

**Mobile Area Transportation Study
Metropolitan Planning Organization and
Technical Citizens Committee Meeting
June 23, 2010, 10:00 a.m.
SARPC Boardroom**

MPO Members Present

Mayor Sam Jones
Mayor Ron Davis
Hon. William Troy Ephraim
Mr. Vince Calametti
Mr. Joe Ruffer
Mr. Tyrone Parker
Mr. Norman Walton
Mr. Bill Metzger (Rep. Hon. Reggie Copeland)
Mr. Nick Amberger (Rep. Hon. William Carroll)
Mr. John Murphy (Rep. Comm Mike Dean)
Ms. Betty Donald (Rep. Hon. Ken Williams)
Mr. Sam Rawls (Rep. Mayor Byron Pittman)
Mr. Russell J. Wimberly (non voting)

TCC/CAC Members Present

Mr. James Jacobs
Mr. Thomas Hughes
Ms. Betty Donald
Mr. John Bell
Mr. Steve Perry
Ms. Tywanda Jackson
Mr. James Foster
Ms. Sandra Forbus
Mr. Nick Amberger
Mr. Gerald Alfred
Ms. Margie Wilcox
Mr. John Murphy
Mr. Bill Metzger
Mr. Bryan Kegley
Mr. Sam Rawls
Mr. Bob Harris
Mr. James Foster

Guests:

Ms. Frances Smiley, Alabama Tourism
Ms. Connie Pearson, Alabama Tourism
Ms. Wendy Allen, Smart Coast
Mr. David Yarbrough, Mobile Airport Authority
Mr. Edwin Perry, ALDOT
Mr. Ricky Mitchell, Mobile County
Mr. Chris Miller, SARPC

MPO Members Absent

Mayor William Stewart
Mayor Don Nelson
Mayor Stan Wright
Mr. Robert Jilla (non voting)
Mr. Mark Bartlett (non voting)

TCC/CAC Members Absent

Ms. Casi Callaway
Mr. Hunter Winton
Mr. George Crozier
Ms. Jennifer White
Mr. Don Powell
Mr. Randy Delchamps
Mr. Donald Watson
Ms. Lindsay Hutchission
Mr. Bert Hoffman
Mr. Tom Briand
Ms. Jennifer Denson
Ms. Ginny Russell

Staff:

Mr. Kevin Harrison
Ms. Monica Williamson

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Jones.

The second item on the agenda was to approve the minutes of the May 19th TCC/CAC meeting. There was one correction on the minutes. Brian Kegley was listed as both present and absent. He was present for the meeting. His name was taken off the absent list. Motion made by Mr. Norman Walton and seconded by Ms. Margie Wilcox. Motion passed with the corrections.

The third item on the agenda was to approve the minutes of the February 24, 2010 MPO meeting. Motion made by Mr. Norman Walton and seconded by Mr. Vince Calametti. Motion passed

The fourth item on the agenda was to consider the modification of the FY 2008-2012 Transportation Improvement Program for the STP Attributable Funds.

Mr. Harrison said the first item in your folder is the schedule of funds and this is going to get a little tricky, a little confusing. SAFETEA-LU as you recall at the end of this last fiscal year, had a rescission on all funding and they took \$3.8 million of attributable funds as part of the rescission. In January, we moved a lot of projects out past the 2011 mark because of that rescission. At the beginning of May, that rescission was restored and we received the \$3.8 million back. The TCC met on May 19th and hashed out this schedule and we moved a lot of these projects back up a year. As a matter of fact project 8 – 14 on this schedule all got pushed up a fiscal year. That was as of May 19th. As of last week, actually about a week and a half ago, after the TCC meeting, we've had several changes. The first change is project number 4, the right of way for Schillinger Road, US 98 to Howells Ferry that was \$1.2 million that now has a new cost estimate of \$5 million so we've lost 3.8, well we didn't lose it, but that estimate went up by \$3.8 million. At the same time in the past two weeks, if you look at the bottom of carryover of fiscal year 2008, there's \$9,203,000. As of a couple of weeks ago, that was \$11,700,000 so we've lost \$2.5 million in the 2008 carryover. I'm not exactly sure what project that had cost overruns to do that. I suspect its Hillcrest. Really what that does, is that eliminates the work we did at the May 19th TCC meeting. What can be done, if we look at 2 projects. Number 3, Zeigler Boulevard, Forest Hill to Athey, right of way and then the right of way for #5, Schillinger, 98 to Lott Road, both of those right of ways have been pushed back to the next fiscal year. Actually, they will be let in November of 2010 which is fiscal year 2011. The city seems to think that the utilities and construction for the Zeigler Road project can happen in the same fiscal year so those projects for utility and construction for #3 are going to stay in Fiscal year 2011. However, #5 Schillinger, 98 to Lott, utilities and construction probably will not happen in that same fiscal year so we are pushing those back to 2012. Anything that crosses the Fiscal Year 2011, 2012 line, I need a resolution and vote from ya'll because the years for the TIP is 2008 to 2011. So that's actually one of the projects that we are voting on today. We are pushing out #5, utilities and construction for \$584,000 and \$10,961,000 from fiscal year 2011 to 2012. At the same time, one of the projects that we discussed at the TCC meeting was pushing up the Three Notch, Schillinger to McDonald Road, preliminary engineering and right of way up a fiscal year so since the PE for #10 is crossing from 2012 to 2011, we have another resolution for that as well. That's the recommended changes to the attributable funding schedule. It will change. Starting October, the county should receive \$8 million for their ThyssenKrupp project to be applied to Schillinger Road so we'll have to move a lot of these projects up. Keep in mind, all these projects that you see down here 8 through 14, every phase of that project is scheduled out to 2018 so once that happens we will be able to move some of these projects up. I'll be happy to answer any questions about that.

Mr. Murphy said who makes the decision on the carryover money to make those calls that we lost that 2 and half million.

Mr. Harrison said I don't know and because we are a TMA, our urban area is over 200,000 in population, we do not have to have a cap on our projects which this is kind of a problem. We had \$1.2 million cost estimate and now all of a sudden it is \$5 million. That same thing is for cost overruns with the project in 2008. What some MPO's do, they say here's the cost estimate and the cost overruns are going to be subject to the sponsor. I don't think that is something we need to do, but I do think we need to look at our estimates and get better estimates. I think one of the problems was that Ronnie Porieux had a rough cost estimate just to get the project in there.

Mayor Jones said who did the initial cost estimate?

Mr. Harrison said the division.

Mr. Calametti said yeah, and that's what it was. Historically, the division may not have put the best estimate in there, but right now we're going back and rechecking everything. I want the estimate to be, what the estimate is. As prices go up, we'll increase them and as prices go down, we'll decrease them. From day one it will be a proper estimate.

Mayor Jones said so we have a new process now.

Mr. Calametti said yes.

Mr. Harrison said we thought we had all this money in May pushing all these projects up and all of a sudden, we've lost \$6 million.

Mr. Murphy said so that carryover could possibly be that we had an old estimate, that was a 10 year old estimate and then they actually bid the project in the construction and it overran that amount of money and that's what coming back and getting us now. Correcting where that project cost more than what is originally on the schedule here.

Mr. Harrison said this is the second time in the past three months that the carryover from 2008 has changed. We lost \$250,000 about 3 months ago. That was on a different project.

Mayor Jones said so is there some way that we can establish more accurate estimates in the initial. I'm talking about for all the projects, not necessarily with just ALDOT, but for all of our projects Kevin. Because if not, we're going to wind up using the carryover to supplement projects from now on.

Mr. Harrison said recently, the past year or two, the division or I guess ALDOT started putting 4% per year. As these projects get pushed back, they add 4%.

Mayor Jones said has that been adequate.

Mr. Harrison said yes, but I guess that has nothing to do with the initial cost estimate which comes from the division.

Mr. Calametti said for three fiscal years out, we will update our estimates every 6 months. We will not have an estimate that is older than 6 months.

Mr. Murphy said I guess that's part of these projects being on the list for so many years, too like that Schillinger Road has been on there for 10 years and I guess we're still using the original estimate that was done ten years ago. I think Vince is right in what they are doing there to start looking at more often to keep us more accurate so we don't get ourselves in that situation anymore.

Mr. Calametti said because right now all construction estimates would go down because we are getting some great bids.

Mr. Walton said do ya'll use any contractor input in your estimating.

Mr. Calametti said we use contractor constructability. We have contractors come in and look at all the plans and just make sure they are constructible. Our estimates are generated through historical like a rolling average of all the prices that we have had for the past several months so they fluctuate.

Mr. Walton said (inaudible)

Mr. Calametti said that's why the construction estimates would go down.

Mayor Jones said okay we have two resolutions on the change in the TIP. As explained by Kevin, we need to approve those resolutions.

Motion was made by Mr. Ruffer with a second by Mr. Walton. Motion passed.

The next item on the agenda was to consider the modification to FY 2008 -2012 Transportation Improvement Program as proposed by ALDOT to replace the I-10 Welcome Center at the Alabama/Mississippi Line.

Mr. Harrison said the next resolution in your folder is for Interstate Maintenance Funds the project to be included in the TIP is the replacement of the Welcome Center at the Alabama state line. It's \$20 million. It's a lot of money.

Mayor Jones said it's going to be a fine welcome center.

Mr. Harrison said as I understand it, they are going to tear down the current welcome center and build a new one. Is that correct?

Mr. Calametti said yes.

Ms. Wilcox said are you still going to have RV sewage facilities.

Mr. Calametti said yes.

Representative from Tourism said we can't hear back here. What did you say?

Ms. Wilcox asked what did I say. I asked if they were still going to have RV sewage facilities.

Mayor Jones said is that a complete reconfiguration.

Mr. Calametti said yes. This project is being handled out of the central office. The way I understand, the rest area will be closed down for a period and completely rebuilt. The architecture will be a Bon Secour Southern Alabama Design and I understand that it may even have a lighthouse.

Ms. Wilcox said like the Middle Bay Lighthouse.

Mr. Calametti said it's in design right now.

Mayor Jones said that is about what it cost to build the convention center. Is that the one coming into the state from Mississippi?

Mr. Calametti said yes.

Mayor Jones said if there is no further discussion we need a motion to approve this resolution.

Motion made by Mr. Ruffer with a second by Mr. Calametti. Motion passed.

The next item on the agenda was to consider the modification to FY 2008 -2012 Transportation Improvement Program as proposed by the WAVE transit for Section 5309 Funds.

Mr. Harrison said the next resolution in your folder is actually Senator Shelby's earmark to the WAVE transit for \$1,372,000 to the Mobile Transit System. Tyrone, I'm not real familiar with this project.

Mr. Parker said this is an earmark from Senator Shelby's office for rolling stock upgrades.

Mayor Jones said I would imagine that would mean new buses.

Mr. Parker said yes sir it does. In fact, this was awarded in 2008. We've followed up with the application this year because we had to show some activity on it.

Mayor Jones asked how many buses is that?

Mr. Parker said well actually for our paratransit operation it will be a replacement of 6 vehicles as well as 10 for our fixed route operations so 16 total.

Mayor Jones said so you are actually replacing, you're not adding.

Mr. Parker said yes, we're replacing. That's correct.

Mr. Wimberly said are you taking alternative fuels into account with these new vehicles.

Mr. Parker said we are. Right now, we are currently operating some CNG vehicles right now. We are looking into some other alternatives and options.

Mayor Davis said I have a question when we are talking about this transportation, what about the situation with the bus hub in Prichard. Where are we on that?

Mr. Parker said what was that, the Prichard hub?

Mayor Davis said the Prichard Hub.

Mr. Bell said the next step is to submit the contract for approval to bring on board a consultant to do the design. I believe the contract is on the chief of staff's desk.

Mayor Jones said I think the reason they are looking at the design is that when we started out we could build a whole lot more with it than where we are right now. So they are trying to see with the money what could be done with it.

Mr. Bell said it would be, the facility would be substantially less than what the initial ideas were. Basically what we are going to have to do is have the consultant design the facility within the parameters of the funds that are available.

Mayor Jones said have we already selected a consultant.

Mr. Bell said no sir. Oh, yes, I'm sorry, yes. We have a contract ready to go. We have selected a consultant.

Mayor Jones said so it's just a matter of moving forward. We need a motion to approve the resolution for the TIP for the WAVE.

Motion made by Mayor Davis with a second by John Bell. Motion passed.

The next item on the agenda was to consider the modification to FY 2008 -2012 Transportation Improvement Program as proposed by ALDOT for Section 5310, Section 5316 and Section 5317 Transit Funds.

Mr. Harrison said the next resolution in your folder is the legal size resolution. There's three pots of money. The first one is FTA Section 5310 that's a pot of money set aside specifically for transit projects that deal with the elderly and disabled. JARC money is Job Access Reverse Commute funds and the New Freedom is transit projects that go above and beyond those requirements of ADA. Now all of these projects have met what is called the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan that we house. The 5310 are applied for through the state and the JARC and New Freedom projects are actually projects that were applied for through the WAVE transit and are the result of a planning process called the program of projects which ya'll actually adopted in January. There's a mix up in ALDOT Montgomery about whether these need another resolution or not so we are providing them with a resolution for all these projects today.

Mayor Jones asked if there were any discussions. If not, we need a motion to approve as presented.

Motion was made by Mayor Davis with a second by Councilmen Ephraim. Motion passed.

The next item of the agenda was the review and discussion of the FY 2011 Unified Planning Work Program.

Mr. Harrison said the next item in your folder is the stapled sheet and this is our, what's called the UPWP, Unified Planning Work Program. It's basically our planning budget for next year. I reviewed this with the TCC at the May 19th meeting and I received comments from ALDOT. Some of the things that are new since the TCC meeting are task 4.6 which is Public Involvement for Air Quality

Conformity. As most of you know, we will become nonattainment in air quality. The deadline for the EPA to come up with a new designation for ozone is August. A year after that the state will have the deadline to create a budget for emissions and a year after that we will have to adhere to a emissions budget. Another new task is 6.1.1 and 1.2, Report Preparation and Amend Project Listings of the Long Range Plan for Air Quality Conformity as well as task 6.2.1 Air Quality Conformity Report Preparation for the TIP. Another new task is since the TCC meeting is task 9.0. There was a brief discussion directly after the TCC meeting about some form of Comprehensive Bicycle Plan. This was actually discussed at the February meeting and part of the public hearing that we had for the Long Range Plan that some form of Comprehensive Bike Plan might be done in the MPO study area so we are planning on doing that for \$75,000 in the next fiscal year. And what we can look at with that is take all the projects that we have in the system and go ahead and look at whether a bicycle path or route or any type of facility can be feasibly put on that road. At the same time, we will have the stakeholder group as part of the study, all the bicyclists can be part of this plan, where we can put share the road signs and stuff like that. It can all be as a result of this comprehensive bicycle plan of the MPO. That's being funded in part with carryover that came from the Freight Study that is part of this fiscal year and last fiscal year with the University of Alabama at Huntsville. That project has been terminated and we have money leftover from that contract. So our budget is basically the same as last year. I've upped the amount in Task 1.1, Program Administration. The very first item on your agenda was the TIP. Project 15 was Airport Boulevard Intersection Capacity Improvement Study for \$200,000. That's a joint study between the city and the county and we're going to help on the consultant selection process for that study. Task 2.2 Data Collection and Task 2.4 Traffic Data, in this next fiscal year we will be purchasing GPS units and at some point traffic counters to help us with our data collection. The GPS units are going to help us with Task 6.6, Congestion Management Process, which starting in October; we will be taking our GPS units and doing travel time studies of all of our freeways, principle arterials and some minor arterials for all the roads in our study area. Task 8.0, the Mobile ITS Interstate Detour Routing Study. We have a consultant selection committee. The consultant selection committee shortlisted 3 firms. We met, collaborated and Volkert was picked to do the study for the Interstate Detour Routing System that will be for \$150,000 starting this fiscal year so there will be some carryover to next fiscal year for the study. What that study is really going to do is, if you recall, last year that was a fatality on I-10, Virginia Street and sheriff's department, state troopers and city police department rerouted everybody different directions so what this is going to do is in conjunction with the ITS system we're going to have an official reroute for every link of the Interstate System and some principle arterials. So the stakeholders group will obviously be the EMS and all the emergency personnel with the city and the county. I do have copies of the full blown budget. I have to adopt it by August 15th so we're going to look at another MPO meeting in early August to adopt the budget. And then after that it will go to public review and I'm going to receive comments from Federal Highway Administration and ALDOT.

Mayor Jones asked if there was any other discussion on the Unified Planning Work Program 2011.

Mr. Walton said I have a question, this under 2.0, data collection. It says preparation of Emissions Data Using MOVES 2010. What is that?

Mr. Harrison said since we are going to become nonattainment for air quality, EPA has an air quality model called MOBILE 6. It's being replaced by an air quality model called MOVES. What it basically is, the model takes the VMT from our travel demand forecast model, it takes the travel speeds from our travel demand forecast model and a whole bunch of different implements. How much fuel is consumed, where it's purchased and the types of fuel, vehicle registration. There's a lot of different input into this model, but the output is an emissions, vehicle emissions, not only for our base year but

for the future year of our long range plan. The emissions from that model has to be below the budget that the state requires.

Mr. Walton said how do we know that model is right.

Mr. Harrison said because we are going to be doing it.

Mr. Walton said so are you going to have an independent check.

Mr. Harrison said I'm going to have what is called an interagency consultation committee. A lot of you in this room will be a part of that, the IAC, that's going to be a committee that's going to vote on absolutely every aspect of the process.

Mr. Walton said the reason why I bring this up, in California, California Air Resources Board put out data that was totally flawed. We proved or presented it back to them and showed them it was flawed and I think we have to be very careful that we don't just accept everything that they throw at us.

Mr. Harrison said I totally agree. A perfect example of that is this last long range plan that we adopted in February. If you recall, I had a capacity flaw. I-10 shows that in 2035 about 110 to 120,000 vehicles in the 2035. I had to use what the state gave me for where the countywide projections were. They used 3.5% per year which I completely disagree. What this agency, this committee will do, we will be able to get together and say we don't agree with 3.5% per year on our interstates. What that translates to is a huge amount of emissions in year 2035. So I agree.

Mayor Jones asked for any further discussion. If not, our next item on the agenda is discussion of priority projects for the transportation planning process.

Mr. Harrison said again at the TCC meeting May 19th, there was some discussion brought up by a TCC member about the potential for prioritizing projects of our Long Range Plan. Right now to kind of give you a summary of how we prioritize our projects, we have a cost ratio for each set of projects. The first priority projects of the long range plan are those projects that are currently in the TIP. Priority two projects is that some form of the project whether it be preliminary engineering, right of way, are in the five year plan. Priority 3 projects they are basically not in the short range plan right now, so when we did the long range plan, we had about \$200 million that were not considered priority one or two and those were priority 3 projects were basically the Snow Rd arterial loop. With that TCC Margie Wilcox asked to be on the agenda to kind of present these ideas of prioritizing projects. Margie.

Ms. Wilcox said thank you and I'll be brief about it. I described it at the TCC this past month. I have recently become a member of the same organization in Northwest Florida. Out of respect for the road builders and engineers, you have a lot of knowledge that some of us on the committee don't have. They have a way of prioritizing projects and I've given you an example. This is a rough draft, but I think it takes into account some of the things that engineers know already off the top of their head that we don't. As an example of how this is a living document, you'll notice that they first, under hurricane evacuation, wanted to give everything a weight of 20 and then one of the engineers made a point that you will never be able to build your way out of a hurricane, they decided to lower that number and reassigned those numbers. These handwritten numbers are mine as they were reassigning numbers as they went back and reprioritized. This is a way that their TCC met and decided to weight. When I talk about weighting, most of us in the room are familiar with an RFP or a grant proposal where your grant

or RFP is graded and weighted in certain areas. To me this is just a familiar way to do what some of these people already know how to do automatically, but for us it's just an exercise in priority. I know Mayor a couple of years ago, you were wondering how we prioritize projects and I know there have been members of the TCC at times and I was just throwing this out as something for the MPO and the committee to consider as just something

Mr. Harrison said I don't disagree with it. I think it's a good idea to have more elaborate prioritization of projects. It's not really anything that we can do right now. We've just adopted our long range plan, the next one is due in four years and we may have new regulations. The new transportation funding bill. SAFETEA-LU expires in December. That might have more regulations on how to do things.

Mayor Jones said after December can't we revisit this. Let's see if the regulations change. If it doesn't change, we might want, the TCC might want to revisit it. Is that okay with you?

Ms. Wilcox said oh, yes sir. It's just something that I wanted to throw out. An idea so I have no preconceived notion that we need to do.

Mayor Jones said under old business.

Mayor Davis said on the stimulus funds, did all those get used.

Mr. Harrison said all the stimulus projects have been authorized. We spent every, if I'm not mistaken every dime of our money was spent. All those projects have been authorized. Most of them are complete or under construction. The vans for MARC we've got kind of a problem with, but we are working through that.

Mr. Wimberly said how do we compare statewide, Vince with other areas. Do we know that? Did they meet all their requirements or have to give money back or what?

Mr. Calametti said I don't know the exact total but I understand several gave money back.

Mayor Jones said we'll take that, we'll take that. We'll help them out.

Ms. Wilcox said well just being an observer on the committee; I think that the committee members and everybody did an excellent job determining how we were going to spend that money. The plan we came up with and how we executed that plan is the reason why we were able to spend all that money.

Mayor Jones said what does the director plan on doing with what was given back.

Mr. Calametti said we don't have an overage of money.

Mr. Harrison said if you recall in the February, it may have been the January MPO meeting, we passed a resolution that gave us the authority for any cost overruns to be applied to different projects. So Michigan Avenue was one stimulus that might go over so if there are cost under runs, we can apply them collectively as a group to Michigan Avenue.

Mayor Jones said under new business.

Mr. Ruffer said just as a reminder in November there will be another pay as you go program on the ballot. I would appreciate it if everybody would support that so we can get our local economy going a little bit more. It will be about \$32 million, I think is the right number. Also on the ballot in November, the legislation is going to give us an opportunity to support a road program basically for ALDOT. It's a billion dollar program. I don't know if Vince can tell us about any projects that is proposed down here at this point or not but that's going to be an important program too for economic development and keeping local contractors busy and getting that money spun back into the economy. We'll make mention of that again at some additional meetings.

Mayor Jones said that's an important program.

Mayor Davis said also the, I was talking to Kevin earlier about the TIGER funding. Is there anyway you can get some assistance on the TIGER funding. I know this is the second round of it.

Mr. Harrison said it's the second round, TIGER 2. It's not as much as TIGER 1. The money that they have set aside, I don't have the figures in front of me, but it's not very much money nationwide. If I'm not mistaken, there is a \$10 million minimum for capital projects and its \$280,000 million is what is left for capital projects. That means 28 projects for the whole country, is my interpretation.

Mayor Davis said well, one thing I know is that we sure can't get it if we don't apply for it or try to get into the mix of it. I at least want to see if we are able to...

Mr. Wimberly said there are two types of TIGER 2's out. One is for transportation issues like Kevin was talking about and the other is for housing and planning and I've got staff, Kevin is looking into right now as well as the other planning staff looking into how we can take advantage or if we can take advantage of that.

Mr. Harrison said part of the criteria is that the engineering has to be complete and the project has to be ready to go.

Mayor Davis said well we have some things especially with bridges that we already have that on it. That's what I'm saying if we can just the technical assistance, maybe we can get those applied for or get it in and I can do what I need to do to try and see if we can get it funded.

Mayor Jones said anything else under new business. If there's no more business of the MPO we are going to adjourn.

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

ATTEST:

Chairman, TCC

Chairman, MPO