

**DIXIE TRANSPORTATION EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (DTEC)
MINUTES
August 17, 2011**

PRESENT

Jim Eardley, Washington County Commission
Jerry Lewis, UDOT Commissioner
Chris Hart, Mayor, Ivins City
Gil Almquist, St. George City
Gloria Shakespeare, St. George City
Roger Bundy, Washington City
Ken Sizemore, Five County AOG
Myron Lee, Five County AOG
Larry Bulloch, St. George City Public Works Director
Curt Hutchings, Dixie MPO
Nathan Lee, UDOT
Dave Demas, Horrocks Engineering
Ron Whitehead, Washington County

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Eardley called the meeting to order at 12:13 pm. The committee was one vote short of a quorum, so action items were deferred to later in the meeting in the hope that another voting member will arrive.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. TIGER III Grant Application (Mall Drive Bridge)

Myron Lee said that the federal government has identified about \$500 million that it is going to distribute in \$13 million chunks for small road projects with a regional significance, modeled after the Model I and II TIGER programs of last year. Last year, the City of St. George submitted a TIGER II grant application for Mall Drive Bridge. The City will do that again this year and has asked whether the MPO would render a letter of support for that project. Myron has drafted a letter for Commissioner Eardley's signature and requested a vote of approval for this. Commissioner Eardley suggested waiting for a quorum to take that vote.

Chairman Eardley said that this is an extremely worthwhile project that would relieve congestion tremendously for at least two communities (Washington and St. George)

MOTION: Motion by Gloria Shakespeare for a Letter of Support for the Application by the City of St. George for Mall Drive Bridge Funding. Motion seconded by Roger Bundy and carried by unanimous vote.

B. Regional Transit Service Study – Status Discussion

Mr. Lee presented a scope of work to this body at the last meeting for a regional transit study and turned that scope of work into a Request for Proposal. He received proposals from six well-qualified consultants and, together with Larry Bulloch and Ryan Marshall (City of St. George) and Dave Glenn (City of Ivins, DTAC Chair), decided to ask the companies presenting the two strongest proposals to consolidate into one. That study is moving forward, and the MPO will edit the final contract the first part of September. The RTTS is an effort by the MPO to look at how to advance Dixie SunTran to the next level, expanding beyond the limits of the City of St. George, and determine how best to finance that expansion. Mayor Hart asked for the anticipated cost of the study, and Mr. Lee responded \$50,000 that would come out of the MPO's planning budget (which currently has \$150,000 set aside for consultants' services).

Ms. Shakespeare supported the study because of the large number of people who are requesting just such an expansion of the SunTran service area.

C. Status of Programmed TIP Dollars

Mr. Lee distributed two documents, one dated 7-1-2011 and the other dated 8-3-2011, entitled, "Dixie MPO Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)." Project dollars are provided to the MPO each year (about \$2.4 million). Over the last ten years, a fund balance of about \$3 million has been built up (UDOT encourages having a one-year reserve fund for projects). There is also, however, about a million dollars in "uncommitted funding" that could be used for potential projects. Mr. Lee said that last week the DTAC decided to move up several projects. In discussions with UDOT, it was agreed that the current STIP be approved, and sometime after October 1st, this group approve the changes highlighted in yellow in the TIP and move that money forward to proceed with those projects. Money would therefore be allocated in an earlier TIP year for these projects.

D. Discussion of Northern Corridor

Myron Lee said that the Washington Parkway from Exit 13 over to State Route 18 will reduce traffic on Bluff Street by about 10 percent, which is significant when one extrapolates 70,000 trips per day in 2040. The MPO conducted a cost-study analysis and can get those figures to the group. Chairman Eardley said that getting the BLM to agree with this viable option is the problem.

E. Washington County Public Works Director Ron Whitehead explained the work

being done on Utah Hill (Old Highway 91). He is searching national archives to find right-of-way information on this roadway. Since the NCA has gone into effect in that area, the BLM has informed Washington County that it intends to narrow the right-of-way to 100 feet wide. The right-of-way fences current in place have been there for over 50 years and are 400 feet wide. When Federal Highways opened up I-15, it transferred Old Highway 91 to the County. Washington County's records are probably in the main archives building in Washington, D.C. The 400-foot-wide right-of-way was planned and surveyed at some point. Chairman Eardley said that the County is continuously dealing with an ever-encroaching group of federal agencies that are difficult to deal with. The 400-foot number comes from old construction drawings from 1928 that were used to build the highway.

Mr. Whitehead said that the County has been admonished for fixing Old Highway 91 and re-opening it since last year's flood because the BLM has stated that the County stepped outside of the 100-foot right-of-way. The road has been paved since the last DTEC meeting, and the chip seal will probably be done in the next year. BLM has announced that it will be watching to make sure the County does not go outside that 100-foot right-of-way.

MINUTES

A. Approval of June 15, 2011, minutes

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Lewis to Approve the Minutes of June 15, 2011. Motion seconded by Mayor Hart and carried by unanimous vote.

UDOT/FHWA BUSINESS

A. Welcome Center Location

Ken Sizemore asked Nathan Lee of UDOT to update the group with respect to the status of the Welcome Center location. Mr. Lee said that a series of meetings has been held with members of the Governor's staff has produced a suggestion to have the Welcome Center located at the Dixie Center. Discussions have followed with the St. George City Manager and officers of the Convention and Tourism Office (CTO) and the Washington County/Interlocal Agency (WCIA) on issues such as traffic, features, and how this all ties in with the new Dixie Drive Interchange. Once that road work is complete, signage will be experimented with at the Dixie Center to determine whether it is a feasible locale for the Welcome Center.

Other feasible options are to continue with the current location; a SITLA property that is not appropriate for this purpose; a combined office with the Port of Entry. UDOT's goal as a transportation agency is to find a way to bring in visitors to a welcome center that is tied in with the City and the County.

Mr. Lee said that UDOT is prepared to do what needs to be done insofar as funding is concerned to make the Welcome Center "work." Commissioner Lewis asked whether the Welcome Center would be treated by the CTO as a welcome center or as a rest stop. Chairman Eardley said the Dixie Center is opposed to the Welcome Center becoming a rest stop. Gil Almquist said that the Dixie Center should be a convention center, a place to showcase what recreation and amenities are available in Washington County from Tuacahn to Zion National Park. The City of St. George is also planning a park in that area, so there will be some duality of purpose. He suggested planning the Welcome Center so that people must go through it to get to the restrooms.

Ken Sizemore clarified that Five County currently has the contract that operates the Welcome Center. Maxine Stringham is doing the day-to-day, over-the-counter work and gives Mr. Sizemore a monthly report on visitation to the current Welcome Center. With the construction going on right now, those numbers are way down. A major concern is to have a place with some shade, trees, benches, etc., where people can get out of their cars and view the information.

ACTION ITEMS

A. 2012-2015 TIP Approval

Mr. Lee said that the MPO passed a TIP recommendation in December of 2010 which has now gone through the public comment period. It has now been incorporated into the TIP that he distributed and basically brings into the 2015 year \$900,000 worth of funding for the East Dixie Drive (to extend it from the new interchange over to Riverside Drive) and another \$900,000 worth of funding for Washington Fields Road (to extend that road out to the airport and the Southern Parkway). He asked for a motion from this body to accept this as the final MPO TIP. The process will begin again in October.

MOTION: Motion by Gloria Shakespeare to Approve the 2012-2015 TIP as presented. Motion seconded by Roger Bundy and carried by unanimous vote.

B. Mobility Management Matching Funds

Chairman Eardley said that this item is carried over from the June meeting, where

several members had questions about the position of Mobility Manager. Mr. Lee and Mr. Hutchings visited with members of the committee since that time to address their concerns. One question that was unanswered was the balance in the MPO reserve fund, which is \$213,334.90 as of June 30, 2011. That money is used for matches against federal money and was built up by the vote share contributions in the past 10-11 years.

Curt Hutchings distributed a document entitled, "Memorandum: Mobility Management Info Sheet," dated July 26, 2011, which described in detail the job duties and funding of the Mobility Manager position. This information was conveyed to DTAC, which recommended funding the match for one year.

MOTION: Motion by Roger Bundy to Approve the Use of Mobility Management Matching Funds. Motion seconded by Gloria Shakespeare and carried by unanimous vote.

C. Urban Transportation Planning Process Certification

Mr. Lee said that every year in August this body certifies that, in addition to the MPO responsibilities, the tasks that we accomplish also meet certain regulations and laws. He distributed a Resolution containing a list of those regulations and certifying that the MPO is following the urban transportation planning process and asked for the approval of DTEC. This will next go to UDOT for its signature.

Ken Sizemore added that as part of the annual single audit process for Five County Association of Governments, a review is conducted of these programmatic compliances. As of the last audit report, the AOG was in compliance with these laws.

MOTION: Motion by Mayor Hart to Approve the Resolution Certifying the Urban Transportation Planning Process, as presented. Motion seconded by Commissioner Lewis and carried by unanimous vote.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ken Sizemore mentioned the monthly Joint Planning Authorities Council (JPAC) meeting in Salt Lake City between the four MPOs in the state and UDOT, and one of the concerns being addressed at those meetings is how the federal transportation dollars that may be coming down the pipe are used. We won't be seeing a transportation bill before the election, but there is a set of Federal Transportation Authorization Principles that has been developed by JPAC. He distributed copies of those principles. Bullet points are:

- Empower state and local decision-making. Make decisions at the local levels and streamline project delivery
- Have stable funding sources to finance the surface transportation work that is so important to our County

NEXT MEETING

- A. Next meeting **September 21, 2011.** Mayor Hart will act as Chair, since Commissioner Eardley will be out of town.

Having no other business, Chairman Eardley adjourned the meeting at 1:20 p.m.