

MEETING MINUTES
Lowcountry Area Transportation Study (LATS)
Meeting of the Policy Committee
Friday, January 8, 2016 – 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:

Chairman Lisa Sulka, Mayor Town of Bluffton
Vice Chair Paul Sommerville, Beaufort County Council
Barbara Clark, Jasper County Council

Policy Committee Designees Present:

Michael McFee, City of Beaufort Council, for Mayor
Billy Keyserling
Tom Lennox, Town of Hilton Head Council, for
Mayor David Bennett
Richard Hamilton for Chairman David Blauch,
LRTA

Policy Committee Members (voting) Absent:

Billy Keyserling, Mayor City of Beaufort
David Bennett, Mayor Town of Hilton Head Island
David Blauch, Chairman LRTA Board
Bronco Bostick, Town of Hardeeville
Samuel E. Murray, Mayor Town of Port Royal

Policy Committee Members (ex officio) Absent:

Sen. Tom Davis, Beaufort County Leg. Delegation
Sam Glover, Commissioner SCDOT
Clifton Parker, Commissioner SCDOT
Rep. Bill Herbkersman, Jasper County Leg.
Delegation Chairman
Samuel E. Murray, Mayor Town of Port Royal
Jim Rozier, Commissioner SCDOT

Technical Committee Members:

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

Technical Committee Members Absent:

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

SCDOT Staff Present:

Scott Donahue, SCDOT Office of Public Transit
Kenny Larimore, SCDOT Area Planning Engineer
Michael Pitts, SCDOT Program Management
Joy Riley, SCDOT Program Manager
Craig Winn, SCDOT Project Manager

LCOG Staff Present:

Ginnie Kozak, Planning Director
Lawrence Holdsworth, Regional Planner
Jonathan Sherwood, Community and Regional
Planner

Others Present:

Susan Zellman, Sun City Government and Business
Affairs Committee

1. Call to Order

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

a. Pledge of Allegiance

b. Invocation

Mr. McFee led the invocation

c. Introduction of Members, Guests and Staff

Ms. Sulka asked members and guests to introduce themselves.

d. The chair added the election of a vice chair due to changes from local elections.

Ms. Sulka asked for a nomination for Vice-Chair. Mr. McFee nominated Mr. Sommerville, Mr. Hamilton seconded it, and Mr. Sommerville was elected unanimously.

e. Designees

The designees are Mr. McFee for Mayor Keyserling of the City of Beaufort, Mr. Lennox for Mayor Bennett of the Town of Hilton Head Island, and Mr. Hamilton for David Blauch of LRTA.

f. Action on the October 2, 2015 Minutes

Ms. Sulka asked for a motion to approve the minutes, Mr. McFee motioned, Mr. Hamilton seconded it, and the motion passed unanimously.

2. Old Business

a) Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Update—Kimley-Horn and Technical Committee

Mr. Guy noted that the LRTP has been up for public comment since December 7 and the period ended January 7 with no comments. All comments from the Technical Committee have been incorporated and reviews have been conducted by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT). Mr. Guy recommended an approval from the Policy Committee. Ms. Sulka asked for a motion to adopt the LRTP, Mr. McFee motioned, Ms. Clark seconded it, and the motion passed unanimously.

b) Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Update—Kimley-Horn and Technical Committee

Mr. Guy clarified the changes suggested by FHWA and made to the draft TIP. He described them as basic changes to the outline of the document and added amendment procedures. He explained that the changes will make the amendment process clear and will be good for the Policy Committee and no changes were made to the project list or cost. Ms. Sulka asked about the previous meeting's discussion regarding project prioritization. Ms. Foster said those were ranges of numbers for the projects and are reflected in the document. Mr. Guy recommended approval of the TIP conditionally based on a review of from the Technical Committee. Ms. Kozak explained that she had just received comments January 7th, after submitting the document for review by FHWA, making the turnaround time problematic in terms of getting transit funds to LRTA. Mr. Larimore agreed and recommended approval due to the urgency of receiving the urban area transit funds. Ms. Foster suggested going ahead as her review of the document didn't reveal any concerns. Mr. Kinton and Ms. Jarrett agreed. Ms. Sulka asked for a motion to approve the TIP, noting the that members of the Technical Committee saw no outstanding issues with the document. Mr. McFee made a motion to approve the TIP, Mr. Hamilton seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

c) SCDOT Project Update—Joy Riley

Ms. Riley gave an update on ongoing projects in the MPO area.

- S-79 Bridge Replacement over Jarvis Creek. The project received two bids in December but they came in 24 percent over the estimate. There will be a second letting in May. Ms. Riley

noted that many of the bridge contractors are busy in other parts of the state due to the flooding damage from the October rain and subsequent flooding events.

- US 21 @ US 21 Business Intersection Improvement - The Project will include a right-turn lane and is currently under construction.
- SC 802 and Holly Hall/Brickyard Intersection – The project includes the construction of a round-a-bout. Letting will begin this month (January 2016). Mr. Sommerville asked Ms. Riley about the availability for temporary electronic roadway signs to inform the public about the work prior to construction. He referenced the utilization of such signage on the Boundary St. project in the City of Beaufort. Mr. McFee said the Council urged staff to keep the public and business advised about the project. Ms. Riley said that she would put in a request to District 6. She explained that equipment, such as mobile electronic signs, are in short supply due to increased demand as a result of recent flooding and roadway closures.
- US 278 Windmill Harbour Intersection Improvement – The project is complete with the final inspection.
- US 21 @ SC 170 Intersection Improvements (Safety) – The project construction letting is anticipated in the winter 2016-2017.
- US 17 Widening – The project environmental work is nearing completion and a public hearing will occur soon after. Letting will occur in the spring of 2017. Ms. Sulka asked about a letter received from the public in regard to bike and pedestrian facilities. Mr. Larimore said that he has responded. Ms. Riley advised that SCDOT will include striped bike lanes in the project, however, at this time, there will be no accommodation for pedestrian facilities. Ms. Kozak noted that, in regards to the pedestrian facilities, there is long-term planning being prepared by the Technical Committee to include other facilities. Ms. Sulka asked about the work of the East Coast Greenway (ECG). Mr. Kinton explained that it's East Coast Greenway's policy that their route designation include only facilities with a separated pathway.

Ms. Sulka asked about the status of the bridge replacement projects on SC 462. Ms. Riley explained that one bridge has been replaced but the other was scheduled later because of its location on a hurricane evacuation route and work could not begin until hurricane season was finished.

Mr. Sommerville asked about the long-term plans for the Hilton Head Island Bridges. Ms. Riley indicated that they are probably on the list but no timeframe has been set. Mr. Kinton explained there are two bridges over Mackay Creek, one being built in the 1950s, the parallel one was built in the 1980s, and the bridge over the intercostal waterway was built in the 1980s. Ms. Riley said that when the bridges are replaced they would be wider than the current ones.

d) LRTA/Palmetto Breeze Update—Mary Lou Franzoni

Ms. Franzoni gave an update on the latest developments at LRTA/Palmetto Breeze. She began by expressing her appreciation to the Policy Committee for adopting the LRTP as LRTA will now be eligible for urban funds after the FTA review process. She is hopeful that will happen before the next fiscal year. She explained the budgetary situation at LRTA which, due to less SCDOT grants, resulted in a \$200,000 shortfall. As a result, the Board of Directors approved a 20 percent fair increase, however, she was happy to report that there was no loss of ridership.

Ms. Franzoni reported that the budget did not allow for major repairs for the larger buses, which have been operating with high miles. SCDOT awarded LRTA \$600,000 that did not require local match. The funds will be utilized for rehabbing 6 MCIs, purchasing two pre-owned MICIs with lower

miles, and retiring two of the oldest in the fleet. She added that SCDOT awarded another grant for with 100 percent funds, in which LRTA purchased seven cutaways that are utilized for demand response routes.

Ms. Franzoni explained that after a budget review, LRTA had to raise rates for coordinated trips for senior services. LCOG's Aging Department, the program managers, chose to find alternative means for the Senior Service's eight routes. Ms. Franzoni said that the decision not to continue these routes under the older rates was saving money, however, many residents were able to use this service to go to doctor appointments and shopping.

Ms. Franzoni talked about LRTA's participation in a regional emergency evacuation planning session and the value that provided the area. She explained that LRTA will be assisting individuals out of Beaufort County to the Jasper County High School Complex, where if needed they are evacuated further inland, in the event of a hurricane. She announced that LRTA will be hosting a bus rodeo that will include school buses and dump trucks.

e) LATS Policy Committee membership composition

Ms. Kozak reviewed the Committee membership and the complication of having the legislative delegation and SCDOT Commissioners as voting members as they are rarely able to attend the meetings. She recommended that their status be changed to *ex officio* as of January 8, 2016. Mayor Sulka asked for a motion, Mr. McFee seconded it, and the motion passed unanimously.

f) Next Meeting

Ms. Kozak recommended that the Friday, April 1st meeting be scheduled but if there is no business that it will be canceled. Ms. Sulka asked for a schedule for the year.

New Business

- a) Ms. Clark announced that Lisa Lamb, Jasper County Building and Planning Services, will now serve on the Technical Committee.
- b) Ms. Foster expressed her appreciation for SCDOT and FHWA staff in the development of the MPO. Ms. Sulka agreed and added a thanks to the consultants, Kimley-Horn. She advised staff at the Town of Bluffton to draft a letter of appreciation.

Other Business

None

Adjourn

Ms. Sulka adjourned the meeting at 10:45 AM.