



# Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday, January 13, 2021

Zoom Meeting

**Attending:** Dennis Pyle (Barry), Miranda Beadles (Christian Alternate), Kim Kinder (Dade), Hollie Elliott (Dallas), J. Howard Fisk (Greene), Joel Keller (Greene), Max Springer (Lawrence), Tim Selvey (Lawrence Alternate), Gail Noggle (Polk), Hank Smythe (Stone), Jerry Harman (Stone), Rick Ziegenfuss (Taney), Buddy Roberts (Taney), Randy Owens (Webster), Sam Rost (Webster), Stan Whitehurst (Webster Alternate)

Andy Thomason (OTO), Sara (OTO), Zeke Hall (MoDOT), Frank Miller (MoDOT), Beth Schaller (MoDOT), Stacy Reece (MoDOT), Jason Ray (SMCOG), Jack Weindel (SMCOG), Aishwarya Shrestha (SMCOG), Hanna Schinstock (SMCOG), Lexi Mason (SMCOG), Jeremy Pruett (Congressman Bill Long), Dana Louderbaugh

The meeting was called to order by Chair Rick Ziegenfuss.

## 1. Introductions by County & Guests

Self-introductions were skipped.

## 2. Approval of the agenda:

Motion to approve the agenda made by Gail, motion seconded by Howard. All ayes. Motion carried.

## 3. Approval of minutes:

Motion to approve the November 18, 2020 meeting minutes made by Sam, motion seconded by Dennis. All ayes. Motion carried.

## 4. SMCOG Staff Update:

### a. 2021 Construction Guide

Aishwarya highlighted the 2021 Construction Guide included in the meeting packet. She mentioned that all the projects listed on the guide are scheduled for completion by the end of 2021 unless otherwise noted.

### b. MoDOT 2021 Legislative Agenda

Aishwarya highlighted this year's legislative agenda included in the meeting packet. She noted that under safety, prohibiting hand-held cell phone and other electronic wireless communication device use while driving, and primary seatbelt is included. And under service/stability, miles per gallon equitable motor vehicle registration model, and 10-cent fuel tax increase are included.

### c. Pre-filed legislation

Aishwarya noted that the meeting packet only contains pre-filed legislation pertaining to transportation.

### d. Other Items of Interest:

Aishwarya highlighted the MoDOT cost-share program. The final deadline for the final application is on April 16, 2021. MoDOT would like to see an initial draft application to be reviewed by the district staff at least a month earlier on March 16<sup>th</sup>. She also mentioned that if someone has a project idea, it would be good to discuss it with our Area Engineer, Beth Schaller to make sure MoDOT can support the project. She also highlighted that the application requires a support letter from SMCOG.

Aishwarya provided information on the local fuel tax. MoDOT's Financial Services Director, Todd, contacted the Missouri Department of Revenue to follow up on Dennis's local fuel tax question. The Department said that a local fuel tax would be collected locally and not through them. Concordia's tax information is included in the meeting packet for reference. Concordia requires their gas stations to submit revenues to the city. More information on how the tax is collected can be found in Section 130.230 on Concordia's tax information.

## **5. MoDOT Update**

Beth highlighted the letter of support required for the TAP applications written by her. She requested everyone to let her know as soon as possible if anyone needs a letter of support from her. A letter of support is required to make sure that MoDOT can support the project.

Frank noted that for the MoDOT cost-share program, the committee wants to know where the project is on the Regional Planning Commission's long-range plan or the prioritization list, and the district's prioritization list. It is important for a project to be on the list, but not necessarily on the top of the list to point out that it is somewhere on the radar.

Frank mentioned that they are currently working on the new Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The STIP was not adopted last year due to the pandemic and funding uncertainties. MoDOT is currently moving forward with it and has funding projections. MoDOT is looking at their asset management plan, which has some deficit in the minor routes resurfacing and will need some funding to address that. It looks like there will be some funding for system improvement projects. MoDOT is also working on updating their unfunded needs list because the Governor's Bridge Bonding program will eat into that list a little bit to address some of those needs. There is also some interest at the state and federal levels for infrastructure finance. Frank highlighted that the TAC's prioritization list will be heavily used in the next month.

## **6. MPO Update**

Andy Thomason mentioned OTO is continuing to work on its long-range transportation plan. They just wrapped up their community survey with over 860 responses. The survey showed a lot of support for trails, road improvements, and provided information on types of taxes that might be supported.

Andy mentioned that they are working on a bike-ped plan. The plan will show how many trails does everyone wants to see built and how big of a system everyone wants for regional connectivity.

Andy noted that OTO is working with MoDOT on their prioritization process and following some relief legislation.

## **7. Legislative Reports**

Jeremy mentioned a resolution was passed about sending a suggestion to Vice President Pence to initiate Amendment 25, which would remove the President from his power. It was a partisan vote. The legislators are in the process of hearing arguments for impeachment.

## **8. Other Member Updates & Guest Reports**

Stan mentioned that at the end of January, there is a kick-off meeting with MoDOT and other partners to begin working on improvements on US Highway 60. The improvements' funding source is CRISI and EDA grant. Stan mentioned that SMOG was instrumental in helping with those grants.

Howard asked the MoDOT staff about revenue projections for road and bridge money. Frank answered that the financial forecast is steady and like last year's, which is a bit on the positive side. That forecast has already assumed a decline in gas tax revenue mainly because of greater fuel efficiency. MoDOT is also predicting a decrease in revenue because of less travel due to the pandemic. A part of the last COVID bill had some funding for state DOTs to sort of compensate for

that over the next few years. The decrease in revenues from the gas tax is being compensated for by the increase in motor vehicle sales tax. Overall, the funding is about the same.

Dennis asked if the TAC committee can write a letter of support endorsing the legislation to increase the fuel tax. Jason mentioned that SMCOG and the TAC have the ability and the position to write a letter of support to our legislators. It was decided that SMCOG staff will draft the letter and Rick will sign the letter as the TAC Chair.

**9. Adjourn by Chair**

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Rick Ziegenfuss.

The next meeting will be on March 10, 2021, via Zoom.

DRAFT