



# Northeast Minnesota Area Transportation Partnership Meeting

October 14, 2020 @ 10:00 am  
Zoom Video/Audio Conference

## Meeting Summary

*Members in Attendance:* Kevin Adee, Bryan Anderson, Ken Anderson, Chris Belden, Ron Chicka, Kate Ferguson, Jim Foldesi, Krysten Foster, Karin Grandia, Steve Hallan, Duane Hill, Andy Hubley, Holly Kostrzewski, Dan Larson, Jack Larson, Bob Manzoline, Susan Michels, JinYeene Neumann, Gary Peterson, Bill Pratt, Dave Reimer, Tony Swader, Cindy Voigt, John Welle

*Guests in Attendance:* Russell Habermann, Scott Johnson, Michael Kalnbach, Scott Kyrola, John Minor, Michelle Pierson, John Stasiak

1. The Zoom conference line opened at 9:30 am to give participants time to get settled prior to the meeting start. Participants were encouraged to log or call into the meeting by 9:55 am. Russell Habermann, Senior Planner at ARDC Planning, greeted participants as they entered the meeting and gave a brief statement regarding processes and formats of the virtual meeting.

Vice Chair Duane Hill called the meeting to order at 10:02am. He noted that NEMNATP staff would be calling roll call for attendance and that there would be an alternative method for voting.

Michelle Pierson, Planning Assistant at ARDC Planning, described the modified Robert's Rules voting method and then took roll call attendance.

After attendance, Vice Chair Duane Hill welcomed new members Jason DiPiazza (Engineer, Lake County), Robert Hass (Engineer, Cook County), and Krysten Saatela Foster (MnDOT D1 State-Aid Engineer).

2. Approval of Meeting Summary - April 8, 2020

**A motion to approve the April 8, 2020, meeting summary was made by Jim Foldesi/Steve Hallan. The motion carried.**

3. Comments from Citizens Present - None
4. Presentation: State-Aid Roles and Responsibilities

Krysten Saatela Foster, MnDOT D-1 State-Aid Engineer, gave a presentation describing the roles and responsibilities of State-Aid and how it interacts with local jurisdictions, engineers, and

MnDOT. The presentation slides were distributed to meeting attendees and NEMNATP members following the meeting via email.

5. Transportation Alternatives FY 2025 Application

Russell Habermann (ARDC Planning) presented the full set of evaluation questions for the Transportation Alternative FY 2025 program, highlighting slight changes from previous year's evaluation questions. He provided rationale and feedback from last year's Transportation Alternatives Task Force that inspired the changes.

**A motion to approve the Transportation Alternative FY 2025 Application as presented was made by Jack Larson/Bob Manzoline. The motion carried.**

6. Transportation Alternatives Task Force Members

Russell Habermann reviewed the objectives of the TA Task Force and an overview of representation on the task force. He then went over the list of five appointments requiring approval by the NEMNATP. This list included returning members Andrea Orest (Cook Co. SHIP, Active Living Representative, reappointment), Ellen Lynch (Lake Co Historical Society, History Representative, reappointment), Bob Manzoline (St. Louis and Lake Counties RRA, Paved Trails Representative, reappointment), Bryan Anderson (MnDOT D1 Representative, reappointment), and Jim Sloan (Pine Co., Local Government Representative, new appointment).

**A motion to approve the appointment and reappointments to the Transportation Alternatives Task Force was made by Steve Hallan/Karin Grandia. The motion carried.**

7. NEMNATP Strategic Plan 2021-2025

Russell Habermann reviewed the process that lead to developing a NEMNATP Strategic Plan during 2020 and introduced the plan documents resulting from two meetings of the Strategic Planning Committee. This document outlines goals and strategies for determining the trajectory of the NEMNATP over the next five years.

**A motion to approve the NEMNATP Strategic Plan 2021-2025 document was made by Jim Foldesi/Cindy Voigt. The motion carried.**

8. NEMNATP Strategic Planning Committee (Attachment #4)

Seeking to implement the goals described in the 2021-2025 NEMNATP Strategic Plan, Russell Habermann presented a proposal to appoint a NEMNATP Strategic Planning Committee that will work on goals and set meeting agendas in 2021. The membership of the proposed committee would include the ATP Chair, ATP Vice Chair, MnDOT D-1 Representative, an Elected Official Representative, a County Engineer Representative, an At-large Representative, and ATP staff (ARDC Planning) Representative. The Committee will be effective through December 31, 2021.

**A motion to appoint the NEMNATP Strategic Planning Committee was made by Cindy Voigt/Karin Grandia. The motion carried.**

9. CY 2021 NEMNATP Vice Chair

Vice Chair Duane Hill noted that this is his final meeting as Vice Chair. In calendar year 2021, he will ascend to serve as NEMNATP Chair. This will leave a vacancy for the Vice Chair

position in 2021. He reminded meeting participants that the Vice Chair serves for one year before ascending to serve as Chair for one year. He asked if there were any volunteers and/or nominations. With no volunteers forthcoming, Andy Hubley noted that in looking at past chairs and vice chairs, it would serve the ATP well if Itasca County Engineer Karin Grandia would serve. She noted her willingness to serve and said she would be honored to serve in that role.

**A motion to approve Karin Grandia to serve as CY 2021 NEMNATP Vice Chair was made by Andy Hubley/Jim Foldesi. The motion carried.**

Duane Hill thanked Karin Grandia for her willingness to serve.

#### 10. CY 2021 NEMNATP Meeting Dates

Vice Chair Duane Hill presented a slate of meeting dates for Calendar Year 2021 that would include February 10, April 14, July 14, and October 13; these are the second Wednesday of each of those months. He reminded the NEMNATP membership that we do not at this point know the format for 2021 meetings.

Discussion on the item included a comment from Commissioner Steve Hallan who mentioned he appreciated the Zoom meetings to save on travel time.

**A motion to approve the quarterly CY 2021 NEMNATP meeting dates was made by Steve Hallan/Ken Anderson. The motion carried.**

#### 11. MnDOT Program Updates

Bryan Anderson, MnDOT D-1, gave a presentation and announced that Rob Ege had recently retired. He noted that future MnDOT Program updates during NEMNATP meetings would include GIS developed story maps outlining ten or so projects from the typical attached spreadsheets to showcase projects with more context. Spreadsheets will still be sent out in packets. Anderson presented slides describing the Minnesota Highway Freight Program and Minnesota Transportation Economic Development (TED) program. Anderson also noted other upcoming funding solicitations and due dates including Transportation Alternatives (letters of intent due October 30), Greater MN Stand Alone Noise Barrier Program (application due December 31), and MN Safe Routes to School Planning Assistance (applications due November 25).

Anderson also requested that the NEMNATP submit two letters of support for the Minnesota Highway Freight Program.

An application for a project on TH 169 for wider shoulders from the Mississippi River to Hill City (24 miles) is seeking \$16.6M in the Freight Program solicitation. The total estimated project cost is \$25.7M, and \$9.1 M is already identified in the STIP and CHIP for mill and overlay.

**A motion to approve submission of a letter of support for the TH 169 MN Highway Freight Program by the NEMNATP was made by John Welle/Jack Larson. Motion carried.**

An application for a project in Koochiching County for intersection improvements at TH 53 and CSAH 332 is also being submitted. Ken Anderson noted that the City of International Falls's City Council had provided a letter of support for this application and that the project is endorsed by the City. This project seeks to improve safety due to large logging trucks using this intersection.

**A motion to approve submission of a letter of support for the TH 53 & CSAH 332 intersection improvements under the MN Highway Freight Program by the NEMNATP was made by Dave Reimer/Karin Grandia. Motion carried.**

## 12. Member Concerns

No member concerns were brought forward. However, Russell Habermann, used this portion of the agenda to ask for some feedback for how this meeting/platform went.

Comments brought forward included:

- Commissioner Hallan noted that in addition to saving travel time, the online/Zoom format makes hearing everyone much easier. He noted that it is difficult to hear at in-person meetings. Even with microphones being passed around, it can be difficult to hear everyone in a large room.
- Jason DiPiazza noted that he appreciated the outlining of meeting procedures/processes at the beginning of the meeting.
- Chris Belden asked if meeting notices/join links could be sent out as calendar invite items so ATP members would be able to access Zoom links in their calendars.
- Jim Foldesi mentioned the advantages of in-person meetings with networking/pre-/post-meeting conversations with peers.
- Gary Peterson asked if a potential hybrid meeting system (some attendees in person, some accessing the meeting remotely) could work going forward. Follow-up conversation identified a potential issue with an imbalance of power in hybrid meetings – do people who attend in person have an advantage over those who attend remotely?
- Chris Belden wondered if a potential post-COVID slate of meetings may have three quarterly meetings online and one annual meeting in person. He noted that this could overcome barriers to travel or inclement weather.
- Karin Grandi noted she appreciated saving the travel time but misses the in-person face time/networking opportunities this group provides.
- Duane Hill noted that MnDOT is asking some of these same questions for convening other groups. It would be good to learn what are the best practices and what are available tools, which could possibly make hybrid meetings effective. This could be a potential future presentation for the group.

## 13. Adjourn

**A motion to adjourn the meeting was brought forward at 11:24am by Gary Peterson/Jim Foldesi. The motion carried.**

###

The next NEMNATP Meeting will be held on February 10, 2021. Meeting invites will be sent out via email and via Outlook calendar items.

**Bold print denotes NEMNATP action.**