

Houma – Thibodaux
Metropolitan Planning Organization (HTMPO)

South Central Planning and Development Commission Office
5058 West Main Street, Gray, LA 70359
985-851-2900

M E E T I N G M I N U T E S

HTMPO Policy Committee Meeting

Date: January 8, 2009

Meeting Location: SCPDC's Pelican Room, Gray, LA.

In Attendance

Committee:	Terrebonne Parish President, Michel Claudet – proxy Pat Gordon City of Thibodaux Mayor, Charles Caillouet – proxy Bonnie Lafont Terrebonne Parish Council Member, Peter Lambert – proxy Al Levron Terrebonne Parish Council Member, Johnny Pizzolatto - Present Terrebonne Parish Council Member, Arlanda Williams – Present Terrebonne Parish Council Member, Clayton Voisin – Present LADOTD, Michael Stack – proxy Lyle Leblanc Lafourche Parish President, Charlotte Randolph – proxy Pat Matherne FHWA, Jamie Setze – Absent
Staff:	Leo Marretta, SCPDC Joshua Manning, SCPDC Emma Bergeron, SCPDC Scott Leger, SCPDC Kevin Belanger, SCPDC Martha Cazaubon, SCPDC
Others in Attendance:	LP Ledet – Neel-Schaffer Charlene Rodriguez – Lafourche Council on Aging Linda Pertuit – Lafourche Council on Aging Glen Graham – ABMB Eng. Rose Hebert – Lafourche ARC Peggy Krieg – Lafourche ARC Eric Shaw – LRA Richard Champagne – Mayor, Town of Lockport

Invocation

J. Pizzolatto let the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance

B. Lafont led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

L. Mareta called roll.

At this time, there was an issue raised over the question of letters for proxies. L. Mareta said that he had received a phone call that morning from. M. Claudet's secretary asking if a letter was needed for P. Gordon to proxy. After L. Mareta reviewed the bylaws, he found that they do, indeed, state that a letter is needed.

A. Levron requested that this rule be waived for this meeting only as P. Lambert was unable to write a letter at such short notice.

P. Gordon motioned that the requirement for written proxies would be removed for this meeting. J. Pizzolatto seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item # 1

Approval of Minutes from October 16, 2008 meeting

It was motioned by A. Levron to approve the minutes from the October 16, 2008 meeting, J. Pizzolatto seconded. Motion carried.

Agenda Item # 2

Public Comment

Chairman Voisin asked if there were any public comments. There being no public comments A. Levron motioned to close comments. P. Matherne seconded.

Agenda Item # 3

**Proposed Amendments to the Policy Committee Bylaws Providing Representation for Assumption and Lockport
Leo Marretta, HTMPO Administrator**

It was motioned by A. Levron and seconded by P. Gordon to table agenda items 3, 4, and 5 to later in the meeting. Motion carried.

Agenda Item # 6

**Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Update Project
LP Ledet, Vijay K. Kunada, and Barry Brupbacher, Neel-Schaffer, Inc**

L. Ledet updated the committee on the progress of the MTP update. He said all fieldwork pertaining to collecting data for putting the network together has been completed. All building permits from 2000 – 2008 have also been collected and will be used to update the network from the 2000 census to 2007 for the model's base year.

A. Williams entered the meeting at this time (12:15).

L. Ledet said that all employers, along with the number of employees, have also been geocoded into the network. The types of employment have further been broken down into categories to determine the type of traffic generated and attracted to the Traffic Analysis Zone.

L. Marretta asked if the employer data was proprietary or if it would be available to the parishes. L. Ledet said that Neel-Schaffer had to sign a confidentiality agreement and cannot release the data, but only use it to aggregate the data to each TAZ.

L. Ledet then said that schools will also be taken into consideration based on where they are located and the number of employees and students they have.

L. Ledet also informed the committee on the upcoming visioning meetings that are to be held. The meetings shall be held on Jan. 26 at Thibodaux High, Jan. 28 at the Larose Civic Center, and Jan. 29 in the TPCG council meeting room. All meetings are to start at 6pm. L. Ledet said the purpose of the meetings is to receive input from the public on what their vision for the study area. Meetings with the highest public officials from each municipality within the study area have already been completed.

C. Voisin asked whether staff from Neel-Schaffer or the MPO will be holding the meetings. L. Ledet said they are being called by the MPO but Neel-Schaffer will lead them. L. Marretta said also that the MPO will be calling the public meetings, but it is important for public officials to be there to help facilitate each table.

L. Ledet said the plan will not include just roads, but all infrastructure related to transportation.

J. Pizzolatto asked how advertising for the meetings would be done. L. Marretta said that the MPO staff and N.S. have discussed PSAs, newspaper ads, and speaking at Chamber of Commerce meetings, but that we was still waiting on getting a press release of some sort from N.S. L. Ledet said N.S. intends also to get information to all parish councils involved.

L. Marretta said he would like for this plan to also make policy recommendations for the local governments on matters such as corridor preservation and traffic impact analysis for new developments.

L. Ledet said that once all the meetings and data entry are complete, forecast models will then be complete.

C. Voisin enforced the idea that press releases pertaining to the visioning meetings are given to the parish councils and to all members of the policy committee.

No action necessary.

Agenda Item # 7
HTMPO Website Live Demo
Josh Manning, HTMPO Staff

J. Manning discussed the changes made to the MPO website. More content, a link to the traffic counting database, MPO documents including plans and bylaws, upcoming meetings and meeting minutes, a list of committee members and a link to DOTD's 511 website have all been added.

P. Gordon asked how the 511 system works during hurricane evacuations and if it was actually up and running. J. Manning explained that DOTD personnel in Baton Rouge are able to input road closures at anytime and that data was inputted and the website live during Gustav and Ike.

L. Marretta introduced Eric Shaw, Director of Planning for the Louisiana Recovery Authority, who joined the meeting during this time.

No action necessary.

Agenda Item # 8

**Coordinated Human Services Transportation Planning Effort Update
Martha Cazaubon, SCPDC/HTMPO Staff**

M. Cazaubon announced that one meeting was held prior to the holidays with the Council on Aging groups, ARCs, and Good Earth. She said the issue being dealt with in this program is the coordination of transit moving across boundaries. The goal is to move people by transit more efficiently. This program is a tool for the state to more efficiently fund transit projects with limited money.

She said the MPO's coordinated area includes St. James, Assumption, Lafourche, and Terrebonne parishes. St. James, she said, is rural and not in the MPO. It is, however, in the SCPDC planning district and must be included in this plan in order to be eligible to any monies.

M. Cazaubon reported that she is currently trying to get in touch with Nicholls' pro-bono survey group to help survey the areas needs. The next meeting will be held once this programs coordinator is available.

A question was raised on whether or not Nicholls had completed doing a study on a similar project already. M. Cazaubon stated that this study must encompass the whole area.

No action necessary.

Agenda Item # 9

**ARC and COA Letters for Grant Applications
Leo Marretta, HTMPO Staff**

L. Marretta explained that letters are needed from the MPO stating its support for the different agencies applying for the Operating Assistance Grant, Non-Urbanized Area Formula Program/49 CFR 5311 and the Elderly and Disabled Capital Assistance Grant. He read a paragraph from the letter from the Assumption Parish Council on Aging stating exactly what is needed from the MPO:

A letter is needed from your organization, stating that our proposed service area is not within the urbanized boundaries and, if approved by DOTD for funding, the project will be included in the Transit Element of the Transportation Improvement Program, is needed prior to the submission of our application to DOTD's Public Transportation Section before the deadline of February 1, 2009.

The groups, he said, need a letter saying they will be in either the TIP or the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan. The letters have already been drafted and are ready to be mailed pending approval from the Policy Committee. The requesting agencies are the Assumption Parish COA, the Lafourche ARC, the Terrebonne COA, the Lafourche COA, and St. Mary Community Action.

L. Marretta explained that these organizations all fell within the MPO's or SCPDC's jurisdiction, with the exception of St. Mary Community Action, which is located in

Franklin, which lies in St. Mary Parish. They are also not located within the study area of the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan.

S. Leger said that he contacted DOTD and they told him the Transit Contact for St. Mary is Lafayette's MPO.

K. Belanger stated that the Lafayette MPO decided not to provide this organization with a letter. DOTD had then advised them to contact us. He said that legislation is being offered during the current legislative session to include St. Mary in the SCPDC region.

Discussion ensued, resulting in the consensus that, since St. Mary Parish is not currently in the MPO or Planning Commission or CHSTP boundaries, the MPO should not supply a letter promising to place their project in the TIP or CHSTP.

It was motioned by J. Pizzolatto and seconded by A. Williams to approve all letters except the one to St. Mary Community Action. Motion carried.

It was motioned by P. Matherne and seconded by A. Williams to return to agenda items 3, 4, and 5. Motion carried.

Agenda Item # 3

Proposed Amendments to the Policy Committee Bylaws Providing Representation for Assumption and Lockport Leo Marretta, HTMPO Administrator

L. Marretta introduced a change in the bylaws to bring Assumption Parish and the Town of Lockport into the MPO. He said that he, K. Belanger, and B. Lafont had recently discussed issues concerning pro-rata representation based upon new census numbers and the corresponding distribution of the \$3 million STP under 200K funds received annually, and the division of the local match requirements. L. Marretta stated that Jamie Setz from the FHWA spoke at the last meeting and informed the committee that there are no federal guidelines for the inclusion of new municipalities, but that it is up to the Policy Committee to determine the steps that should be taken.

L. Marretta then reviewed the process that was taken to bring Lafourche Parish and the City of Thibodaux into the MPO, and shows the similarity to the proposed changes. Under the proposed changes, Assumption would represent 3% of the MPO population, and Lockport would represent 2%.

At this time, K. Belanger spoke about how the stimulus plan currently being discussed in Congress could help current MPO projects be completed more timely and would then allow the MPO to focus on more feasible projects.

L. Marretta said the proposed changes to the MPO bylaws would increase the number of voting members from 8 to 10, adds Assumption and Lockport, and changes the quorum from 5 to 6.

R. Champagne pointed out the proposed language should from "City of Lockport" to "Town of Lockport" in Article VIII, section 2.

L. Marretta also points out another typographical error in Article V that would also be changed.

A. Williams motioned to accept the proposed amendments to the MPO bylaws. J. Pizzolatto seconded.

J. Pizzolatto asked if Assumption wanted to join and pointed out that there was no Assumption representation at the current meeting. K. Belanger said that Assumption has indicated to him they wish to join. R. Champagne said Lockport wishes to join.

P. Gordon asked if the matter could be tabled until the next meeting. He said he would like to look at the matter further and make sure all members of the Policy Committee had been informed.

A. Williams said she did not wish to remove the motion to approve.

P. Gordon offered a substitute motion to table the matter. Seconded by A. Levron. Discussion ensued. The committee then voted 6-2 for the motion. L. Marretta requested a role call.

Votes for:

A. Levron
P. Matherne
B. Lafont
L. Leblanc
P. Gordon
C. Voisin

Votes against:

J. Pizzolatto
A. Williams

Motion passed.

Agenda Item # 4

LADOTD Project Update

Lyle Leblanc, LADOTD Traffic Engineer

L. Leblanc reported that the federal government has committed money to repairing several roads in the area including 3 miles on LA 308 from Raceland to Triple Oaks, an overlay of LA 316 from US 90 to the Terrebonne Parish line, LA 56 from LA 58 to the Boudreaux Canal, 5 miles on LA 57 between Houma and the Buquet Bridge, and LA 659 between Prospect Blvd. and Howard. He said other upcoming projects subsurface drainage on LA 308 between St. Patrick and Tiger Drive, subsurface drainage on LA 316 from LA 24 to the parish line, a new Prospect Blvd. bridge and a replacement of the St. Charles Street Bridge near Terrebonne High.

L. Leblanc also announced to the group that the Boudreaux Canal Bridge would be closed to all vehicular and marine traffic for repairs from March to May. The bridge will be open only to vehicles from 6-8am, 3-4:30pm, and 10pm-3:30am. It will be open to marine traffic 3:30-5:30am and 8-10pm. It will be closed at all other times.

C. Voisin requested that steps be taken to ensure a fire truck be placed on each side of the bridge. Discussion ensued.

L. Marretta informed the committee that the St. Anne Bridge replacement is scheduled to be let sometime during the 2010-2011 SFY.

B. Lafont also reported that Thibodaux is entering into a contract with Duplantis Design Group for a Stage 0 study on the Acadian Road intersection.

No action necessary.

Agenda Item # 5

Proposed Amendments to the TIP from Nov 20, 2008 meeting with DOTD Leo Marretta, HTMPO Administrator

L. Marretta reviewed the proposed changes to the TIP recommended by DOTD during the last white board meeting. The changes included an updated cost estimates page and updated time frames and costs for MPO projects during the next three Federal Fiscal Years. He mentioned one reason that projects were able to move around is because Terrebonne Parish would acquire the right-of-way for Westside Blvd. B according to the Louisiana uniform Relocation Act. He explained if this project is added back to the TIP, programmed funds would exceed \$4 million per year and projects will need to be moved around again. He also explained that the high price of Acadian Road will have to be dealt with in the future, either through phasing or other sources of money.

K. Belanger mentioned it was very important for Terrebonne Parish to understand that they will need to acquire the Westside Blvd. B right-of-way under the uniform relocation act.

B. Lafont voiced concern that Acadian Road was not being funded in FFY 10-11. J. Manning said this was done because of the high price of construction and because of the uncertainty of the intersection study at the time of the white board meeting. A. Levron said that Country Drive will probably be phased and will probably free money in 10-11. K. Belanger assured her that the programmed money would follow the project and that it would not lose funding.

It was motioned by A. Levron and seconded by P. Gordon to accept the changes to the TIP. Motion passes.

It was motioned by A. Levron that the MPO support the request by the Terrebonne Parish administration to phase Country Drive and seconded by P. Gordon. Motion carries.

Agenda Item # 10

Other Business

P. Gordon asked if it would be possible to remove the language from the bylaws necessitating a letter for proxies. C. Voisin said the MPO should review state laws before a decision is made on that issue. L. Marretta said he would prefer to just have a

letter kept on file. C. Voisin recommended that this issue be placed on the agenda for the next policy committee meeting.

Agenda Item # 11

Determine date of next HTMPO Policy Committee meeting

It was motioned by A. Levron and seconded by P. Matherne for the next meeting date of the Houma-Thibodaux MPO Policy Committee to be held on May 14, 2009 at 12:00 PM. Motion carried.

Agenda Item # 12

Adjournment

The motion to adjourn the meeting was made by J. Pizzolatto seconded by P. Matherne. Motion carried.

Date: January 9, 2008
Copies to: MPO Policy Committee, MPO Interested Parties List, file