

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

**September 3 2015
6 p.m.
Greeley Family Fun Plex
1501 65th Ave.
Greeley, CO**

Voting Members

Present

Sean Conway-Chair -Weld County
Chris Colclasure -APCD
Gerry Horak -Fort Collins
Tom Norton -Greeley
Troy Mellon -Johnstown
Tom Donnelly -Larimer County
Paula Cochran -LaSalle
Joan Shaffer -Loveland
Jordan Jemiola -Milliken
Kathy Gilliland -Trans. Comm.

Absent

Jan Dowker -Berthoud
Kevin Ross -Eaton
John Morris -Evans
Don Brookshire -Severance
Paul Steinway -Timnath
John Vazquez -Windsor
*No member -Garden City

MPO Staff:

Terri Blackmore, Executive Director; Becky Karasko, Regional Transportation Planning Director; Renae Steffen, Administrative Director; Crystal Hedberg, Finance Manager; Aaron Buckley, Alex Gordon and Josh Johnson, Transportation Planners.

In Attendance:

Eric Bracke, Leah Browder, Robb Casseday, Dave Clark, Aaron Greco, Joel Hemesath, Myron Hora, Janet Lundquist, Suzette Mallette, Wes McElhinny, Josh Sonnenberg, Bob Sakaguchi, Steve Teets, Martina Wilkinson.

Chair Conway called the MPO Council meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Wes McElhinny, Weld County Area Representative from the office of Congressman Ken Buck, introduced Josh Sonnenberg, Northeast Area Representative, to the Council. He then reported that the Transportation Legislation and Highway Trust Funding had been extended to October 29th in spite of Senator Buck's vote against it. The congressman does not feel it makes sense to continue funding small, short-term measures for a couple months that are paid for over a 10-year window. Congressman Buck is co-sponsoring the Transportation Empowerment Act which completely reforms highway funding programs by transferring authority over to the states and allowing the states to decide how to spend the money. McElhinny commented that will be very useful as organizations like the MPO know what is needed and how to get it done at a fraction of the cost compared to the Federal Government, citing an example in Evans where a small section of roadway damaged in the 2013 flood that FEMA spent \$200,000 to repair, a cost almost three times what Evans had projected to spend. McElhinny will continue to update the Council at future meetings.

Steve Teets, Citizen's Bus Improvement Committee, Chairman, thanked the MPO, Weld County, the City of Greeley and the City of Evans for addressing the Hill 'N Park issue recently by providing a Greeley Evans Transit (GET) route there, however the timing does not allow, or encourage, people to ride because there are

not enough trips scheduled each week. He feels the 34 Express is needed back in the area, not just for Hill 'N Park, and the new route changes in Greeley will make the current system worse. He would like to have routes available every hour. Teets mentioned that a survey had been done recently for Greeley, Evans and Weld County transit systems by a company in Denver and asked when survey information would be available to the public. Chair Conway explained that a study of the residents in those areas had been commissioned through the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) and the University of Colorado at Boulder and indicated that Weld County Commissioner, Julie Cozad, was now in charge of the committee working on that and he would ask that she or someone else from Weld County, get that information to him. Teets asked how Bustang was doing. Conway said it was doing well and indicated that Kathy Gilliland would be reporting on it later in the meeting.

APPROVAL OF THE MEETING AGENDA:

Shaffer ***moved*** to accept the meeting agenda. The motion was ***seconded*** and ***passed*** unanimously.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

Norton ***moved*** to approve the August 6, 2015 meeting minutes. The motion was ***seconded*** and ***passed*** unanimously.

Lead Planning Agency for Air Quality Agenda

Chair Conway 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) briefly reviewed information from the Monthly Report from CDPHE, August 2015 (Corrected Report). Donnelly and Conway questioned whether days with significant haze would be attributed to fires from surrounding states, noting that has not always been the process for CDPHE. Colclasure was uncertain what those exact dates were but assured the Council that every exceedance day is reviewed and submitted for an exceptional event, when beneficial, and explained the very time-intensive, resource-demanding, process that is followed. He also identified the many ways smoke can affect ozone.

Donnelly asked if the new compliance guidelines were an indication that the EPA will now have greater control over policy-making in Colorado. Colclasure responded that the bump up to a moderate status requires CDPHE to review additional emission control requirements and doesn't really change the balance between the EPA's authority versus the State of Colorado, and noted it will still be a State plan, but will be submitted to EPA for approval. He expounded on certain requirements that could change, such as the lowering of thresholds and offsets for new major sources. Shaffer asked for a brief explanation of how exceptional events are determined. Colclasure replied that the department monitors data on a daily basis and tracks any days that an exceedance occurs to determine if weather or pollutants, such as fire, were a factor. Then the data is compared to the regulatory criteria for an exceptional event package. If it fits the criteria, it is flagged and may be considered for the package, depending on how close the area is to going out of containment. He noted that the three worst air quality days are excluded each year.

The Council discussed which industries they believed may be new major contributors to ozone and what mediation may occur. Colclasure noted that although it may be difficult to make a significant difference, there are several programs under way that will make a positive impact. Conway complimented Colclasure and the CDPHE for their efforts and requested an updated report for Northern Colorado showing the number of days with high ozone associated with the recent haze.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Agenda

Chair Conway opened the MPO portion of the meeting.

Executive Director Report:

Terri Blackmore, Executive Director, briefly reviewed information from the September 2015 Director's Report Addendum with the Council.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)

A written report was provided.

Finance Committee

Gerry Horak, Finance Committee Member, briefly reviewed the Finance Committee Report and Finance Committee Minutes from August 19, 2015 and stressed the importance of the member communities paying their annual dues by the end of March.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Norton commented that that in the future he would like to have identifiers, such as footnotes, provided for all the funding sources on specific projects in the RTP, citing the I-25 Climbing Lane and the interchange at I-25/Crossroads as examples.

*Horak made a **motion** to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was **seconded** and it **passed** unanimously.*

- Approve the 2015 Congestion Management Process (CMP)
- Approve the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

ACTION ITEMS:

MPO Reserve Policy

Crystal Hedberg, Finance Manager, reviewed the MPO Reserve Policy memo with the Council.

Donnelly asked to confirm that only excess dues from the communities would be used to create the reserve fund and those community dues were not being increased. Hedberg confirmed that was correct. Shaffer asked if the community's percentages would also stay in balance. Hedberg said they would.

*Shaffer **moved** to approve the MPO Reserve Policy with Excess Local Match Being Rolled into a Reserve Fund until such time that Three Months Reserve Money is Obtained for Operational Needs. The motion was **seconded** and it **passed** unanimously.*

VanGo Reserve Policies

Hedberg stated there were two VanGo policies for approval, one for operating reserve and one for capital reserve. She noted they should disregard the policy documents sent in the packet and reviewed the information from VanGo Reserve Policy handouts with the Council.

*Jemiola **moved** to approve the VanGo Reserve Policies. The motion was **seconded** and it **passed** unanimously.*

FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)

Johnson briefly reviewed information from the FY 2016-2019 TIP AIS with the Council. He indicated that thus far there had been no positive or negative public comment.

*Shaffer made a **motion** to approve Resolution No. 2015-13 adopting the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), pending no negative Public Comment prior to the end of the Public Comment Period ending Saturday, September 5, 2015. The motion was **seconded** and it **passed** unanimously.*

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Public Involvement Plan (PIP)

Alex Gordon, Transportation Planner, gave the 2015 Public Involvement Plan presentation to the Council.

The Council consented to open the 45-day public comment period for the PIP. Gilliland complimented Gordon on the layout and presentation of the plan.

Executive Director Survey Process

Conway conveyed to the Council that the Executive Committee is following the newly implemented guidelines and timelines for Executive Director (ED) Evaluation Process as amended into the Articles of Association in July. The next step is for the Executive Committee to meet informally with MPO staff to determine which evaluation survey process is appropriate for the current year and has scheduled an informal meeting and lunch with MPO staff on September 17th. All MPO staff has responded to a short electronic survey regarding their relationship with Director Blackmore and others at the organization, as well as their job satisfaction as part of Blackmore's goals for the year. Those results are available to the Council for review by request. He reviewed the survey options and possible participants with the Council. The Council was in consensus that they would prefer to conduct another 360 survey for the current year and assigned Jemiola to lead and provide guidance to the Executive Committee through the process within the established timeframe. Conway confirmed there would be an opportunity provided to the MPO staff to communicate with the Executive Committee privately and confidentially. Jemiola and the Executive Committee will report back to the Council following the September 17 lunch with MPO staff.

COUNCIL REPORTS:

Transportation Commission

Kathy Gilliland, Transportation Commissioner, District 5, reported on the following:

- Two new commissioners; Kathy Hall, Grand Junction, District 7 and Nolan Schriener, Colorado Springs, District 9. Also Heather Barry, Westminster, District 4, has returned for two years.
- Bustang fare box recovery is 22% and ridership continues to increase on routes from Glenwood Springs to Denver Union Station, it is at 85% of capacity for the one roundtrip. May need to add a second bus. Northern route is also doing well and ridership is going up. A route from CSU to Denver on Friday nights, returning Sundays, will be implemented soon.
- CSU Transportation System (transit run by TransFort) tour was impressive. Separate pathways for both bikes and walkers works well. Aaron Fodge can arrange tours for those interested.
- Transportation Matters Summit, October 28th. Posters were handed out.
- Tolling and Revenue Study in the works for I-25.

CDOT Region 4

Myron Hora, CDOT R4, announced the following:

- CDOT will be moving their Administration, Greeley, Evans and Loveland operations into their new Greeley building the first week of November. Also occupying the building will be the Colorado State Patrol.
- US 34 bridge between Greeley and Kersey should be opened late October or early November.
- Thank you to everyone for their support and well wishes following the loss of Loveland Resident Engineer, Scott Ellis. New Loveland Resident Engineer will be Rich Christy and James Usher will be the US 34 Permanent Repair Project Director.

Statewide Transportation Advisory Committee (STAC) Report

Blackmore reported on the following topics from the August STAC meeting:

The first Freight Advisory Committee (FAC) meeting was held on July 30th. Positive feedback; there was a diverse range of people represented (government officials, CDOT staff, industry representatives, STAC/TPR representatives). They talked about integrating surface, airport, rail,

and including pipeline to serve the needs of the public. Next meeting will be held on September 23rd.

- Presentation on technology of connected vehicles. CDOT would like to use some DRIVE Act funding to implement this technology on North I-25 and I-70.
- An update on Bustang was given.

North I-25 Coalition

Shaffer reported that the coalition had a highly productive meeting. Many State Legislative Representatives and one Senator were present and were very responsive to the challenges, accomplishments and need for funding on North I-25. She reviewed the coalition's six visions with the Council. The North I-25 Legislative Package showcasing the coalition's visions and goals will be sent electronically to the Council and posted on the NFRMPO website.

Conway added that he believes the meeting was one of the most successful meetings to date. He was pleased that the efforts of the NFRMPO as a whole, as well as individual members and their communities, were acknowledged by the legislators and others in attendance. It was also recognized that the coalition and CDOT want to work collaboratively to address the transportation funding issues on North I-25. Norton commented that there appeared to be some discrepancies with some of the data on their The Time is Now flyer. Conway responded that many of the figures were predicated on estimates and would be reevaluated prior to any further distribution. Shaffer added that the overarching goal was for the coalition to be viewed as a statewide resource; both she and Conway believed that had been accomplished.

Highway 34 Coalition

Conway announced that there had been a meeting just prior to the MPO Council meeting. Several communities were in attendance. CDOT gave a PEL presentation and discussed lessons learned from some of the other highway coalitions. The next meeting will be on October 1st at 4:00 in Eaton.

Host Council Report

Norton complimented his staff for the set-up of the meeting and thanked everyone for attending. He announced that there were several exciting events coming to Greeley including Friday Fest and OktoBREWfest and Trick-Or-Treat Street. He also mentioned that UNC athletics were in full swing.

Other Council Reports

La Salle- Cochran reported that there were new turn signals and lane changes on 1st Avenue and US 85 that were helping to relieve some of the congestion before and after school as well as when there is a train.

Milliken- Jemiola thanked the MPO for their participation at Beef & Bean Day.

MPO- Blackmore announced that the Economic Benefits of Biking and Walking presentation would be offered to the Council in conjunction with the NoCo Bike & Walk Conference and the November 5th MPO Council meeting. The Town of Windsor is hosting the event at UNC and will be providing the dinner. Invitations will be sent to all of the communities and their councils and board members at the end of September.

Larimer County- Donnelly reported that he will be accompanying Senator Cory Gardner to the Rocky Mountain National Park 100th Anniversary Rededication celebration. They will also be touring some of the post-flood projects in the Estes Park and Glen Haven areas.

Transportation Commission- Gilliland announced that Executive Director, Mike Cheroutes will be leaving the HPTC on October 1st and pursue new opportunities as a public-private partnership consultant in Colorado, as well as nationally and internationally. Interviews for his position will begin in September.

Weld County- Conway reported that The Weld County Bright Futures Grant Program kick-off had been on September 1st. Bright Futures is a “first-in” educational financial assistance program for high school graduates, GED recipients and honorably discharged veterans. The program, which Donnelly noted could be greatly attributed to Conway’s efforts, is funded by donations from taxpayers receiving a 50% tax incentive payment or credit when contributing to the county workforce development fund. It provides \$3,000 a year for up to four years for any post-secondary education from an accredited school or training program and will start with the graduating class of 2016. Conway hopes other counties will follow Weld County’s lead.

MEETING WRAP-UP:

Final Public Comment: Steve Teets requested copies of the Transit Plan and public survey results from the approved 2040 RTP. Bracke offered to print a copy for Teets at the Greeley Public Works office.

Next Month’s Agenda Topic Suggestions: There were no suggestions.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Meeting minutes submitted by: Renae Steffen, MPO Staff