

Meeting Minutes

**Salisbury/Wicomico Metropolitan Planning Organization (S/WMPO)
Technical Advisory Committee
April 13, 2017**

**Tri-County Council Multipurpose Center
Shore Transit Training Room
31901 Tri-County Way
Salisbury, MD**

Attendees:

S/WMPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) members:

Amanda Pollack, Vice-Chair, City of Salisbury Public Works
Dallas Baker, Wicomico County Public Works
Ian Beam, MDOT
Brad Bellacicco, Shore Transit
Eric Berkheimer, Salisbury University
Tremica Cherry, Delaware Transit Corporation
Lauren DeVore, DNREC – Division of Air Quality
Tracey Gordy, Maryland Dept. of Planning (MDP)
William Hardin, Town of Delmar
Dorothy Morris, Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination
Becky Robinson, Delmarva Water Transport Committee
Jim Thomas, Salisbury-Wicomico County Planning and Zoning Commission
Josh Thomas, Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT)
Jennifer Walls, Proxy, Sussex County
Keith Hall, S/WMPO Administrator

Others:

Peter Sotherland, State Highway Administration – District 1
Melissa Krafchik, State Highway Administration

Introduction

Vice Chair Pollack opened the meeting at 10:30 A.M. and welcomed everyone.

Minutes

The first item of business was the approval of minutes from the January 12, 2017 meeting. Mr. Josh Thomas made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted; the motion was seconded by Mr. Jim Thomas. With all Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) members voting in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Implementation of 2015 Ozone Standard presentation

Lauren DeVore (DNREC – DAQ)

Ms. DeVore started the presentation with an overview about National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ozone, which were established in 1979 and revised in 1997, 2008, and 2015. NAAQS for ozone includes, but is not limited to, monitoring and measuring Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) and Nitrogen Oxide (NOx) emissions on air quality. Based on the 2014 Emissions Inventory completed by DNREC-DAQ, 72 percent of NOx Emissions are generated by the mobile/transportation sector. This sector consist of on-road equipment, non-road equipment, aircraft, commercial marine vessels, and locomotives.

Ms. DeVore reviewed the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) new 2015 Ozone NAAQS Standard, which set stricter thresholds for health and welfare based standards. Currently, the Standard is 75 parts per billion (ppb), which will be revised to the new Standard of 70 ppb. The Ozone Role is meant to assist with implementation of the revised Ozone Standard. The Role established two alternative approaches for revoking the 2008 Ozone NAAQS, anti-back sliding requirements, and non-attainment areas classification thresholds. The first alternative consists of revoking 2008 Ozone Standards for all areas. The second alternative is to not revoke designated non-attainment areas; however, they would be bound by 10-year maintenance plans.

The impacts for the counties located in Delaware were briefly described by Ms. DeVore. Sussex County is monitoring attainment for both Standards and may likely be designated for attainment. If Option 1 is selected, conformity will no longer apply to Sussex County; however, if Option 2 is selected then conformity will apply and a 10-year maintenance plan will need to be developed and implemented. On September 23, 2016, DNREC submitted 2015 Ozone Standard designation recommendations to the EPA, which placed Sussex County in attainment at 0.069 ppm.

Mr. Josh Thomas noted DelDOT is the responsible agency tasked with conducting conformity analysis for Sussex County. He inquired about the coordination levels between DNREC and DelDOT to meet the 2015 changes. Ms. DeVore responded meetings between the two organizations occur quarterly. He inquired if Option 2 is implemented a conformity analysis is no longer required; however, a 10-year maintenance plan will be required. Ms. DeVore responded in the affirmative to Mr. Josh Thomas's inquiry. Mr. Josh Thomas and Mr. Hall emphasized the importance of DNREC developing a SIP /TIP Transportation Conformity Timeline for Sussex County. Mr. Hall noted if Sussex County achieves attainment, the Organization's Long Range Transportation Plan update cycle will change from every 4-years to 5-year schedule. Mr. Jim Thomas asked if anything could happen by a President's Executive Order impacting attainment levels. Ms. DeVore stated it is not likely; however, anything is subject to change.

There being no further questions, Vice-Chairman Pollack thanked Ms. DeVore for participating on the Technical Advisory Committee, as well as presenting an update 2015 NAAQS Standards.

Delmarva Water Transport Committee Presentation

Becky Robinson, Executive Director (DWTC)

Mrs. Robinson started the presentation with an overview of the purpose of the Delmarva Water Transport Committee. DWTC was formed in 1974, and its current membership includes representatives from City of Salisbury, Wicomico County, State agencies, maritime transportation

industry, dredging and contracting companies, petroleum distributors, commodities shippers, ship builders, financial institutes, and other entities utilizing or associated with waterborne commerce on the Delmarva Peninsula. The Organization represents members in various aspects of waterborne commerce and provides a centralized line of communication with U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, U.S. Coast Guard, and other government agencies. Membership provides an opportunity to meet other entities with similar interest and serves as a forum for the exchange of information and ideas.

She stated that the primary responsibility of DWTC is to maintain adequate dredging requirements on the Wicomico River. Annually, the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers receives federal funding to dredge the Wicomico River channel to the federally mandated depth of 14'. Each year, the federal government's budgets are limiting funds allocated to the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers for maintenance dredging, which is concerning. If adequate dredging can't be maintained on the Wicomico River, some industry stakeholders may consider shipping commodities by alternate means of transport including truck and rail. The potential change in transport mode of commodities may lead to a reduction in the amount of ships built and / or repaired at Chesapeake Shipbuilders. Chesapeake Shipbuilders has expressed interest to increase the depth of the Wicomico River channel to 20', which will require an act of Congress. DWTC will support and assist with this request.

Other activities of DWTC include: hosting meetings with U.S. Army Corp of Engineers and Wicomico County to discuss the strategic plans and support for Wicomico River dredging projects, assisting the County by coordinating with State agencies to acquire land for future dredge placement sites, meeting with local environmental groups, supporting local community group meetings to discuss waterway issues, co-hosting the annual ice planning meeting, communicating with NOAA and U.S. Coast Guard during ice conditions, coordinating approvals of pier permits on the Wicomico and Nanticoke Rivers, and researching alternate metrics to calculate waterborne commerce in terms of economic development instead of tonnage. Over the next year, DWTC will focus on public awareness of the local waterways and prepare an informational booklet highlighting the efforts of the Organization.

Vice Chair Pollack inquired about the next steps for requesting a change in depth of the Wicomico River channel. Ms. Robinson provided historical background information about depth levels of navigable waterways and advocated for increasing the depth from the existing 14' to 20'. This change will require an action of the U.S. Congress.

After a discussion amongst Mrs. Robinson and S/WMPO TAC members, Vice Chair Pollack thanked Ms. Robinson for presenting an overview of DWTC operations.

Draft FY 2018 Unified Planning Work Program

Keith Hall (S/WMPO Administrator)

Mr. Hall presented the proposed FY 2018 UPWP for the S/WMPO TAC's consideration. He noted that the proposed budget contains funding allocations from Maryland and Delaware. The FY 2018 allocation for the Maryland portion of the budget is \$151,210, which represents an increase of \$2,638 or 1.8 percent compared to the FY 2017 contribution. The FY 2018 Planning Fund Agreement between DelDOT and the S/WMPO

is \$49,611, which is consistent with the FY 2016 allocation. The Maryland and Delaware budget split is 75 and 25 percent, respectively. The total 2018 budget for the S/WMPO is \$200,821, which does not include unencumbered funds from previous fiscal years.

The proposed FY 2018 UPWP consist of four (4) major categories. As presented, Core Planning functions account for \$92,710 or 46% of the overall budget, MPO Administration allocation of \$52,000 or 26 percent, Public Participation is \$5,000 or 2.5 percent, and the remaining \$51,111 or 25 percent has been budgeted to the Special Studies line item. Mr. Hall proceeded with presenting the proposed FY 2018 budget table – Appendix A, which contains allocations for each line item by funding source and state. It was noted that the proposed budget allotments for the Salisbury/Wicomico Area Long Range Transportation Plan and Special Studies line items in the Maryland portion of the UPWP are substantially different than previous fiscal years. The budget increase to the LRTP line item is in anticipation of associated cost to obtain professional planning services to assist with the S/WMPO's LRTP update, which is on a four-year update cycle. During previous updates, the Maryland Department of Transportation funded this planning initiative in whole or part; however, this contribution will no longer continue as part of future updates. As a result of an increased allocation to the LRTP, funding for Special Studies is considerably less than previous UPWP's.

Ms. Gordy made a motion to forward a favorable recommendation to forward the FY 2018 UPWP to the S/WMPO Council for their review and action, with the motion seconded by Ms. Cherry. With all Committee members voting in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Annual Elections

Keith Hall (S/WMPO Administrator)

Mr. Hall announced that as part of the adopted prospectus and by-laws for the S/WMPO, annual elections were in order to establish the S/WMPO TAC Chair and Vice Chair. Mr. Hall reminded members the nominations will have to be confirmed by the S/WMPO Council at their upcoming meeting scheduled for June 1, 2017.

Mr. Berkheimer made a motion to nominate Ms. Pollack as Chair of the S/WMPO TAC. Mr. Thomas seconded the motion. With all members voting in favor, the motion was passed unanimously.

Mr. Beam then made a motion to nominate Mr. Berkeimer as Vice-Chair of the S/WMPO TAC. The motion was seconded by Ms. Cherry. With all members voting in favor, the motion was passed unanimously.

After a brief discussion, a recommendation was made to amend the Prospectus and Bylaws to modify the terms of the Chair and Vice Chair of the S/WMPO TAC from one (1) fiscal year to two (2) fiscal years, Chair going to immediate Past Chair, as well as automatic

advancement of the Vice Chair to Chair contingent upon confirmation by the S/WMPO Council.

Mr. Jim Thomas made a motion to forward a favorable recommendation to forward the proposed amendments to the S/WMPO Council for their review and action, with the motion seconded by Mr. Josh Thomas. With all Committee members voting in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Member Updates / Other Business

TAC Members

Mr. Bellacicco stated that the upcoming budget for Shore Transit has been submitted to the State of Maryland. The budget consist of multiple funding sources totaling approximately \$7.0 million for FY 2018. Shore Transit recently expanded their onsite propane tank storage capacity. In addition, Shore Transit recently procured five (5) new buses, three (3) of which will be fueled by propane. Upon delivery of new buses, Shore Transit will have nineteen (19) buses fueled by propane.

Mr. Sotherland provided an update about the rehabilitation of the bridge decks along the Bypass, stating that the estimated completion date is summer 2018. The State Highway Administration issued a Notice to Proceed for programmed U.S. 50 pedestrian and cyclist enhancements along U.S. Route 50 between Ward and E. Main Streets; completion of improvements is scheduled for summer 2017. Ms. Gordy asked about the project along U.S. 13 south of the Bypass split. Mr. Hall responded the improvements were access related rather than expanding capacity and applauded SHA for the activity of projects occurring in the region.

Ms. Cherry provided an update about recent DTC / DART efforts including public hearings on proposed service changes. For the western side of Sussex County, the City of Seaford requested a realignment of flex route 903. Public responses to the proposed service change were positive. Other changes include adding a stop at Nanticoke Health Pavilion and timing adjustments to Route 212, which would reduce total daily roundtrips from 16 to 11. On the eastern side of Sussex County, the Lewes Transit Center will be opened as a park and ride for this season.

Ms. DeVore announced that Mr. Shawn Garvin is the newly appointed DNREC Secretary. DNREC is seeking public input on their proposed mitigation plan; the final draft will be available soon. DNREC launched a new interactive flood planning tool to determine risk for structures and assist with designing development projects.

Mr. Hardin thanked Mr. Sotherland for his assistance in coordinating with Norfolk Southern for rail crossing improvements within the Town of Delmar. The Town of Delmar received a Categorical Exclusion from SHA for their Safe Routes to School project. The estimated date of completion is November 2018.

Mr. Josh Thomas thanked Ms. Robinson for the informative briefing about DWTC operations and invited TAC members to attend the upcoming annual Freight Summit, which will be held on June 21, 2017. On March 24, 2017, DelDOT met with representatives from the new short line operator

Delmarva Central Railroad; the new operator is seeking to expand their customer base in the central part of the Delmarva Peninsula.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Next Meeting Date/Adjourn

Ms. Pollack inquired about the FY 2018 TAC meeting schedule. Mr. Hall stated that the meeting dates are July 13th, October 12th, January 11th, and April 12th.

There being no other business before the TAC, upon a motion by Mr. Jim Thomas, seconded by Mr. Berkheimer, with all members voting in favor, and none opposed, the meeting was adjourned.