

Houma-Thibodaux Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
Policy Committee Minutes
January 17, 2008, 12:30 PM

Approved at February 28, 2008 HTMPO-PC Meeting

Prayer Johnny Pizzolatto

Pledge of Allegiance Pat Gordon

Roll Call

Leo Marretta called roll.

Lafourche Parish President, Charlotte Randolph – Present, proxy Pat Matherne
Terrebonne Parish President, Michel Claudet – Present
City of Thibodaux Mayor, Charles Caillouet – Present, proxy Bonnie Lafont
Terrebonne Parish Council Member, Peter Lambert – Present, proxy Pat Gordon
Terrebonne Parish Council Member, Johnny Pizzolatto - Present
Terrebonne Parish Council Member, Arlanda Williams - Present
Terrebonne Parish Council Member, Clayton Voisin – Present
LADOTD, Michael Stack – Present, proxy Lyle Leblanc
FHWA, Jamie Setze – Present

Others in attendance were:

Kevin Belanger, SCPDC
Leo Marretta, SCPDC
Scott Leger, SCPDC
Emma Bergeron, SCPDC
Tanya Etier, SCPDC
Al Levron, Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government
Joan Schexnayder, Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government
Natalie Robottom, Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government
Philip Poche, Louisiana State Police Troop C
Kermit Kraemer, City of Thibodaux
Rosa Lou Molaison, Assumption Council on Aging
Dennis Hebert, LADOTD
Jonathon Fox, ABMB Engineers, Inc
Evangeline Jackson-Martin, St. James Parish Transit

Before the start of the meeting, it was requested for the committee to move item 4 on the agenda to the beginning of the meeting. A. Williams moved for item 4, Election of the HTMPO Policy Committee Chair and Vice Chair to be the first item discussed. It was seconded by P. Gordon. Motion carried.

Election of HTMPO Policy Committee Chair and Vice Chair

C. Voisin introduced the election of HTMPO Policy Committee Chair and Vice Chair to the forum. L. Marretta gave a brief overview of the by-laws pertaining to the nominations and elections of the officers. A. Williams nominated C. Voisin for Chairman. There being no other

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nominations a motion was made by J. Pizzalato to close the nominations, seconded by A. Williams. There being no objections, motion carried.

It was then motioned by A. Williams to elect C. Voisin as HTMPO Policy Committee Chairman, seconded by J. Pizzalato. Motion carried. C. Voisin accepted the appointment as HTMPO Policy Committee Chairman.

Next up for nominations was the HTMPO Policy Committee Vice-Chairman appointment. C. Voisin nominated A. Williams; however, according to the By-Laws Article II, Section 6: The Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall be of different political representation. Therefore, the nomination of A. Williams could not be accepted. B. Lafont motioned to nominate C. Randolph as Vice-Chairman, seconded by A. Williams. There being no other nominations, nominations were closed, and the motion carried. C. Randolph is appointed as the new Vice-Chairman of the HTMPO Policy Committee.

Approval of Minutes from October 4, 2007 meeting

It was motioned by P. Gordon to approve the minutes from the October 4, 2007 meeting, A. Williams seconded. Motion carried.

Public Comments

There were no public comments

Distribution of By-Laws

L. Marretta gave a brief overview of the By-Laws which were distributed within the meeting packets. B. Lafont, P. Matherne, and P. Gordon each requested a copy of the HTMPO Briefing Notebook. A. Williams left the meeting at this time.

Adoption of language recommended by LA DOTD regarding future administrative adjustments to the TIP

L. Marretta reported on a meeting conducted by LA DOTD on October 11, 2007. The purpose of this meeting was to synchronize the MPO's Transportation Improvement Program with the LADOTD project phasing and budgeting process. One of the suggestions to come from this meeting was to include language in the TIP which would allow for the HTMPO to make necessary administrative adjustments to the TIP without the need for action by the Policy Committee.

The verbiage proposed by LADOTD is as follows; "While every effort has been made to develop this document using the latest information available at the time, it is recognized that there are uncertainties in the development of projects, right-of-way acquisition, relocation of utilities, acquisition of permits, costs, funding availability, etc. Therefore, the Policy Committee has no objection to phases of projects moving within the TIP or STIP as necessitated by the situation,

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and gives its approval to the MPO staff to make those necessary administrative adjustments without action by the Policy Committee.”

Discussion ensued. K. Belanger reassured the Committee when changes take place, the HTMPO will make all efforts to notify the Committee of the changes being made. It was agreed upon by all that email would be the best method for notification of amended TIP's.

P. Gordon motioned for proposed verbiage be added to the HTMPO TIP with the added provision to make every effort to notify by email each Policy Committee member of changes to the TIP, J. Pizzalatto seconded. No objections were made. Motion carried.

Notice of revisions by LADOTD to the project scheduling section of the TIP and recommendation for the TAC to review in February

L. Marretta informed the Committee of LADOTD's request for the HTMPO to re-submit their next TIP by March 1, 2008 in order to be in step with previously scheduled updates by the other Louisiana MPO's. The re-submitted TIP will be submitted as is except with the following exceptions; administrative adjustments to align the updated TIP with changes to project programming as delineated by LADOTD, added language to facilitate administrative adjustments in the future, and an inflationary rate of 4% per year will be employed to better calculate programmed project costs as mandated by SAFETEA-LU. The revised-updated TIP will be reviewed at the next TAC meeting, if there are no concerns it will then be formally submitted to the Policy Committee for final approval to re-submit. TAC meeting dates are yet to be set.

Review and recommendation of grant applications for the next fiscal year by local Public Transportation Providers

L. Marretta reviewed which Public Transportation Providers who are submitting grant applications to LADOTD for the next fiscal year. These applications require the HTMPO to include them in the TIP and/or Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan as applicable and an authorized letter from the HTMPO be sent with their application packet confirming their inclusion in those documents. Discussion ensued.

J. Pizzalatto moved to include each applicant into the TIP and to authorize a letter from the HTMPO be sent with their application as required, seconded by P. Gordon. No objections, motion passed.

UPDATE – Louisiana Transportation Efficiency Analysis

K. Belanger explained how at the last meeting a motion was made to join with other Louisiana MPO's in funding and participating in a 3rd party independent analysis of the whole transportation planning process including MPOs, LADOTD, and all entities involved in procuring roads in the state. He also updated where the report stands at this point, still in the process of being generated. Discussion ensued.

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UPDATE – Houma ITS - Jonathan Fox, ABMB Engineers, Inc.

C. Voisin introduced Jonathan Fox of ABMB Engineers, Inc. to the forum. J. Fox gave a brief overview on Houma ITS project. Phase I has been completed, Phase II is in the final stages of completion, Phase III, and Phase IV are now under construction. Funding is limited and in need. M. Claudet main concern was the time span of implementation. Due to funding, definite implementation of the ITS has yet to be set. A meeting is scheduled following the PC meeting. No further discussion on the matter.

FYI – Safe Routes to School Grant

L. Marretta announced the next round of the Safe Routes to School Grants is due February 29, 2008. This program is designed to improve safety along public roads in order to encourage children to walk or ride their bikes to school. It can be a dedicated bike path, running path, or equestrian path. Parish Councilwoman T. Cavalier has inquired on this. A brief discussion ensued.

Other Business

K. Belanger announced a meeting for the Highway Dept Planning and Program Committee which will be held on January 29, 2008 at the LADOTD office in Houma, LA.

He also spoke of SCPDC exploring options for the possibility of hiring in house employees to handle “right-of-way” acquisitions and a biologist to help in preparing Environmental Impact Statements and 404 permits. A small discussion ensued.

Next Meeting Date

It was agreed upon the next meeting date of the Houma-Thibodaux Policy Committee would be held on February, 28 2008 at 12:00 PM.

TAC meeting date will be set accordingly.

Adjournment

The motion to adjourn the meeting was made by P. Gordon, seconded by J. Pizzalatto. Motion carried.