

**Meeting Minutes of the
NORTH FRONT RANGE TRANSPORTATION &
AIR QUALITY PLANNING COUNCIL**

March 3, 2016

6 p.m.

**Larimer County Offices Building
Carter Lake/Boyd Rooms
200 West Oak Street
Fort Collins, CO**

Voting Members

Present

Gerry Horak-Chair -Fort Collins
Jan Dowker -Berthoud
Chris Colclasure -CDPHE
Kevin Ross -Eaton
John Morris -Evans
Tom Norton -Greeley
Tom Donnelly -Larimer County
Paula Cochran -LaSalle
Joan Shaffer -Loveland
Jordan Jemiola -Milliken
Paul Steinway -Timnath
Kathy Gilliland -Trans. Comm.
Sean Conway -Weld County
Myles Baker -Windsor

Absent

Troy Mellon -Johnstown
Don Brookshire -Severance

*No member -Garden City

MPO Staff:

Terri Blackmore, Executive Director; Renae Steffen, Administrative Director; Crystal Hedberg, Finance and Operations Manager; Becky Karasko, Regional Transportation Planning Director. Alex Gordon, Transportation Planner/Mobility Coordinator.

In Attendance:

Jeff Bailey, Eric Bracke, Michael Brian, Leah Browder, Mike Crow, Julie Cozad, Thomas Edwards, Joel Hemesath, Saja Hindi, Myron Hora, Mark Jackson, Louis Keen, Janet Lundquist, Dan Mattson, Suzette Mallette, Karen Schneiders.

Chair Horak called the MPO Council meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Karen Schneiders, CDOT R4, thanked the Council, MPO staff, CDOT staff, and others for the numerous heartfelt sentiments, cards, flowers, and support she received following the passing of her husband, Greg Schneiders, on February 2nd.

APPROVAL OF THE MEETING AGENDA:

The meeting agenda was accepted as presented.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

*Norton **moved** to approve the February 4, 2016 meeting minutes. The motion was **seconded** and **passed** unanimously. Dowker and Gilliland abstained as they had not attended the meeting.*

Lead Planning Agency for Air Quality Agenda

Chair Horak opened the Air Quality portion of the meeting.

Air Pollution Control Division Report

Chris Colclasure, Planning and Policy Program Manager of the Air Pollution Control Division (APCD), gave the following presentations to the Council:

- 8 Hour Ozone Concentrations- Steinway asked how the 4th Maximum is determined. Colclasure explained that the 8-hour average is developed from the hourly ozone concentration provided daily by all of the site monitors in the network. Then the highest 8-hour average, or peak concentration, for that day is recorded. The three highest days in a year are excluded from the data to help account for unusual conditions such as inclement weather or fires. The 4th highest reading from a particular monitor on any given day is used in the annual data and is referred to as the 4th Maximum. If a 4th Maximum reading from a single monitor exceeds 75 ppb then the Colorado is out of attainment for the year. Dowker questioned the rationale for the placement of the monitors. Colclasure stated that the federal guidelines require that monitors are initially placed where they may receive the highest readings. He also noted that the monitors may be moved if they do not appear to be giving representative data.
- Background Ozone- the Council expressed their frustration and concern that the EPA standards are essentially unattainable, thus attainment is unachievable citing that roughly a 30% cut in emissions resulted in a 3-6% reduction in ozone concentrations, which are the basis of attainment. Colclasure noted that 16-22ppb of ozone is actually outside of Colorado's jurisdiction because it is either coming from outside of the State or it is biogenic. He reminded the Council that the goal of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is to protect human health with an adequate margin of safety and that the standards are set in their best effort to attain that goal. Although cost is not a factor when EPA sets the standards, CDPHE evaluates costs when developing a State Implementation Plan, and CDPHE regulations are based on what is considered both technologically feasible and economically reasonable. Colclasure also explained that the EPA's options for addressing background ozone are limited because they can only allow flexibility that is included in the Clean Air Act. He was unaware of any Congressional effort to change the Act but noted that the ozone standard is required to be reviewed every five years by the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee.

Council discussion ensued regarding the cost effectiveness of their efforts, EPA policy/standards and the connection between emissions and public health. Colclasure praised the overall success of the State's efforts to reduce ozone concentrations through improved transportation planning and gas and oil business practices, citing improved air quality since the 1970's, even with the high increase in population. Without the State's efforts the air quality would be much worse.

- Clean Power Plan Update- Colclasure announced that the Clean Power Plan rule has been highly controversial and involved in a law suit. Although it was unusual, the rule was put on hold before the lower court made a decision. Therefore, while there is litigation going on the implementation of the Clean Power Plan rule has been stayed. A decision is not expected until 2018. It is currently unknown how the requirements and deadlines in the plan will be effected.

Regional Air Quality Council –RAQC

A written report was provided.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Agenda

Chair Horak opened the MPO portion of the meeting.

REPORTS:

Executive Director Report:

Terri Blackmore, Executive Director, briefly reviewed information from the March 2016 Director's Report Addendum as well as the following handouts provided at the Council table: North Front Range MPO Rider's Guide, Fix Colorado Roads Agreement and FAQ's and Viable Funding Sources for the North I-25 Corridor. It was noted that the date for the next Fix N I-25 meeting was March 11, not February 11. In response to a request by Dowker to have presentations on the VanGo[®] program, Blackmore asked Council members for assistance in getting Jeff McVay, VanGo[®] Customer Service & Outreach, onto their community's agenda for a presentation on the vanpooling program. Blackmore also announced there may be a new vanpool going between Cheyenne and Fort Collins.

The Council discussed the concerns of the immediacy of the application process for FASTLANE and whether it was the right choice for the MPO. Horak indicated that the Railroad Bridge and Cache la Poudre River Bridge had been selected for replacement rather than the Big Thompson and Little Thompson River Bridges because they are able to handle an interim lane. Also, the Poudre Bridge is only a 10-year flood bridge. Blackmore identified that although the total of the bridge projects did not meet the \$100M minimum, the FASTLANE funding could be leveraged with TIGER money to help fund all of those bridge projects. Gilliland expressed concern that the MPO may end up competing with CDOT for FASTLANE funding, although there was no way to know this early in the process. Blackmore agreed that it was possible, but stated that generally the first-round applications are the easiest to get approved. She believed it was imperative that they at least begin the lengthy process now and then take action on the completed application at the next meeting, at the Council's discretion. Norton noted that the MPO would need to be in close communication with CDOT to ensure there was no completion for funding, and agreed that it was important to begin the application process. Donnelly asked for Norton's concurrence that moving forward with the application process would not damage relations with CDOT. Norton concurred and added that would not be problematic as long as the MPO informs CDOT of their intention and coordinates with them as the process goes forward. Blackmore added that she saw this as an opportunity for the MPO and CDOT to form a partnership.

*Norton made a **motion** to Approve MPO Staff Draft an Application of Intent for FASTLANE. The motion was **seconded** and it **passed** unanimously.*

Horak clarified that the motion incorporates the philosophy that the MPO will be working closely with CDOT and the intent to apply is the only action currently being taken. He also suggested it may be beneficial to get help from Senators Bennet and Gardner and Representatives Polis and Coffman and coordinate efforts with the National League of Cities. He requested that MPO staff provide a single sheet of viable funding sources for handing out. Blackmore agreed to provide the requested information and reminded the Council that the money need not be obligated until 2019 and the construction will not need to be completed until 2024.

Report of the Chair:

Chair Horak addressed the following topics with the Council:

- FASTER Funding- The MPO sent a letter requesting the standard on the VanGo[®] van replacement be changed so that it is no longer necessary to identify specific Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) one year in advance in order to replace a van. A meeting is scheduled with CDOT on March 23rd to discuss changing the standard to be more similar to the FTA guidelines.
- I-25 Subcommittee- A meeting was held on February 5th to identify what information is wanted from the High-Performance Transportation Enterprise (HPTE), CDOT and Fix I-25. Their next meeting will be March 11th. Those interested in attending should inform Blackmore so she can get appropriate seating.

- New Community Representatives- All members who will no longer be on the Council following April 5th elections were encouraged to foster new members. Horak recognized Dowker, Jemiola and Vazquez for their years of service with plaques. Council members praised Dowker, Jemiola and Vazquez for their work on the MPO Council.

Mobility:

A written report was provided.

Finance Committee:

Ross reviewed the February 18th Finance Committee Report bullet points and minutes with the Council highlighting that some of the member entities have not responded to their billing for their 2016 local match. He offered to discuss the issue with members who were questioning if their community had paid their match.

ACTION ITEMS:

4th Quarter Unaudited Financials

Conway ***moved*** to accept the CY 2015 4th Quarter Unaudited Financial Statements dated December 31, 2015. The motion was ***seconded*** and it ***passed*** unanimously.

FY2016 UPWP Amendment

Blackmore briefly reviewed FY2016 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Amendment memo and noted that this was not, in fact, an increase in the budget, but simply an amendment to the UPWP itself. She said the resolution would be revised to reflect the omission of the word "budget".

Norton ***moved*** to approve Resolution 2016-06 Approving the FY2016 UPWP Budget Amendment with "Budget" omitted. The motion was ***seconded*** and it ***passed*** unanimously.

WORK SESSION:

US 34 PEL Study

Sean Conway, US 34 Coalition Chair, stated that the US 34 Coalition was formed by several elected officials along the North Front Range nearly a year ago. The coalition also includes MPO Executive Director, Terri Blackmore and a member of CDOT staff as non-voting members. He said that the Coalition as a whole had determined that in order to have projects ready to receive funding on US 34 it is necessary to complete a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study on the corridor. In December CDOT was asked what a PEL study would encompass and how much it would cost. CDOT brought a presentation to the Coalition in February and it was then determined that CDOT needed to also present the information to both the Upper Front Range Transportation Planning Region and the North Front Range MPO. Conway introduced Mike Crow, CDOT Region 4 Traffic Engineer, who introduced Construction Resident Engineer/Project Manager; Lou Keen, and Project Engineer; Dan Mattson. He also recognized Blackmore for her assistance and Transportation Planner/Mobility Coordinator, Alex Gordon, for his work on the map.

Crow and Keen gave the US 34 PEL presentation to the Council. Conway indicated that the Council needed to decide if the PEL was a good idea for the MPO and then provide CDOT with feedback on the information that was provided in the presentation. He also said it was necessary for them to have a refined plan defining how much RPP money should be used to complete the study. Blackmore identified that the RPP money is flexible and goes to the region...It can be spent early and CDOT works with the MPO to determine where it will be spent.

Myron Hora, Senior Engineering Manager at WSP Parsons Brinckerhoff Engineering Services, formerly with CDOT Region 4, reported that the base cost for the US 85 PEL had been determined by FASTER safety standards that were previously in place but CDOT is no longer funding projects with FASTER funding so they are requesting RPP funding instead.

Blackmore identified that there may be changes to Land Use Mileage/Percentage Breakdown numbers that differ from those shown in the previous draft because the percentages are now attributed to both the community including its growth boundaries. Council debate and discussion ensued for thirty-seven minutes.

Following their discussion the Council requested that the following be addressed by the US 34 Coalition at their March 9th meeting:

- Actual cost and justification of MPO funding for the PEL study.
- Clarification of areas included in the study.
- Actual proposed municipality shares.
- Clarification on allocation of RPP money to the study and how much of the \$1.8M is requested for RPP funding.
- Other funding available from CDOT.
- Growth boundaries clearly defined.

The US 34 Coalition was asked to report back to the Council on these items at the April 7th MPO Council meeting in order for them to take action on the funding for the PEL.

2016 Council Goals

Horak determined that based on Council discussions during the past several meetings, the following were areas the Council wanted to focus on over the next year:

- North I-25
- Cache la Poudre River Bridge and the Railroad Bridge
- US 34 PEL Study
- Airports presentations and identifying the MPO's role for air transportation

Additional goals Council member requested as greater areas of focus:

Harmony Road- Identify where the process is currently and address needs for the future by outlining the planning steps needed to facilitate final plans.

Freight Plan- Freight Plan- Blackmore noted that the MPOs Plan schedule is now aligned with the State's freight and passenger rail plan and they should be finished at about the same time. Horak requested that Karasko provide Council with an update on the schedule for the Multimodal Freight Plan and the Freight and Passenger Rail Plan in the next meeting packet. Blackmore stressed the importance of finalizing the plan because beginning in 2018 it will be required to have an adopted freight plan in order to be eligible for freight funding allocated to the State or through the FASTLANE funding streams.

COUNCIL REPORTS:

Transportation Commission Report

Gilliland reported that the Commission has been discussing new revenue streams for transportation and working on their 10-year plan. She also noted that soon there will be information on whether \$200M from Senate Bill 228 will go to I-70 Central.

CDOT Region 4

Schneider briefly reviewed the CDOT Project Status Updates (1 Mar 2016) with the Council. She noted that weather permitting; many projects would be coming out of their winter shut-down and mentioned that a VMS board was going up on US 34 near 10th Street that will complement those going up near Centerra in Loveland.

STAC Report- A written report was provided.

North I-25

There was no additional information to report.

Highway 34 Coalition

There was no additional information to report.

Host Council Report

Donnelly thanked everyone for coming to the Larimer County Courthouse and recognized Karris Bryant, owner of Bite by Bite Catering and one of Larimer County's 2013 Young Entrepreneur Program contest winners, for the delicious meal.

Milliken- Jemiola expressed his appreciation in working with the Council.

Evans- Morris reported his concern and frustration that the UPRR is trying to shut down four roads in Evans and he is uncertain how traffic will be rerouted. He was hopeful that their need to obtain permits for the closures could alter the dates of the closures to allow for open routes.

LaSalle- Cochran reported that LaSalle had finished their improvements to Main Park off US 85 and that Sunset Auto Sales of Greeley was a new business for them that would be occupying the building at 1st Avenue and US 85.

Windsor- Baker indicated that he was uncertain if he would continue to be the alternate for Windsor and thanked the Council for their support during his time with them.

Berthoud- Dowker said it had been an honor to serve with the Council and said she loved the passion and diversity shown by the Council.

Timnath- Steinway indicated that he was uncertain of whether he would remain on the Council following the April elections. He is running for re-election but there are four candidates running for two positions on the Town of Timnath Board.

Loveland- Shaffer highlighted that the Fire and Ice Celebration in Loveland, February 12-14, was a great success. She also indicated that the US 287 Coalition had met on February 25th and Berthoud, Longmont and Larimer County all gave presentations on what their communities are currently doing on the corridor. The MPO is scheduled to present on land use and inventory on the corridor at their next meeting.

Eaton- Ross reported that the Town of Eaton continues to work with CDOT on securing funding for improvements needed at the intersection at CR 76 and US 85 where several accidents, some with fatalities, have occurred recently as well as historically.

MEETING WRAP-UP:

Final Public Comment:

There was no comment.

Next Month's Agenda Topic Suggestions:

1) US 34 PEL

2) TIGER Grant

3) FASTLANE

The meeting was adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

Meeting minutes submitted by: Renae Steffen, MPO Staff