

Lowcountry Area Transportation Study (LATS)

Policy Committee Meeting

Friday, February 8, 2018, 10:00 a.m.

TCL New River Campus, Conference Room

AGENDA

Policy Committee Members Present:

Barbara Clark, Jasper County Council
Mike McFee, Council and Mayor Pro Tem, City of Beaufort
York Glover, Beaufort County
Richard Hamilton, LRTA Board Chair
Chairman Lisa Sulka, Mayor, Town of Bluffton
Robby Robbins, Chairman, SCDOT Commission
Harry Williams, City of Hardeeville
Bill Harkins, Mayor Pro Tem, Town of Hilton Head Island

Policy Committee Members Absent:

Rep. Bill Herbkersman, Jasper County Leg. Delegation Chairman
Samuel E. Murray, Mayor, Town of Port Royal
David Bennett, Mayor, Town of Hilton Head Island
Sen. Tom Davis

Technical Committee Members:

Kraig Gordon, Chair, Beaufort County CTC
Kevin Icard, Town of Bluffton
Mary Lou Franzoni, LRTA Executive Director
Katie Woodruff, Planning Manager, City of Hardeeville
Rob McFee, Director of Engineering and Infrastructure, Beaufort County
Anne Cyran, Senior Planner Town of Hilton Head
Lisa Wagner, Planning Director, Jasper County

Technical Committee Members Absent:

Dave Prichard, Community and Economic Development Director, City of Beaufort
Linda Bridges, Planning Director, Town of Port Royal

LCOG Staff Present:

Ginnie Kozak, Planning Director
Meredith Burns, Planner
Christian Dammel, Planning Assistant

SCDOT Staff Present:

LaToya Grate, SCDOT

Others Present:

David Spisso, Mayor Pro Tem, City of Hardeeville
Ken Fischer, Sun City Government and Business Committee
Tom Keaveny, Beaufort County
Michael Dennis, Ramey Kemp & Associates
Kelly Farabee, Wolverton
Bill Jordan, AECOM
Frank Turano, Alliance Consulting Engineers
Shawn Epps, F&ME Consultants
Andy Fulghum, Administrator, Jasper County
Pete Nardi, Hilton Head Public Service District
Charles Cousins, Assistant to the Town Manager, Town of Hilton Head Island
Mark Wilkes, Director, Coastal Region MPO Savannah
Joe Lee, Lowcountry Inside Track
Matt Davis, City of Hardeeville
John Kemp, Hardeeville resident

1. Call to Order.
 - a. Pledge of Allegiance
 - b. Invocation
 - c. Introduction of Members, Guests and Staff
 - d. Designees
 - e. Action on December 7, 2018 Meeting Minutes

Action: Meeting minutes from Dec. 7, 2018 were unanimously approved.

2. Old Business.
 - a. SCDOT US 278 and US 17 Project Update
ACTION: Information

The SCDOT US 278 project report can be found [here](#). The report states surveys are 55 percent complete, seismic evaluations of existing structures are 35 percent complete, the Preliminary Geotechnical Field Exploration is 55 percent complete, preliminary traffic counts are 95 percent complete, NEPA documentation is 7 percent complete, and public involvement is 25 percent complete.

The SCDOT US 17 project report can be found [here](#). Construction is expected to start in the summer or fall of 2019.

The report for other projects within the LATS area can be found [here](#).

- b. Beaufort County Project Update, including sales tax referendum projects and BTG—Rob McFee
ACTION: Information

Rob McFee provided an update on various projects in Beaufort County. He said there is going to be a discussion at the next Beaufort County Council Meeting (Feb. 11) about how to proceed with the 278/Jenkins Island project given the passage of the one-cent sales tax. Collections on the one-cent sales tax voters passed in November should begin on May 1, he said.

Mr. McFee said the 278 Signal System Initiative is complete and has contributed to a roughly 8 percent increase in travel efficiency. The mast arm rebuilds in the City of Beaufort are under construction. Design for the WK Alston Connector Road is complete and they are moving into right-of-way acquisition. The county has also been working with Kimley-Horn on the US 21 Business (Woods Bridge) Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) to identify platforms to give drivers advance warning of bridge openings. The county is also working on various projects along US 21 on Lady's Island, including a right hand turn lane on SC 802. The county has completed preliminary designs for that project and a public meeting should be held in April. The US 278 project, which is being managed by SCDOT, should have feasible alternatives this August and a preferred alternative in the spring of 2020, McFee said.

Lisa Sulka asked about a forum for quarterly updates on the one-cent sales tax projects. Committee members reached a consensus that Beaufort County staff will present quarterly updates on the one-cent sales tax projects at LATS Policy Committee meetings.

- c. Palmetto Breeze Update—Mary Lou Franzoni
ACTION: Information

Mary Lou Franzoni said the trolley service on Hilton Head will resume March 15 with slight changes to the schedule and route. Instead of running 9 a.m. – 7 p.m., the trolley will run from 1-10:30 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and 1 p.m. – 12:30 a.m. Friday and Saturday. The route has also been extended on the south end of Hilton Head to incorporate shops at the Village at Wexford and Hilton Head Island Motorcoach Resort. The changes reflect feedback from the community and a ridership assessment. Palmetto Breeze will also provide complementary ADA services to residents living within three quarters of a mile of the trolley route. This will provide door-to-door transportation service to anyone unable to travel to a bus stop. Applications for ADA services are available through the Palmetto Breeze office.

Ms. Franzoni said Palmetto Breeze staff intend to award a contract for marketing services on Feb. 8. The contract will cover marketing materials for vehicles as well as an updated Palmetto Breeze website. Ms. Franzoni said the transit provider is also moving ahead on facility upgrades, including a modular building to house the operations team. Improvements have also included installing a backup generator and implementing the Palmetto 800 communications system that will provide more reliable service during an emergency. Ms. Franzoni said they've realized a need for faster internet so they are paying to bring in a line with Spectrum.

Ms. Franzoni said she expects to be awarded a federal grant next week that will include money for more detailed transit planning in the Bluffton area.

d. SC 170 Corridor Access Management Study Update
ACTION: Information

Ginnie Kozak provided an update on the SC 170 Corridor Access Management Study. The LATS Technical Committee has recommended a consultant after receiving four applications, but an announcement will not be made until the contract is signed. Ms. Kozak said this will hopefully be the first of many corridor access management studies.

York Glover asked who would oversee the study. Ms. Kozak said the Lowcountry Council of Governments, which is the fiduciary organization for the MPO, will oversee the project with input from the LATS Technical Committee.

Mayor Sulka said given the number of new committee members and meeting attendees, it might be helpful to present a brief history of LATS and the MPO during a future LATS Policy Committee meeting.

3. New Business.

a. Election of Policy Committee Chair and Vice Chair. Per LATS Bylaws.
ACTION: Nomination and election of officers

Ms. Kozak said LATS Policy Committee bylaws state there should be an election for a new chair and vice chair every two years at the first meeting of the calendar year. Mayor Sulka and Barbra Clark, the current chair and vice chair, would not be able to succeed themselves unless the bylaws are amended, Kozak said.

Ms. Clark and other committee members said they were interested in amending the bylaws to allow the chair and vice chair to succeed themselves. Robby Robbins and others pointed out any action amending the bylaws would have to take place at a future meeting in order to follow proper procedure.

Action: The committee approved a motion to request an amendment to bylaws at the next LATS Policy Committee Meeting.

b. Draft Meeting Schedule for Calendar Year 2019

ACTION: Approval

Mayor Sulka said the meetings are scheduled for every other month, but additional meetings may be called as needed considering how many projects are starting in the area.

Action: The committee unanimously approved the proposed meeting dates of Feb. 8, April 5, June 7, Aug. 2, Oct. 4 and Dec. 6.

c. Addition of Interstate 95 Widening Project to LATS STIP list

ACTION: Approval

Ms. Kozak said this is a procedural measure so SCDOT can officially include the project on the state's project list.

Mr. Robbins, who is Chairman of SCDOT, discussed some housekeeping items. He said that while SCDOT does not have the \$800 million to \$1 billion needed for complete Interstate 95 widening, the commission allocated about \$1 million to get the process started from the Georgia line to Exit 33. He also referenced state legislation passed in 2017 that provides a rebate of \$115 to \$125 million a year. He said the rebate may expire in 2022 and he hopes to be able to access that money for widening Interstate 95 and Interstate 26 from Ridgeville to Sandy Run.

Chairman Robbins added the State Infrastructure Bank is facing two lawsuits related to the passage of the gas tax. It is his understanding the bank cannot bond any projects until pending litigation is resolved, making it difficult for local governments to finance projects. Chairman Robbins said they are working through how to continue receiving and ranking projects in the meantime. He added State Senator Peeler will have two new appointments to the bank board and Barnwell Fishburne now represents the 6th congressional district on the SCDOT board.

Action: The committee unanimously approved adding of Interstate 95 Widening Project to LATS STIP list.

d. Amendment to Safety Measures Targets in LRTP (attached)

ACTION: Approval

Action: The committee unanimously approved amending Safety Measure Targets in the LRTP.

e. LATS Financial Summary

ACTION: Information

Ms. Kozak provided the financial summary for the fourth quarter of 2018. There was one project, US 17, with a total project amount of \$1 million.

4. Other Business

Andy Fulghum provided a brief update on the Jasper Ocean Terminal. He said Jasper County staff are working to get Georgia and South Carolina officials working together to get the project back on track.

The Jasper County Council has prepared lawsuits about the issue. The suits are in negotiations and have not yet been filed, he said.

5. Public Comment Period.
6. Next Meeting. Friday, April 5, 2019.
7. Adjourn