

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**Lowcountry Area Transportation Study (LATS)**  
**Meeting of the Policy Committee**  
**Friday, January 9, 2015 – 10:00 a.m.**  
**TCL New River Campus Board Room – Bluffton, SC**

*LCOG staff sent agenda packets to Policy Committee members and posted an agenda in the lobby of the LCOG office at least 24 hours prior to the meeting time.*

**Policy Committee Members Present:**

Chair Lisa Sulka, Mayor Town of Bluffton  
Vice-Chair Barbara Clark, Chair Jasper County Council  
David Blauch, Chairman LRTA Board  
Bronco Bostick, Mayor City of Hardeeville  
Samuel E. Murray, Mayor Town of Port Royal  
Paul Sommerville, Chairman Beaufort County Council

**Policy Committee Designees Present:**

Tom Lennox, for Mayor David Bennett  
Michael McFee, for Mayor Billy Keyserling

**Policy Committee Members Absent:**

David Bennett, Mayor Town of Hilton Head Island  
Sen. Tom Davis, Beaufort County Leg. Delegation  
Billy Keyserling, Mayor City of Beaufort  
Sam Glover, Commissioner SCDOT  
Clifton Parker, Commissioner SCDOT  
Rep. Bill Herbkersman, Jasper County Leg. Delegation Chairman  
Jim Rozier, Commissioner SCDOT

**Technical Committee Members Present:**

LeNolon Edge, Jasper County  
Mary Lou Franzoni, LRTA Executive Director  
Jill Foster, Town of Hilton Head Island  
Karen Jarrett, Town of Bluffton  
Colin Kinton, Beaufort County

**Technical Committee Members Absent:**

Linda Bridges, Town of Port Royal  
Lauren Kelly, City of Beaufort  
Katie Woodruff, City of Hardeeville

**SCDOT Staff Present:**

David Grey, SCDOT Office of Transit  
Mike Sullivan, SDOT Chief of Statewide Planning  
Joy Riley, SCDOT Program Manager

**LCOG Staff Present:**

Sabrina Graham, Executive Director  
Ginnie Kozak, Planning Director  
Jonathan Sherwood, Community and Regional Planner

**Others Present:**

Craig Forrest, former SCDOT Commission Vice Chairman  
Steve Riley, Town Manager, Town of Hilton Head Island  
Juan Singleton, Interim City Manager, City of Hardeeville  
Branan Snowden, City of Hardeeville Planning Director  
David Spisso, City of Hardeeville Council

## 1. Call to Order

Vice-Chairman, Ms. Sulka, called the meeting to order.

- a. **Pledge of Allegiance**
- b. **Invocation**
- c. **Introduction of Members, Guest and Staff**

Ms. Sulka asked members and guests to introduce themselves and those who are new Committee to indicate their role. With new people in attendance, Ms. Sulka stressed the importance of regionalism and the work of the MPO.

- d. **Action on June 27, 2014 Minutes**

Mr. Blauch made a motion to approve the minutes, Ms. Clark seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

- e. **Election of new Chair & Vice-Chair**

Ms. Sulka asked that the minutes reflect the service of former Town of Hilton Head Island Mayor and MPO Chair, Drew Laughlin, for his dedicated work with MPO.

Ms. Sulka asked members for nominations for the Chair of the Policy Committee. Mr. Bausch nominated Ms. Sulka for Chairman, Mr. Murray seconded the motion and Ms. Sulka was elected unanimously. Ms. Sulka nominated Ms. Clark as Vice-Chairman of the MPO Policy Committee. Mr. Blauch seconded the nomination and Ms. Clark was elected unanimously.

## 2. Old Business

- a. **US 17 Widening Project Update- Joy Riley & Mike Sullivan, SCDOT**

Ms. Riley discussed SCDOT scheduling of the US 17 widening project. Based on available funding and due to the size of the project and technical issues involved, a value engineering study will be conducted. With a team of experts to assess the latest concepts and designs, the value engineering study has the advantage of utilizing the best practices for the funding available. Mr. Sullivan reviewed the joint COG-MPO workshop at Sgt. Jasper Park and the funding scenario for the widening of US 17. LCOG has endorsed the current funding scenario and will contribute \$34 million, and to complete the funding package, LATS will contribute \$19 million. Members asked if there was a vote needed. Mr. Sullivan advised that a vote would be premature before an adopted LRTP, after which the Policy Committee would approve the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), where the project would be listed.

Mr. Sommerville asked for clarification on the funding scenario and the second Back River Bridge. Mr. Sullivan stated that \$8 million dollars will come from LATS for the bridge, with expectation that Georgia will pay for half. He added that consultations have occurred between the SCDOT and GDOT Secretaries. Mr. Sullivan clarified that the \$8 million is in addition to \$19 million, a total of \$27 million from LATS.

- b. **Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Update - Ginnie Kozak, LCOG/LATS**

Ms. Kozak reported that the LRTP work is behind schedule by three to four months, due to the US 17 widening issues, but added that a fair amount of the work is finished. She talked about the work being done by consultants Kimley-Horn, in coordination with the Technical Committee. Ms. Kozak added the Technical Committee takes their job very seriously, evaluating and commenting on the consultant's work. As a result, the recommendations regarding local priorities and concerns are incorporated into the LRTP. Ms. Kozak invited members to request detailed presentations for the jurisdiction's council meetings.

As part of the next steps for the LRTP, Ms. Kozak reviewed access management corridors, and project prioritization criteria, requiring quantitative weighting, as a result of ACT 114

passed in 2007. The consultants and Technical Committee are working to reformat the COG's project prioritization matrix to accommodate the LATS study area, LATS Guiding Principles and State and Federal transportation planning priorities. Ms. Kozak advised that the Draft LRTP and TIP will be submitted for approval in the third quarter of the year. Ms. Kozak explained that the TIP list is comprised of projects that would exist if funded, but she's optimistic that alternative sources of funding will arise for US 17 in the future. Ms. Sulka discussed the importance of projects being ready to go as part of the TIP.

Ms. Kozak spoke to the valuable contribution from the public workshops held in Northern Beaufort County and the Town of Bluffton. She noted there will be one more workshop, likely in March. Mr. Blauch recommended that a presentation be made to the Policy Committee before the LRTP is released to the public. Mr. Bostick asked about the location of the public meetings for the LRTP and said that he'd like to see a meeting in Jasper County. Ms. Sulka stressed the importance of a central location, having the largest number of people in participation. Mr. Kinton mentioned the benefits of the meeting space at Palmetto Electric facilities in Jasper County. Ms. Kozak reminded attendees that there would be future community meetings, not directly related to the LRTP, which will be held at various locations throughout the MPO Region.

Ms. Kozak asked those on the Technical Committee to add any information on the process. Ms. Jarrett requested that the roadway and bike and pedestrian recommendation maps, produced by the consultants, be distributed to the Policy Committee.

Ms. Franzoni reminded the Committee of the importance of continued progress of LRTP. She highlighted the linkages between 5307 transit funding with MPO formation and the completion of the LRTP. She explained that funds are needed and authorized, but can only be released once the document is complete. Held funding will be available from as far back as 2013.

Ms. Riley advised that full funding needs to be identified in the STIP to finish the environmental documentation, which allows right-of-way (ROW) purchases to proceed early next year, all of which cannot start until after the completion of the LRTP.

Ms. Sulka asked that the new LCOG Executive Director keep the process on track and requested a project timeline regarding the LRTP and the next steps, separated by quarters, with a calendar detailing project milestones.

**c. Update on new management and progress at LRTA/Palmetto Breeze – Mary Lou Franzoni**

Ms. Franzoni commented on transitions at LRTA, including new staff, bus purchasing and technology implementation. She indicated the past problems have been stabilized. Mr. Blauch spoke to increasing contract revenue with coordinated trips and vehicle replacement, including cutaways (smaller-fuel efficient buses). Ms. Kozak highlighted the transition from human services agencies providing their own transportations to contracts with LRTA to offer transportation services, which allows counselors to do more human service work.

**d. Discussion of public transit provider for small urban area – Ginnie Kozak**

Ms. Kozak reminded participants that there is still a need for Beaufort County, the Town of Bluffton and Town of Hilton Head Island to pass a resolution designating a Transit Provider. Ms. Kozak added that a meeting, between the jurisdictions, will be needed to determine the share of local match for public transit, which will allow for significant federal funding. Ms. Kozak will contact the jurisdictions to set-up a time for a meeting. Ms. Jarrett reminded those present that the jurisdictions also need to agree on allocations of the local match from each. Ms. Kozak agreed to develop scenarios showing how the allocations might be determined and their approximate amounts.

**3. New Business**

**a. Meeting Schedule**

Committee members expressed the need for more regular meetings. Ms. Sulka asked for a motion for a quarterly schedule starting in March, with the details emailed by Ms. Kozak. A motion was made by Mr. Bausch, seconded by Mr. McFee and passed unanimously. The members agreed that the original schedule of the first Friday of the month, at 10 a.m. should be used.

**4. Adjourn**

Ms. Sulka asked for a motion to adjourn at 10:45 AM, Mr. Sommerville made the motion, Ms. Clark seconded and it passed unanimously.