division of the GNRC? These questions need to be clarified.

Mayor Burgess agreed that clarification on the difference between merger and integration. This is confusing to him.

Mayor Reed said it has always been to integrate.

Mr. Michael Skipper said that the word, merger, was a convenient word but from the beginning any time that word was used, it was clarified that this is not a merger of two organizations because the MPO isn't a legal free-standing organization. It is a program administered by the Metropolitan Planning Department and this proposal would have the GNRC administering the program.

Mayor Burgess asked if there will still be an MPO Board. Mr. Skipper said that the MPO Board will continue to exist and if there is any change in the future it will be the Board's decision.

Vice-Mayor Briley said that he wants to see a written agreement between the GNRC and the MPO that each board adopts with attached new Bylaws of each organization and a contract between TDOT and GNRC before voting. He said that it seems everyone is okay with the general path we are on but he wonders why the joint committee keeps meeting to affirm this path. It's not that complicated.

Ms. Lacewell said that the staff has heard your concerns. She said that one of the actions is to draft a transportation policy and planning agreement between the MPO and the GNRC. She said that in that agreement a sponsorship policy will be laid out on how the MPO Board will operate, and its roles and responsibilities as it relates to hiring of the MPO director/coordinator and many of the discussions that will be had at the executive committee meeting level. She said that staff does not make those decisions, the Board does. After the committee meeting in May, there will be draft documents for discussion. The vote will be in May

Mayor Hutto said no one has stated that they are not in agreement with the process. We do need a timeline. He said that a detail version of how it will all work is a good idea answering all of the questions voiced today. Maybe a work session is needed?

Mayor Bradley said that we are working through the recipe but are anxious about what the cake will taste like. We need to have faith in each other to move through this process. We need to be either all in or all out because we are all in the same boat.

Director's Report

- MPO Membership Dues
Ms. Lacewell said she would follow up with everyone on the dues. She said that if anyone has any questions, to let her know.

- FY 2018 UPWP schedule

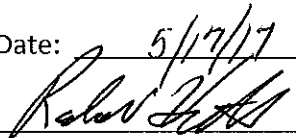
Ms. Lacewell said the first review has been received back from TDOT and it will be coming before the Board for review in the coming months and will be voted on in August.

Other Business

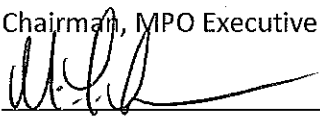
Mayor Bradley introduced Ms. Gina Holt, the interim City Manager of Springfield who is representing Mayor Ann Schneider today.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

Date: _____

5/17/17


The Honorable Randall Hutto
Chairman, MPO Executive Board



Michelle Lacewell, Interim MPO Director
Secretary, Executive Board