

Lowcountry Area Transportation Study (LATS)
Policy Committee Meeting
Friday, May 1, 2020 10:00 am
Zoom Conference Call (*Broadcasted via Facebook Live*)
MINUTES

Policy Committee Members Present:

Chairwoman – Mayor Lisa Sulka, Town of Bluffton
Paul Sommerville, Beaufort County Council
Susan Zellman, LRTA
Glenn Stanford, Town of Hilton Head
Mayor Joe DeVito, Town of Port Royal
Mike McFee, City of Beaufort
Mayor Harry Williams, City of Hardeeville
Robby Robbins, SCDOT Commission Chairman

Technical Committee Members Present:

Kraig Gordon, Chairman Beaufort CTC
Katie Woodruff, City of Hardeeville
Kevin Icard, Town of Bluffton
Rob McFee, Beaufort County
Mary Lou Franzoni, LRTA

LCOG Staff Present:

Ginnie Kozak, Planning Director
Christian Dammal, Planning Assistant
Kira Fuller, Executive Assistant

Others Present:

John Fleming, Southern Carolina Alliance
Mark Wilkes, Coastal Region MPO Savannah
Mark Pleasant, Federal Highway Administration
Dan Wood, Town of Bluffton
Mark McCain, Beaufort County CTC
David Spisso, City of Hardeeville
David Wilhelm

Policy Committee Members Absent:

Barbara Clark, Jasper County
Sen. Tom Davis, JC Leg. Delegation Chairman

SCDOT Staff Present:

Josh Johnson
Craig Winn
LaToya Grate
David Gray

Others Present:

Carolyn Kassel, City of Hardeeville
Ashley Jacobs, BC County Administrator
Andy Fulghum, JC County Administrator
Joe Croley, Lowcountry Inside Track
Bill Harkins, Town of Hilton Head
John O'Toole

1. Call to Order: Chairwoman Lisa Sulka called the meeting to order at 10:00 am
 - a. Pledge of Allegiance
 - b. Invocation – led by Mike McFee
 - c. Roll Call
 - d. Action on February 7, 2019 Meeting Minutes – Mike McFee made the motion to accept the minutes. Mayor Joe DeVito seconded. No discussion. **Motion carried unanimously.**
2. Old Business:
 - a. SCDOT US 278 & US 17 Project Update – Craig Winn, SCDOT
 - i. US 17 – The project is currently in the August letting. SCDOT is working with partners to keep the project moving forward despite Covid-19. In the new month, SCDOT will advertise the project. Contractors are reaching out and showing interest in the project.
 - ii. US 278 – SCDOT is holding biweekly team meetings and communicating with consultants. They are working on intersection alternatives through Squire Pope Road, Old Wild Horse, and Spanish Wells Road. There are 14 alternatives to improve traffic flow through those intersections. After a recent meeting, they have narrowed it down to 4 alternatives. SCDOT plans to share the alternatives with the Town of Hilton Head and Beaufort County staff. At the end of May, there will be a stakeholder meeting via Zoom to discuss the intersection alternatives and other small tweaks. In two weeks, SCDOT will meet with the Agency Coordination Effort, and involve resource agencies, core engineers, and official wildlife to gain feedback on the proposed alternatives. At the meeting, SCDOT will present data for the preferred alternatives. SCDOT will wait to release information to the public. The Seismic Report is under review for all bridges. The Preliminary Traffic Report was uploaded onto project website.
 - b. SC 170 Corridor SC 462 Traffic Signal Update - Kraig Gordon
 - i. The traffic signal light is 1 of 4 action items approved on the SC 170 Corridor Access Management Study. The project is a collaboration between Jasper CTC, Beaufort County CTC, and SCDOT. At this point in time, the lights are up and installed. There are minor adjustments to be made. The goal is for all adjustments to be taken care of by “next week” (May 8, 2020). It will take a 5 to 7-day flashing period then the lights should be turned on by June 15, 2020.
 - c. SC 170 Corridor Access Management Study – Ginnie Kozak, LCOG
 - i. Discussion
 1. Ginnie expressed her concern that when a study is done and then there is no group or person(s) given the authority and responsibility to move forward the recommendations may not be implemented. There is a need to decide how to proceed organizationally. Do we keep it to LATS? Does SCDOT want to take charge? Do we want to set up a different organization?
 2. Paul Sommerville adds that Beaufort County expressed interest in taking the lead on the project. He can’t speak for the administration though.
 3. Ginnie informs the LATS committee that they will have to make a recommendation for who takes the lead because this is a multi-jurisdiction project. There would have to be some sort of agreement if one jurisdiction is going to take it over. Will there be an advisory capacity by LATS?
 4. Paul Sommerville states that Beaufort County can get with Jasper County and the City of Hardeeville between now and the next meeting to make a recommendation to committee.
 5. **ACTION:** LATS Committee make a decision regarding the future direction of the study.
 6. **MOTION:** Mayor Joe DeVito made a motion that LATS take the lead on this project; the LATS Technical Committee members from Beaufort and Jasper counties, Hardeeville and LATS/LCOG will determine what needs to be implemented and the timeline. The

technical committee would report back to the LATS Policy Committee. Paul Sommerville seconded. **Motion carried unanimously.**

7. Ginnie advises the committee that LATS is the MPO, Metropolitan Planning Organization, for the study. Also, Guidesshare funds are allocated to LATS which means that those funds would have to be distributed via LATS.
8. Mayor Harry Williams asked, "If LATS is still the responsible organization for funding, if we set up committee then would that committee would report back to LATS?"
9. Mayor Joe DeVito stated that the committee should figure it out and then report back to LATS. We will work with members of the existing LATS Technical Committee. Chairwoman Lisa Sulka advises that it would be a policy subcommittee.
10. It was agreed that the subcommittee be comprised of the technical committee members from each of those jurisdictions.
11. **MOTION:** Set up a subcommittee of the Policy Committee to include representatives of Jasper County, Hardeeville and Beaufort County to proceed with a strategy for implementing the SC 170 Corridor Access Management Study.
12. **ACTION:** Mayor Joe DeVito approved; Mayor Harry Williams seconded. **Motion carried unanimously.**

d. Palmetto Breeze Update--Mary Lou Franzoni

- i. Palmetto Breeze is running all rural commuter buses and they are at about half capacity. Also, they are operating the Demand Response effort from Beaufort which takes people to doctor appointments, dialysis, and anywhere they really need to go. Currently, there are no trolleys, agencies, adult education, vocational rehabilitation, or special worker routes. There are no additional services that help pay local match funding such as USCB, Palmetto Bluff, Vacation Club, and more.
- ii. The maintenance department built shields on buses for all drivers. All drivers have personal protection equipment (PPE), masks, face shields, sanitizer, and wipes.
- iii. Due to CARES Act funding, the board approved that no one would have to stop and pay fares until June 30, 2020.

3. New Business:

- a. Introduction of new Technical Committee Chair – Ginnie Kozak
 - i. Katie Woodruff, Planning Manger from Hardeeville.
- b. Update on Long Range Transportation Plan Update — Katie Woodruff
 - i. A few weeks ago, the Technical Committee agreed on an RFP to release for the update on the Long Range Transportation Plan. Due to changes at the federal level, the document needed to be amended and will be released again soon. The Technical Committee will have an update for the LATS Policy Committee as soon as they have some responses.
- c. Amendment to Unified Planning Work Program to include Federal Transit Administration grant funding for Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority/Palmetto Breeze marketing and planning – Mary Lou Franzoni
 - i. The current Unified Planning Work Program, UPWP, is for the following grant year. The UPWP is needed in order to get the grant approved. The document provided is for next year's grant. The Federal Fiscal Year starts October 1st. Federal grants do not expire in one budget year but are dispersed every year annually.
 - ii. **MOTION:** Approve the amendment to UPWP to include Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grant funding for LRTA/Palmetto Breeze marketing and planning.
 - iii. **ACTION:** Mayor Harry Williams approved. Paul Sommerville seconded. **Motion carried unanimously.**

4. Other Business: LATS, Chairwoman Sulka, requested an update about Ginnie Kozak's replacement via email by the next LATS meeting.
5. Public Questions on Facebook: None
6. Next Meeting: Friday, June 5, 2020
7. Adjourn: Paul Sommerville made a motion to adjourn. Mayor Harry Williams seconded. **Motion carried unanimously.** Meeting adjourned at 10:47 am.

See Links for additional information:

1. [Minutes](#)
2. [SCDOT Project Update](#)
3. [278 Project Status Update](#)