

MEETING MINUTES

Kootenai Metropolitan Planning Organization
Policy Board Meeting
April 1, 2010
Post Falls City Council Chambers, City Hall, First Floor
Post Falls, Idaho

Board Members in Attendance:

Jimmie Dorsey, Chair	East Side Highway District
Clay Larkin, Vice Chair	City of Post Falls
Andrea Storjohann (alternate)	Idaho Transportation Department
Richard Panabaker	City of Hayden
Vic Holmes	City of Rathdrum
Lynn Humphreys	Post Falls Highway District
Al Hassell	City of Coeur d'Alene
James Mangan	Worley Highway District
Marv Lekstrum	Lakes Highway District

Board Members Absent:

Todd Tondee	Kootenai County
Damon Allen	Idaho Transportation Department
Norma Peone	Coeur d'Alene Tribe

Staff Present:

Ryan Stewart, Senior Transportation Planner
Jeff Selle, Transportation Relations Manager
Mallory Atkinson, Transportation Planner I
Donna Lively, Administrative Secretary

1. Call to Order.

The meeting of the Kootenai Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Board was called to order by Chair, Jimmie Dorsey at 1:30 pm.

KMPO Chair Mr. Jimmie Dorsey announced an adjustment to the agenda. Item 8.a., Congressional Update, was moved to the first item of business. Mr. Jeff Selle deferred his update to Congressman Walt Minnick representing Idaho's 1st District. Mr. Minnick asked Chairman Dorsey whether or not he wanted the update to be general or transportation specific. Mr. Dorsey requested a general congressional update.

Mr. Minnick reported that after ten months, the health care bill passed, although he did not vote for it. He briefed the Board on the key elements of the bill, noting that some components take effect as early as this September, while major changes become effective in 2014. He stated that the bill, which received no Republican support in either the House or the Senate, contained cost control deficiencies.

A financial reform bill is expected to pass sometime this summer along with the possibility of an energy bill, which won't be cap and trade. Other major legislative issues discussed include immigration reform and labor law changes. He stated that the remaining session will deal with minor, job creating, headline maximizing job bills to reduce unemployment. Not much is expected in the area of transportation, except for an extension.

Mr. Richard Panabaker asked Mr. Minnick what Congress is doing to address the national debt dilemma. Mr. Minnick responded that the national debt is the biggest problem facing the nation. The budget deficit this year is between \$1.6 to \$1.8 trillion, not including the unfunded obligations in the nation's entitlement programs, which include Medicare, Social Security, and Veteran's and Children's benefits. The national debt stands at \$70 trillion, equating to over \$200,000 for every man, woman, and child in the U.S., and 60% of the total gross domestic output making it increasingly unserviceable. An Entitlement Commission has been formed, comprised of 10 Democrats and 10 Republicans, and charged with reporting their findings/recommendations after the elections on entitlement reforms that will make them actuarially sound.

Mr. Dick Edinger asked why Congressmen and others in Washington D.C. feel they are better than most Americans because they are offered better health care options. Mr. Minnick responded that there is a common misconception that members of Congress have a special health care plan when in actuality they are offered the same health care options as all other federal government employees. Under the new health care bill, individuals and small groups should be offered the same discounted health care options given the bargaining power of the federal government.

Mr. James Mangan commented that most people do not believe the negative financial trends because of the presence of the Social Security Trust Fund. Mr. Minnick responded that this trust fund is an accounting fiction and opined that this will probably be the year when the outflow exceeds the income. He stated that America is not too big to fail and what will make it fail is continued fiscal irresponsibility.

Mr. Bob Miller commented that certain elements in the federal government oppose the development of capital based systems and business, the two factors that built this country. Mr. Minnick responded that a typical business or city budget accounting system has never been adopted by the federal government in part due to the complexity of federal accounting. He does not see or anticipate any changes to this in the near future.

Mr. Panabaker opined that most Americans would help pay off the U.S. debt if they had confidence in how the federal government would utilize the funds. Mr. Minnick stated that this kind of consensus commitment is needed to enable Congress to deal with the financial crisis. The U.S. has but a few years to address this issue until the world's financial markets will force it to.

The Board thanked Mr. Minnick.

Mr. Jeff Selle briefed the Board on the Jobs Bill, also known as the “Hiring Incentives to Restore Employment (*HIRE*) Act.” The bill restores transportation funding to 2009 levels through the end of 2010 and restores the \$8 billion in funds from the 2009 rescission, which comprised a 30% hit in Idaho’s transportation budget. Funds from 100% earmarked transportation programs will be combined and processed through the normal formula program and distributed equitably to all states.

2. Approval of March Meeting Minutes.

Mr. James Mangan commented that paragraph 4 on page 5 of the March 4, 2010 KMPO Board meeting minutes did not answer the question as to whether or not the RPTA would include both Kootenai and Benewah Counties per the Coeur d’Alene Tribe’s request. Mr. Dorsey stated that he felt Mr. Miles covered that in his response in that an RPTA in Kootenai County could still have a relationship with Benewah County in much the same way it operates now. Mr. Stewart concurred stating that the recommendation and intent is to start out small and then expand as the need warrants. The issue of providing services outside the area that provides the voluntary contributions, however, would need to be addressed. He noted that KMPO will meet with the tribe to discuss a proposed RPTA.

Mr. Mangan noted that the Mr. Miles’ statement expressing concern that rural vs. urban programs under the contract administration would require more ITD Public Transportation Office involvement seems to indicate that this is a hurdle to overcome. Mr. Stewart stated that this does not pose a hurdle since the rural areas of Benewah County would still receive services from Citylink. Mr. Mangan asked whether it meant that Citylink’s service into Benewah County would not be supported by the RPTA. Mr. Stewart responded that current Citylink services would be supported by a RPTA. Mr. Mangan asked whether the minutes should be modified to exclude the concern expressed by Mr. Miles. Mr. Stewart responded that this would be considered.

Mr. James Mangan made a motion to approve the March 4, 2010 KMPO Board Meeting Minutes with amendments as discussed. Ms. Andrea Storjohann seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

3. Public Comments

Mr. Bill Brannan representing Northwestern Trailways introduced himself. Mr. Ryan Stewart reported that Trailways has a new service commencing today and invited Mr. Brannan to the meeting to announce this new service.

Mr. Brannan reported that Northwestern Trailways started services between Coeur d’Alene and Spokane that runs twice a day. He noted that half of their passengers are interline passengers connecting to other places from Boise and Spokane. He provided copies of the Trailways bus schedule to the Board, noting that they have a bus leaving

from Coeur d'Alene to Boise at 7:45 am returning to Coeur d'Alene at 3:30 pm and on into Spokane by 4:30 pm to make east and west bound connections.

Trailways is currently operating from the Conoco station on Northwest Boulevard off of I-90. Although they do not have an on-site ticket agent, they are working with Greyhound and Amtrack for online ticket purchases.

Mr. Brannan announced that the State of Idaho has developed a 511 transit information service, which is located on the ITD website. ITD conducted an inner-city bus study that is currently in draft form but is expected to be published soon.

Mr. Brannan noted that all public transportation carriers agree with the coordination efforts underway; he referred to the Community Transportation Association of Idaho (CTAI) workshop to be held later this month for the purpose of determining policies and processes for planning and developing local transportation plans throughout the state.

Trailways has had a tremendous interest and response from smaller cities such as Potlatch and Plummer, Idaho, who now have their own sales agents. He noted that Moscow is also working on an intermodal facility.

4. KCATT Recommendations.

Mr. Stewart reported that there are no KCATT recommendations this month. However, the bulk of the meeting discussion was on establishing a consolidated process for applications and criteria to evaluate projects for future Call for Projects. A subcommittee was formed and met yesterday and settled on a single application form and set of criteria that will be used in the near future for establishing a prioritized regional project list. KCATT will consider the subcommittee's findings and a recommendation from KMPO is forthcoming.

Mr. Stewart announced that the City of Rathdrum's Highway 41 and Wright Street project will be moved forward from 2012 to 2010 for construction per ITD. An STIP administrative amendment is all that is needed, thus eliminating the need for a public comment period.

5. Administrative Matters – Glenn Miles

a. KMPO General February 2010 Expenses & Financial Report

Mr. Stewart stated that there were no major items on the February 2010 Expenses and Financial Report requiring a detailed explanation but that he would entertain questions if needed.

Mr. Clay Larkin made a motion to approve the KMPO Vouchers payment for February 2010 in the amount of \$11,904.22. The motion was seconded by Mr. Vic Holmes and unanimously approved.

6. Public Transportation

a. Citylink Status Report – Alan Eirls

Mr. Alan Eirls briefed the Board on bus maintenance issues. He reported that ridership was up to its highest levels on record. Every route had increases with the C route having the largest at nearly 19,000 passengers.

He stated that there have been incidents whereby passengers had to be ejected. The incidents occurred in the Post Falls area involving juveniles using knives or sharp instruments to stab seats. Incident reports to the Board can be provided upon request.

b. KATS Status Report – Helen Stephens

Mr. John Austin provided the KATS report on behalf of Ms. Stephens who was unable to attend the meeting. He noted that ridership numbers were down for the month though he could not provide an explanation.

c. ARRA Public Transportation Projects Update – John Austin

Mr. John Austin reported that 14 busses have been procured on behalf of the Kootenai County Commissioners. The Commissioners approved the purchase of the 7 smaller busses that support fixed routes: 3 for KATS, 3 for the hospital, and 1 for the Tribe. The 7 large busses have been rebid and will later be approved by the County Commissioners as well. A total of 14 busses valued at \$1.3 million have been ordered.

d. Financial Report – John Austin

Mr. Austin stated that all ARRA funds have been approved and awarded. The 5307 funds for the operation of the grant fiscal year commences today.

e. Mobility Manager's Report – Clif Warren

Mr. Clif Warren reported that the Board has been informed of the 511 transit information service along with the inner city bus study and the new Trailways bus service. The Section 5311 funding requests are completed and include inner city routes heading south and north in Kootenai County as well as rural transportation.

A balancing meeting is scheduled for April 14th at 9 am at the Best Western Hotel; determinations are expected to be made on how to spend the \$750,000. A PTAC meeting is scheduled for April 26th in Boise, ID.

He noted that the Community Transportation Association of Idaho (CTAI) has instituted an I-WAY Leadership Award Program to recognize individuals and/or organizations excelling in the area of public transportation.

Mr. Warren asked whether the Board has decided on which Board member would be attending the CTAI workshop on April 27-28, 2010. Chairman Dorsey responded that KMPO staff member Mr. Ryan Stewart would be attending this workshop and that he is available to attend as well, but noted that KMPO would need to cover the cost of one attendee.

Mr. Clay Larkin made a motion to authorize and cover the cost for Mr. Jimmie Dorsey to attend the CTAI workshop on April 27-28, 2010, in Boise, Idaho. Mr. Al Hassell seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

f. RPTA Recommendation Update – Ryan Stewart

Mr. Ryan Stewart reported that an informational meeting is scheduled with the Kootenai County Commissioners on April 7, 2010 at 3 pm to discuss the Board's RPTA recommendation before a formal letter of recommendation is presented.

7. Director's Report – Glenn Miles

Mr. Stewart provided a memo to the Board from Mr. Glenn Miles summarizing the Idaho STP Urban Balancing Meeting that he attended on March 22, 2010. The memo addressed the funding status on the Government Way project from Hanley to Dalton in Coeur d'Alene and the Lakes Highway District's Lancaster Road overlay project from US 95 to Huetter Road. It also addressed the need to move forward with the STP Call for Projects in order to establish a priority project list for future funding opportunities.

Mr. Stewart introduced KMPO staff member, Mallory Atkinson, who will be assisting with modeling and planning efforts for KMPO.

Mr. Stewart demonstrated ITD's new transit information website located at <http://hb.transit.idaho.gov>. He stated that Citylink was one of the first providers featured on the site, which includes detailed route and schedule information.

8. Other Business

a. Jobs Bill Update – Jeff Selle

This agenda item was moved to the first item of business.

b. DEQ Update – Mark Boyle

Mr. Stewart reported that Mr. Mark Boyle could not attend today's meeting but had forwarded an email explaining that there were no new updates to report on other than ozone and nox monitoring season in Kootenai County begins April 1 and DEQ's 2009 ozone report for Kootenai County is currently being developed.

9. Board Member Items

Mr. Clay Larkin reported that the bridge on west Seltice Way will be closed on May 31 for 18 months until October 2011. Also, traffic will be hampered due to ITD's redecking of state line bridges and work being conducted on Spokane Street. Ms. Storjohann added that ITD will commence a public awareness campaign regarding the dates, timelines, and descriptions of these projects.

10. Adjournment.

There being no further business before the Kootenai Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Board, the regular meeting was adjourned at 2:45 pm.

Donna Lively
Recording Secretary