



MINUTES

Pursuant to the City of Roanoke Emergency Ordinance adopted by the Roanoke Valley Transportation Planning Organization (RVTPO) Policy Board on April 23, 2020 and the 2020 Virginia General Assembly legislation H29 enacted April 24, 2020, the February meeting of the RVTPO Policy Board was held a virtually via Zoom on Thursday, February 25, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. Under the current State of Emergency, and until further notice, it has been deemed unsafe to assemble a quorum of a public body in one place.

TPO VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT

Mickey Johnson	Bedford County
Steve Clinton	Botetourt County
Billy Martin, <i>Chair</i>	Botetourt County
Phil North, <i>Vice Chair</i>	Roanoke County
David Radford	Roanoke County
Robert Jeffrey	City of Roanoke
Stephanie Moon Reynolds	City of Roanoke
Renee Turk	City of Salem
Steve Fijalkowski	Montgomery County
Mike Stovall	Town of Vinton
Kevin Price	Greater Roanoke Transit Company (Valley Metro)
Daniel Sonenklar	Va. Dept. of Rail and Public Transportation
Ken King	Virginia Dept. of Transportation – Salem District

TPO VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT

Bill Jones	City of Salem
Keith Liles	Town of Vinton

TPO NON-VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT

Lee Osborne	Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission
Richard Caywood	Roanoke County
Cody Sexton	Botetourt County
Anita McMillan	Town of Vinton
Ben Tripp	Chair of the TPO Transp. Technical Committee

Others Present: Gary Powers, Chair of the Roanoke Airport Commission; Megan Cronise, Roanoke County; Will Crawford, Roanoke County; Mark Jamison, City of Roanoke; Michael Gray, Virginia Department of Transportation- Salem District; Liz Belcher, Roanoke Valley Greenway Commission.

Staff Present: Wayne Strickland, Cristina Finch, Bryan Hill, Rachel Ruhlen, Jeremy Holmes, Eddie Wells, Matt Miller, and Virginia Mullen.

TPO POLICY BOARD: Cities of Roanoke and Salem; Counties of Bedford, Botetourt, Montgomery and Roanoke; Town of Vinton; Greater Roanoke Transit Company (*Valley Metro*); Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport; Virginia Department of Rail & Public Transportation; Virginia Department of Transportation

1. **CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, OPENING STATEMENT BY THE CHAIR**

Chair Martin called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. A quorum was present.

Chair Martin read the following opening statement...*"Pursuant to the City of Roanoke Emergency Ordinance adopted by the RVTPO Policy Board on April 23, 2020 and 2020 Virginia General Assembly legislation H29 enacted April 24, 2020, the February meeting of the Roanoke Valley Transportation Planning Organization will be held virtually via Zoom on Thursday, February 25, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. Under the current State of Emergency, and until further notice, it has been deemed unsafe to assemble a quorum of a public body in one place. Any members of the public may view and participate in the meeting through electronic means. Meeting details are listed on the second page of the agenda. All materials made available to the members will be made available to the public at the same time by posting on the RVARC website."*

2. **APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

The following Consent Agenda items were distributed earlier:

- A. February 25, 2021 RVTPO Meeting Agenda
- B. January 28, 2021 RVTPO Minutes

Motion: by Mr. Johnson to approve items (A) and (B), as distributed. The motion was seconded by Mr. Radford.

RVTPO Policy Board Action: Roll call vote: Ayes- 10 (Johnson, Martin, Fijalkowski, North, Radford, Turk, Stovall, King, Price, Sonenklar); Nays-0; Abstentions-0. Motion carried unanimously.

3. **REMARKS BY THE CHAIR**

Chair Martin reported that last week the US Department of Transportation announced the latest round of INFRA (Infrastructure for Rebuilding America) Grants. Localities and TPOs are eligible to apply. Applications are due March 19, 2021. Projects must be construction ready. The grant requires 20% match. More information is available by contacting staff.

Chair Martin reported that last week the Commonwealth of Virginia released an updated draft SMART SCALE funding scenario. Fortunately, the projects recommended for funding in the TPO region were not affected by this update.

4. **APPROVAL OF ADJUSTMENTS TO THE SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BLOCK GRANT (STBG) PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURES**

At the November 24, 2020 Policy Board meeting, Mr. King and Mr. Radford were asked to work with staff on STBG policy changes. Ms. Finch and Mr. Strickland presented those suggested policy changes to the RVTPO's Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Project Development and Selection Procedures previously distributed in the agenda packet staff report. Ms. Finch noted that the language for policy #9 was being recommended by Mr. King to change to the following:

Original Proposed Edits:

- 9) Candidate projects ~~that are also included in the 2018 Regional Study on Transportation Project Prioritization for Economic Development and Growth that are deemed a priority~~ requesting STBG funding to cover a portion of the project expense, thus leveraging other funding sources ~~in order to fully fund a project through construction~~, may be tentatively programmed in ~~years 3-6 of any six-year~~ the financial plan ~~as conditionally committed funds under the "conditional commitment" that the remaining required funds to complete the project be secured.~~

Newly Proposed Edits:

- 9) The RVTPO Policy Board will work to develop and maintain a top priority list of projects (e.g., Top Ten List) similar in format and purpose found in the recent 2018 Transportation Project Prioritization for Economic Development and Growth (TED Study). Additional regional priority projects and initiatives beyond the top priorities may also be listed and recognized as regional priorities. Candidate projects that are deemed consistent with these established regional priorities may be programmed in the financial plan with conditionally committed STBG funding in an effort to leverage other funding sources, such as SMART SCALE funding, in order to fully fund the project(s) through construction.

Additionally, Chair Martin proposed the following change to the Resolution (previously distributed with the agenda packet): Chairman Billy W. Martin Jr. to be replaced with Chairman Billy W. Martin Sr.

Motion: by Ms. Moon Reynolds to approve the Resolution, approving adjustments to the STBG Project Development and Selection Procedures, as amended. The motion was seconded by Mr. North.

RVTPO Policy Board Action: Roll call vote: Ayes- 11 (Johnson, Martin, Jeffrey, Moon Reynolds, Fijalkowski, North, Radford, Turk, King, Price, Sonenklar); Nays-0; Abstentions-0. Motion carried unanimously.

5. DRAFT UPDATE TO THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

Rachel Ruhlen explained the proposed updates to the Public Participation Plan and described how staff have improved public participation. Highlights were the use of surveys during public comment periods, using public-friendly language and terminology to achieve meaningful public input, getting input from all the zip codes in the RVTPO, and increasing the number of responses from Blacks/African Americans.

Motion: by Ms. Moon Reynolds to direct staff to advertise the Draft Public Participation Plan for the required 45-day public comment period and subsequent public hearing expected for the April 22, 2021 RVTPO Policy Board Meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Jeffrey.

RVTPO Policy Board Action: Roll call vote: Ayes- 12 (Johnson, Martin, Jeffrey, Moon Reynolds, Fijalkowski, North, Radford, Turk, King, Price, Sonenklar, Clinton); Nays-0; Abstentions-0. Motion carried unanimously.

6. **OTHER BUSINESS**

A. **Briefing on the Regional Study on Transportation Project Prioritization for Economic Development and Growth – 2021 Update**

Eddie Wells reported RVTPO staff has gathered input from economic development and business stakeholders to identify and then from their perspective prioritize current and anticipated transportation needs. Staff will categorize the needs by type. The Economic Development Committee Members were asked to submit their "Top 10" priority needs back to staff. It is anticipated that the gathered information of needs be presented to the TTC at their March meeting. The TTC will have the chance to review and consider the information to update the projects in the TED Study. The Draft TED Study update will be presented to the Policy Board at their April or May meeting depending on when the TTC members will have the draft projects completed.

Note: At 1:57p.m. Chair Martin's computer went silent. Vice Chair North took over the meeting.

7. **COMMENT PERIOD BY RVTPO POLICY BOARD MEMBERS AND/OR PUBLIC**

Mr. Strickland commented that the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is proposing to change the definition as to what constitutes a metropolitan statistical area in the Census.

is. The action would affect six metropolitan areas in Virginia. OMB is also proposing to redefine what an urban area is, which may have an impact on the RVTPO since the urbanized area defines the boundary for the RVTPO service area.

Mr. Strickland asked Mr. King if there are any projects in our region that qualify for the federal INFRA funding. Mr. King replied that he has not been notified of any projects yet.

Mr. North announced that he has been appointed to the Transportation Steering Committee of National Association of Counties.

Motion: by Ms. Turk to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Moon Reynolds.

RVTPO Policy Board Action: Roll call vote: Ayes- 11 (Johnson, Clinton, Jeffrey, Moon Reynolds, Fijalkowski, North, Radford, Turk, King, Price, Sonenklar); Nays-0; Abstentions-0. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 2:06 p.m.



Wayne Strickland, Secretary
Roanoke Valley Transportation Planning Organization