

**MINUTES
OF
THE OZARK FOOTHILLS TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**FEBRUARY 20, 2014
OZARK FOOTHILLS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

JOURNEYMAN'S RESTAURANT, DONIPHAN, MISSOURI

I. Call to Order

Chairman Brain Polk called the meeting to order at 6:14 p.m.

II. Open for Public Discussion

Bill Kennon, Ripley County, welcomed everyone to Doniphan and Ripley County. Chairman Polk requested that everyone introduce themselves for the benefit of those in attendance that had never before attended a Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting.

III. Adoption of October 24, 2013 Minutes

Minutes of the October 24, 2013 TAC meeting were reviewed. The minutes were adopted with a motion by Frank Carroll, Butler County, and second by Bill Kirkpatrick, Wayne County.

IV. Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) Reports

David Wyman, MoDOT Southeast District, began by addressing the fact of a tremendous budget shortfall in Missouri's transportation funding. The federal Highway Trust Fund will be out of funds by September, even though it is supposed to last through September. Funding in Missouri is a serious issue that will have to be addressed in the immediate future.

Currently, MoDOT has been buying right of way in Ripley County for the Highway 160 expansion. The 4-lane work on Highway 67 South in Butler County will be completed next year. Although no new projects have been placed in the new Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), all projects that are currently in the STIP will be completed. In addition to the suspension of new projects, the Cost-Share Program has also been indefinitely suspended. This hits home for our region as it was the Cost-Share Program that helped to build the 4 lane of Highway 67 north of Poplar Bluff after the citizens of Poplar Bluff voted to place a sales tax on themselves.

Doug Warren, Reynolds County, asked what would be done to create new revenue. Mr. Wyman explained that last year the legislature tried to authorize a statewide one-cent sales tax to fund transportation projects. It passed in the Missouri Senate, and in the Missouri House, but the House changed some of the language. When the legislation went back to the Senate, it was

filibustered. An organization called Missouri for Safe Transportation and New Jobs was created after the last election and moved to have the sales tax placed on the November 2014 ballot via referendum. This initiative petition will not manifest now, but there is again a movement in the Missouri Legislature to authorize the sales tax and allow the Missouri voters to decide if they want a sales tax to fund transportation infrastructure. House Joint Resolution 68 and Senate Bill 48 are now before the two houses and have the same language. The House Bill has moved out of the Transportation Committee and is currently sitting with the Rules Committee.

For this legislation to be placed on the ballot, MoDOT must compile a list of projects that are to be completed should the sales tax become effective. The language of the proposals allows for funding of all transportation modes. Not only will traditional highways and bridges be funded, but also aviation, railways, public transit, bike/ped, motor carriers, trails, waterways, etc. The sales tax would last for 10 years. The collections would be distributed 90% to the state, 5% to cities, and 5% to counties. The distributions would be made in the same manner as CART funds, based on county road miles and assessed property valuations.

Matt Seiler, MoDOT Southeast District, stated that MoDOT is an agency that spends revenue, and does not generate it. Funding is a serious problem; and, while changes will not be noticeable over the next couple of years, in 2017, 2018, and 2019, there will be a large drop in what MoDOT is able to accomplish. Federal revenue is falling and state revenue is either falling or flat. There has been no increase in funding for 20 years in Missouri, yet the prices of concrete, asphalt, etc. have tripled.

Bill Kennon commended MoDOT for their efforts during the last major storm. Due to the harsh winter, the entire country is low on salt. MoDOT normally pays \$60 dollars per ton for salt, but had trouble finding additional salt during the last round of snow and ice. What could be found was selling for \$180 per ton.

Mr. Seiler mentioned that on Tuesday, February 25th from 9-11 am, MoDOT will be holding a Freight Forum at the District Office in Sikeston. He encouraged everyone that is interested to attend. The program is similar to the recently concluded *On the Move* campaign and the study will look at freight's impact on the state.

Elquin Auala, MoDOT Southeast District, reported that BRO funds have not been spent down very much from this time last year. A big reason is that most of the projects are in the design phase. There are still threats of BRO money being pulled at the federal level, but Missouri should be in good shape next year as some of these funds begin to shrink once construction begins.

Ms. Auala also mentioned that there is a push to keep projects to a tighter schedule and make sure they are completed on time. Consultants are going to have to follow stricter timelines and grant recipients need to make sure their consultants are following the approved timeline. She encouraged any questions regarding timelines to be directed to her.

Starting in March, Local Public Agencies (LPAs) will no longer have to advertise projects under \$100,000 for engineering services. Lastly, new grant rounds for Transportation Alternative programs are expected this fall and may have up to 3 years' worth of funding available.

Joe Killian, MoDOT Southeast District, provided a road mileage report that MoDOT's Central Office conveyed to the Internal Revenue Service. Mileage reported is the official amount that will be used for the next round of CART funding. He is still waiting on updated map books for a couple of the Ozark Foothills counties.

V. Guest Speaker

Andrew Murphy, Ozark Foothills Transportation Planning Coordinator, explained that to help MoDOT create the list of projects for the possible one-cent sales tax, the RPC's across Missouri will be conducting prioritization meetings with the general public. The guest speaker, Mr. Gail Hinshaw, will facilitate those meetings for the Ozark Foothills region in March, and will return at the next meeting in April to assist the TAC in making final project recommendations.

Mr. Hinshaw introduced himself and quickly reviewed his background in strategic planning. He worked 18 different jobs in 14 years for the same company refining their planning process at all levels and worked with Bass Pro Shops, Applebees, Doe Run Mining, and others in their planning processes.

He next reviewed the methodology that will be used at the March prioritization meetings. Attendees are to work in pairs to promote privacy. A stack of three by five cards will be given to each pair of attendees. Attendees will be encouraged to write proposed projects on the cards with one project per card. One person from each pair will then bring forward their stack of proposed projects and place them across the front on a large board or on several flip charts positioned across the front of the room. As they do so, they will be encouraged to find the same or similar projects and group theirs with them. All in attendance will then review the benefits of each project.

The total number of projects will be divided by three. This number of small adhesive blue dots will be provided to each participant along with one larger adhesive blue dot. The participants will come forward to place their large blue dot on their number one project and their small blue dots on other projects they desire to be included in the capital project list. Once all blue dots have been attached to the projects, it will be evident to all participants what the priorities are for the group. This will be done for each mode of transportation and will allow for everyone to participate and a grass roots list to be garnered.

After the five meetings are concluded, identified projects will be turned over to MoDOT who will then provide cost estimate and pricing guidelines for those projects. The projects and guidelines will be reviewed and prioritized by the TAC in April.

Joe Lloyd, Reynolds County, asked if this is being conducted to show support for the sales tax. Mr. Hinshaw said that MoDOT is looking for more grassroots participation rather than a top down approach.

Ed Strenfel, Butler County, stated the sales tax seemed similar to the Transportation Development District (TDD) that was passed in Poplar Bluff. There will be a certain amount of projects that will be completed with the funds and the tax will sunset in 10 years.

Angela Smith, Wayne County, asked if this is what the TAC already does, but is just casting a slightly wider net. Both Andrew Murphy and Matt Seiler answered yes. Mr. Seiler mentioned that all different modes of transportation would be included in this process, where the TAC had traditionally focused on roads and bridges. MoDOT wants to ensure this list is inclusive of all modes of transportation.

Butch Anderson, Butler County, stated that people in this part of the state are much more concerned about roads than other modes. Mr. Seiler stated that depending on where you live, that is completely true. Mr. Anderson said that last year's legislation was too focused on I-70. Mr. Seiler said that the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission would determine if I-70 improvements will be funded from this sales tax or if it will compete with all other projects.

Joy Lloyd asked about any of the potential funds being reserved for special projects. David Wyman said only 10% is reserved, the previously mentioned 5% for cities and 5% for counties.

Angela Smith asked if there was any way to gather specific statistics for infrastructure in the region. Matt Seiler stated that is not really information MoDOT has available, but they can say that for every one dollar spent on transportation, four dollars is generated in return.

VI. Transportation Planning Coordinator Report

Andrew Murphy provided updates on a variety of projects in the area. The City of Poplar Bluff has installed street lighting on the Poplar Bluff Industrial Park Road within the city limits. Ozark Border Electric Coop. has agreed to install lighting for the remainder of the road and has the area staked. They are currently waiting on more cooperative weather to finish the project.

The Doniphan Sidewalk Project is currently in the bidding phase.

The Doniphan Quick Creek Trail Project has been completed and is closed out.

The Doniphan Quick Creek Park LWCF/RTP projects are progressing. The LWCF portion is close to being finished after being delayed due to the weather. The Doniphan High School trade class is constructing the restrooms and has not been able to complete them due to school closings and winter weather. The RTP portion to construct the trail around the ballpark is complete, and DNR has completed their final inspection.

The Carter County Courthouse Sidewalk Project has been completed and closed out.

Bridges were delivered and installed for the Piedmont Sidewalk Improvement Project.

The Old Greenville Trail Project has been completed and final inspections with both MoDOT and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) have been completed. MoDOT has made all reimbursements for the project. DNR is currently reviewing the final reimbursement request. The project should be closed out by mid-March.

VII. Old Business

Andrew Murphy informed the TAC that the next TAC meeting, originally scheduled for May 8, has been moved to April 17. It will take place at the Ozark Foothills Regional Planning Commission Office in Poplar Bluff. The meeting was moved so as to accommodate MoDOT's project prioritization timeline for the proposed sales tax initiative.

VIII. New Business

Mr. Murphy provided comments he collected at the Poplar Bluff Ag Expo on January 24 and 25 at the Black River Coliseum. He collected about 95 comments over two days. The most common comments included less potholes and repaving of roads, more public transportation, more bus routes in Poplar Bluff, more sidewalks, four lane 67 South to Arkansas, and widen Highway 53 in Butler County.

He next mentioned the rescheduled *Southeast District Freight Forum* to be held on Tuesday, February 25, 2014 in Sikeston, and encouraged everyone to attend if possible.

Mr. Murphy then mentioned that it was time for everyone who had completed LPA training in 2012 to recertify. There will be an option to recertify online this year. Tentative training dates include:

Jefferson City - February 20, 2014
St. Louis - June 17, 2014
Kansas City - April 29, 2014
Springfield - August 26, 2014
Jefferson City - October 21, 2014

There are no training dates scheduled in the Southeast District. Mr. Murphy stated he has tried to contact Jeffrey Cremer with MoDOT to find out if it is possible to add training at Sikeston. Mr. Cremer has yet to respond.

Lastly, Mr. Murphy stated that should there be a prioritization process this fall, the method will be enhanced. In the past, the TAC has focused primarily on road/bridge and maintenance of roads and bridges. Starting this year a Multi-Modal category will be added as well. He encouraged TAC members to talk with people who are interested in public transit, sidewalks, trails, railway improvements, airport improvements, etc. to assist in putting together a list of these types of projects.

IX. General Discussion

Chairman Polk asked for future TAC meeting dates. Andrew Murphy said the August meeting is scheduled for August 14. The November meeting, scheduled for the second Thursday of November, may be moved to an earlier date.

Chairman Polk also asked MoDOT if there existed plans to seal roads with something besides an oil-based sealer. This has been a harsh winter and roads all over the state are deteriorating.

Chairman Polk said that Highway 34 in Wayne County has deteriorated tremendously and the road is only two years old. He asked if it can be sealed before it progresses further. Joe Lloyd said the same thing is happening to Highway 72 in Reynolds County. There is cracking all over the road and the road has deteriorated much more quickly than normal. Ed Strenfel said they are seeing similar deterioration on PP Highway in Butler County.

David Wyman said MoDOT has two pavement engineers in the Southeast District whose job it is to check on pavement conditions and keep pavement in good condition. Mr. Wyman stated he would have to defer to them, and will mention the concerns brought forward tonight.

Jelly Halley, Ripley County, asked how damaging salt is to roads. Mr. Wyman stated salt does damage roads, but the biggest contributor to damage is water. When water is trapped in the road it causes a lot of damage. It was also discussed that due to the unusually strong winter weather this year, MoDOT has used a variety of treatments besides salt, including other abrasives, beat juice, and even saw dust.

X. Adjournment

Ed Strenfel moved to adjourn. Chairman Brian Polk adjourned the meeting at 7:38 p.m.

TAC ATTENDANCE ROSTER

February 20, 2014

Mr. Andrew Murphy	Ozark Foothills RPC
Mr. Ed Strenfel	Butler County
Mr. Don Anderson	Butler County
Mr. Jeff Darnell	Butler County
Mr. Frank Carroll	Butler County
Mr. Bill Robison	Butler County
Mr. Mike Gossett	Carter County
Mr. David Reynolds	Carter County
Ms. Elizabeth Reynolds	Carter County (Alternate)
Mr. Joe Loyd	Reynolds County
Mr. Doug Warren	Reynolds County
Mr. Eddie Williams	Reynolds County (Alternate)
Mr. William Kennon	Ripley County
Mr. Jerry Halley	Ripley County
Mr. Brian Polk	Wayne County
Mr. Bill Kirkpatrick	Wayne County
Ms. Angela Smith	Wayne County
Mr. Matthew Seiler	MoDOT Southeast
Mr. David Wyman	MoDOT Southeast
Mr. Joe Killian	MoDOT Southeast
Ms. Elquin Auala	MoDOT Southeast
Mr. Gail Hinshaw	Hinshaw & Associates
Ms. Sheila Hinshaw	Hinshaw & Associates

THOSE NOT IN ATTENDANCE

Mr. John Bailiff	Carter County
Mr. David Bowman	Carter County
Mr. Wayne Gibbs	Carter County
Ms. Renee Horn	Reynolds County
Mr. Darrell Dement	Reynolds County
Mr. Ben Pickett	Reynolds County
Mr. David Johnson	Ripley County
Mr. Steve Burke	Ripley County
Mr. Nick Ederer	Ripley County
Mr. Don Scowden	Wayne County
Mr. Harold Ellinghouse	Wayne County