

RPC TAC MEETING

Minutes

October 22, 2015

RPC Conference Room

Members Present: Don Woodward, Exeter Transportation Committee; Brian Deguzis, COAST; Paul Lockwood, NHDES; Richard McDermott, H. Falls; Robert Clark, Atkinson; Stephen Gerrato, Greenland; Leigh Levine, FHWA; Mark Mason, CART; Richard Hartung, Hampstead; Ken Christianson, Brentwood; Joan Whitney, Kensington

Staff Present: Dave Walker, Transportation Program Mgr; Cliff Sinnott, Executive Director; Julie LaBranche, Senior Planner; Annette Pettengill, Business Manager

Meeting convened at 9:00 a.m.; Walker noted he will be acting as Chairman

1. Introductions

Attendees introduced themselves

2. Minutes of September 24, 2015

*McDermott moved to approve the Minutes of September 24, 2015 as presented; Clark seconded.
SO VOTED (1 abstention)*

3. New Ozone Standard – Paul Lockwood, NHDES

Lockwood began his presentation by giving some background on the EPA Criteria for Pollutants standards and limits that protect people and the environment. He explained that the EPA determines if any State is in violation of any NAAQS (National Ambient Air Quality Standards), and the State has to develop a SIP (State Implementation Plan) which dictates the policies that will be used to get into “attainment” with whatever NAAQS were violated, in order to attain conformity. Transportation accounts for more than 50% of non-attainment issues. He noted that every five years the EPA reviews these NAAQ standards and he demonstrated the current ozone standards. He further explained that the EPA looks at the 4th highest levels over a 3 year average and that NH meets the ozone standard. Some other MPO’s remain in a Maintenance rating and still need to consider air quality when developing projects, however the RPC is in compliance. Lockwood continued to explain details in the NAAQ standards and SIP requirements. Discussion followed.

4. Tides to Storms – Coastal Vulnerability Assessment from Sea Level Rise & Other Coastal Flooding Hazards – Julie LaBranche, RPC

LaBranche explained that two and a half years ago the RPC received grant funding to assess & plan for projected future impacts to NH's coastal resources and assets from sea level rise and storm surge. The project finished in September and the RPC has been meeting with coastal towns to discuss the results of the study. She reviewed some sea level rise scenarios and discussed the impacts on state and local roadways, critical facilities, and natural resources. She discussed how the regional & municipal assessment and maps can be used to guide future policy both by the State and the towns when considering land development projects, roadways and buildings, and repair and restoration methods. Discussion followed.

5. Federal/State Transportation Legislation/Budgets

Walker distributed and explained the Surface Transportation Reauthorization & Reform Act of 2015 is a reauthorization Bill that proposes to shift STIP funds controlled locally to 55%. He also referred to the Federal Register on Controlling Criteria for Roadway and Bridge Design and discussed design exceptions and standards for under 50 mph.

6. 2016 Meeting Schedule – Distributed

7. Project Updates

- a) East Coast Greenway Update: Bogle distributed a memo of Project Updates and reviewed the Seacoast Greenway & Hampton Branch Acquisition status. Discussion followed over wetland crossings and design.
- b) RPC Comments 2017-2026 Ten Year Plan: Bogle distributed the Draft Ten Year Plan Comments letter and noted changes made at the last MPO meeting; two of those being NH financial support of Downeaster Train Service and support for turnpike toll increases to address turnpike system needs, provided it included a "retrofit" soundwall program to address noise impacts on existing development.

Clark asked that Attachment 2 from the MPO Policy meeting be reviewed in an effort to clarify one of items in the Draft Ten Year Plan comments regarding the Support of the Downeaster Train Service. Walker and Sinnott explained the item in question was added at the most recent MPO meeting in Hampton Falls and was not on the previous Draft comments that this TAC Committee previously approved. Walker further clarified the support in terms of 5307 funds which includes funds for train stations and supplemental funds for towns to use towards insurance and station maintenance costs, which is currently all funded by Maine. The MPO expressed that it's time NH provide some of that support for capital projects related to train service. Discussion followed regarding 5307 flex funds and the caution should be taken distributing those funds since they are not unlimited. Their use must also be consistent with public transportation uses such as CART and COAST's needs.

- c) Finalized UPWP Performance Report: Walker noted that the Performance Report is completed and copies are available. The Report is basically a synopsis of how the 16,000 hours of staff time was spent on transportation projects. McDermott asked what grade was on our report card and Walker replied that out of the 187 tasks identified, 9 didn't have to be completed and 128 were complete with 37 still in progress, and 13 we couldn't get; which left us with an A-/B+

Sinnott noted that we may see Phase III of CTAPP funding soon. This was the project to help manage the growth stimulated by the I93 highway project. Eligible criteria for CTAPP funds: \$150k project size; large communities; planning that encourages transit development; promote ridesharing; 20% cash match required.

Clark asked that a copy of the October 14th MPO Minutes be sent to him

Meeting adjourned at 11 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette Pettengill
Recording Secretary