



Northeast Minnesota Area Transportation Partnership Meeting

February 14, 2018 @ 10:00 am
Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation Board
4261 US-53, Eveleth, MN 55734

SUMMARY

Members Present: Bryan Anderson, Robert Anderson, Joel Astleford, Bill Bennett, Ron Chicka, Robert Deschampe, Jim Foldesi, Krysten Foster, Karin Grandia, Duane Hill, Jason Hollinday, Andy Hubley, Gary Johnson, Dan Larson, Jack Larson, Mark LeBrun, Bob Manzoline, John McDonald, JinYeene Neumann, Gary Peterson, Bill Pratt, Maggie Rothstein, Jeff Rypka, Joe Sutherland, Cindy Voigt, Matt Wegwerth, John Welle

Members Absent: Kevin Adee, Louise Anderson, Richard Dunkley, Steve Hallan, Bill Hennis, Mike Moilanen, Keith Nelson, Caleb Peterson, Jim Sharrow, Jennifer Sterbenz, Jesse Story

Also in attendance: Wayne Boucher, Robert Ege, Tom Gottfried, Russell Habermann, John Minor, Michelle Pierson, Sue Siemers

Meeting called to order at 10:25 am.

- 1. Approval of Meeting Summary**

A motion was made by John Welle/Karin Grandia to approve the November 15, 2017, NEMNATP meeting summary document. No comments. Carried unanimously.

- 2. Approval of Agenda**

A motion was made by Matt Wegwerth/Jack Larson. No comments. Carried unanimously.

- 3. Comments and Suggestions from Citizens Present**

None brought forward.

4. Program Updates and Subcommittee Reports

a) Federal Funding Program – Local and State Programs

Local Program

2018 Local Projects handouts were emailed with meeting notice. Hard copies were distributed to those who needed them. John McDonald provided some background regarding Federal Aid projects. Project memoranda were due by December 1, and all projects came in on time. Plans will need to be submitted to MnDOT District 1 by April 1. McDonald highlighted updates on three projects, including 092-090-053, 118-080-063, and 129-090-007, and brought attention to several STIP modifications.

State Program

FY 2018 – Robert Ege distributed a handout and map. Bridge replacements and mill and overlay on I-35 in Pine County is the biggest project.

FY 2022 Program

Bryan Anderson presented the 2022 Program Targets. \$9.1M will be coming into the NEMNATP. This budget is broken into four components: Transportation Alternatives (\$900,000), MPO (\$2.68M), HSIP (\$1.5M), and Cities and Counties (\$4.02M).

Anderson then went through the 2022 Federal Aid Candidate Projects, including the Snively Rd/CSAH 37 project, Arrowhead Road preservation project, and Woodland Avenue project in Duluth and pavement rehabilitation projects in Carlton, Itasca, and St. Louis Counties. An additional pavement rehabilitation project will occur in the City of Hibbing.

Anderson called for a motion to approve the seven Federal Aid candidate projects as presented to the ATP. Motion made by Mark LeBrun/JinYeene Neumann. No comments. Carried unanimously.

b) Other MnDOT Updates

Anderson spoke about the Corridors of Commerce projects. Of 34 applications, 6 were deemed eligible. MnDOT did not apply. MN Legislature provided a total of \$400M in bonding funds, with a \$200M dispersion in each the metro and Greater Minnesota. Eligibility was determined that projects had to develop additional highway capacity and/or improve the movement of freight, so two-lane roads were ineligible. Eligible projects include projects on Highway 2 between Grand Rapids and Cohasset, a passing lane on Highway 53 between Cook and International Falls, and a project on Highway 169 to upgrade from two to four lanes between Pengilly and Bovey. A project on I-35 in the Twin Ports Interchange was submitted. And one on I-35 in Cloquet would provide new access at 14th Street. Next steps will be detailed scoping of each project. All projects were applied for by local entities, none by MnDOT.

Anderson next went over Chapter 3 bonding projects which had a total \$1B statewide bonding package, which included the Corridors of Commerce budget. Total project

funding in District 1 is \$78M in projects. Projects currently under consideration include a Highway 210 project between Aitkin and Hassman, a TH 2 project between the Prairie River and TH 200, and three projects in the Twin Ports Interchange area. An unbonded overlay project in Pine County may also be included as a shelf project.

c) **ARDC Regional Transportation Planning Updates**

Russell Habermann provided updates on Safe Routes to School planning, District freight plan preparation, Superior National Forest Scenic Byway Council, Aitkin area active transportation, and MnDOT's trail counter program. Michelle Pierson provided an update regarding technical assistance provided to the Gitchi-Gami Trail Association.

d) **Bicycle Technical Advisory Committee**

Habermann noted that the BTAC is a subcommittee of the ATP and has been working to establish bike routes in the region that may utilize, in part, county or city roadways. The third meeting of this group is scheduled for February 26. More information is available at www.districtonebicycleplan.com.

5. **Unfinished Business**

a) **NEMNATP Operating Guidelines**

Chair Bill Bennett called for a motion to approve the NEMNATP Operating Guidelines with revisions. Motion made by John Welle/Karin Grandia. No comments of questions offered. Motion carried unanimously.

6. **New Business**

a) **Transportation Alternatives Program FY 2022 Projects for Approval**

Habermann requested that members refer to a map showing the distribution of projects seeking Transportation Alternative applications. After careful review and scoring of projects, the Transportation Alternatives Program task force recommended three projects: City of Aitkin Trail Extension project - \$192,000; French River Wayside Rehabilitation - \$480,000; and Fond du Lac SRTS Sidewalks - \$228,000.

Habermann asked for a motion to approve these projects for inclusion in the STIP. Motion so presented by Cindy Voigt/Bob Manzoline. Andy Hubley offered a comment of thanks to the TA task force members for their time. Motion carried unanimously.

b) **Future of Transit Funding (MnDOT)**

Tom Gottfried, Office of Transit and Active Transportation (OTAT) Section Director, presented a short background regarding how transit funding has aligned with ATPs. In NEMNATP, there are two of the state's largest systems with Arrowhead Transit and the Duluth Transit Authority.

The OTAT has gone through a reorganization process (OTAT chart was distributed) to streamline office function, enhance data management, and expand capacity to develop and deploy advanced technology.

Duluth is looking to add electric buses. It will be the first deployment of electric buses outside of the metro area. Duluth's hills have required that the electric buses used in this area would need larger batteries. St. Cloud has converted to compressed natural gas (CNG) entirely. It is a pilot project to see if this technology will extend to the full life of the buses (15 years).

Vehicle replacement used to be a component of ATP disbursements. 2016 was the last time the ATP gave money to Greater Minnesota transit. Greater MN transit has been centralized since that time. Depending upon how the legislative season plays out, it may be that Gottfried may need to present to the NEMNATP if transit funding needs to go back under the ATP umbrella for FY 2023, which may have a \$2.5M implication.

c) **Request to Evaluate Discrepancies between Regional Development Organization and MnDOT District Boundaries**

Chair Bennett provided background on this issue and then opened to the floor to ask what the next steps about his issue should be. A committee was evaluated to look at MnDOT districts, but the discussion did not apply to planning boundaries. Pine County is the only real outlier/discrepancy between MnDOT D1 and ARDC, some considerations with Aitkin County, too. Conversation included acknowledgement that this is a political issue, and would require legislative action. Should Pine County wish to be part of the ARDC rather than the ECRDC, next steps should be up to Pine County to pursue this change. Discussion also reflected that this is an issue in other parts of the state, too, and can help cause efficiencies in MnDOT maintenance. It was noted that maintenance boundaries are where they should be logistically for maintenance reasons and aligning them with county lines to match up planning boundaries would not be efficient. Consensus at the end of the topic is that this group does not need to prepare a letter or statement.

d) **ARDC Regional Transportation Planning Workplan FY 2019**

Habermann noted that he would be seeking any input for a first draft of a work plan. At this point, freight movements, transit needs in transportation planning, and development of an active transportation checklist for construction project are being considered. Habermann asked if there were recommendations for additions at this point. None offered.

e) **CY 2018 Meeting Dates - April 11, July 11, October 10**

Habermann noted the ATP would be looking at the 2nd Wednesdays of February, April, July, and October for meetings going forward. Motion to approve April 11, July 11, and October 10 for meeting dates in 2018 was made by John Welle/Jim Foldesi. Carried unanimously.

f) **NEMNATP Membership**

Meeting attendees were invited to review the updated membership list.

g) **CY 2018 Officers**

Chair Bennett noted that under the new model, he is now an advisory member representing economic development and commented that it would be most likely that Bob Manzoline would move to serving as Chair. He then asked for nominations or volunteers to serve as Vice Chair. The person serving as Vice Chair would do so for one year, and then ascend to the Chair position. Cindy Voigt asked if John Welle would like to serve. Mr. Welle declined. JinYeene Neuman was asked if she would accept a nomination. She agreed. A motion to nominate JinYeene Neuman to serve as Vice Chair was made by Krysten Foster/John MacDonald. Motion carries unanimously.

7. **Member Concerns**

None offered.

8. **Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was put forth by J. Foldesi/K. Grandia at 12:03pm. Carried unanimously.

Bold print denoted need for Committee action.

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Next NEMNATP Meeting: April 11, 2018 @ 10:00 a.m. in the Proctor Area Community Center
(100 Pionk Drive, Proctor, MN 55810)