



**Policy Committee Meeting Minutes
May 18, 2015**

<http://www.fampo.gwregion.org/committees/policy-committee/>

Members Present:

Mr. Paul Milde, County of Stafford (Chair)
Mr. Matt Kelly, City of Fredericksburg
Mr. Billy Withers, City of Fredericksburg
Mr. Doug Barnes, Spotsylvania County
Mr. Tim McLaughlin, Spotsylvania County
Mr. David Ross, Spotsylvania County
Mr. Anthony Romanello, Stafford County
Ms. Laura Sellers, Stafford County
Mr. Al Harf, Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC) - Alternate
Ms. Marcie Parker, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

Others Present:

Mr. Hap Connors, Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB)
Mr. Chris Arabia, Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)
Ms. Allison Richter, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Mr. Rupert Farley, Citizens Transportation Advisory Group (CTAG)
Ms. Fran Larkins, Citizens Transportation Advisory Group (CTAG)
Ms. Dawn McGarrity, Citizens Transportation Advisory Group (CTAG)
Mr. Paul Agnello, Citizen

Staff Members Present:

Mr. Lloyd Robinson, FAMPO
Ms. Marti Donley, FAMPO
Mr. Daniel Reese, FAMPO
Mr. Tim Ware, GWRC
Ms. Diana Utz, GWRC
Ms. JoAnna Roberson, GWRC

CALL FAMPO MEETING TO ORDER

Chair, Mr. Milde, called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. and received acknowledgement that a quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF FAMPO AGENDA

Upon motion by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Ms. Sellers, with all in consensus, the agenda was approved as submitted.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Mr. Farley stated that he felt the region was experiencing the “orphan murder” syndrome. The region is convinced that all transportation problems are related to not having enough funding to fix the problems. For decades, the region has focused on the most costly way to move people within a single-operating vehicle from place to place. Decades later it has been repeatedly shown that this is not the solution to solving the region’s transportation needs. The solution is not to receive more funding to be applied as has been in the past, but instead the funding should be applied to alternatives that stop promoting urban growth. Changes can be made and this committee needs to start the process to ensure that alternatives are implemented to get away from the “pay to pave” concept.

Ms. Larkins stated that she is also a member of the CTAG committee. Ms. Larkins stated that there are a lot of hard-working and interested people who comprise the CTAG committee. Ms. Larkins stated that CTAG is interested in assisting the Policy Committee in coming up with solutions to ease the region’s traffic congestion problems. Ms. Larkins stated that she feels that other than the Policy Committee receiving the monthly CTAG minutes and seeing some CTAG members attend the Policy Committee meetings that this is where the interaction between the Policy Committee & CTAG begins and ends. Ms. Larkins stated that she would like to see the Policy Committee work more closely with CTAG.

PUBLIC HEARING

Public Hearing for the Draft FY2016 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) – None

CHAIRMAN’S COMMENTS

Mr. Milde expressed support for completion of the southern segment of the I-95 Express Lanes and instructed staff to prepare a status report and action plan for moving forward.

Mr. Ross stated that what he had asked for from last month’s meeting is for information from VDOT in regard to data obtained to date from the HOT lanes project. He thinks this committee should review the data already received before it makes any determination on spending more money on a project that is obviously not working. Mr. Ross stated that he asked that VDOT provide data on what was forecasted for traffic congestion for commuters before the HOT lanes; why the original forecast was not accurate; what happened to the billion dollars that was already spent, etc.

Mr. McLaughlin stated that the HOT lanes are not broke and are working further north; however, further south it has created more of a daily and on-going traffic back-up.

Mr. Milde stated that he gets on them every day at the Route 630 interchange and he thinks they are great.

Mr. McLaughlin stated that Mr. Milde “pays to ride” and does not see this as an issue and also that the consistent back-ups occurring further south-bound do not affect him. Mr. McLaughlin stated that he thinks the HOT lanes are horrible.

Mr. Kelly stated that from day one this committee said you are just moving traffic back-ups further down I-95.

Mr. Milde stated that the County of Spotsylvania has already highlighted traffic congestion at the southern end of the I-95 corridor. Mr. Milde stated that whether funded by the county and/or whether funded from state monies that are allocated to the region that the second phase of construction at Massaponax is to move forward.

Mr. Robinson stated that this body has a letter from VDOT stating that the second phase of the HOT lane development will be fully funded and constructed by FY2021. Mr. Harf stated that he thinks this board needs to review that letter as it preceded HB1887.

Mr. Ross stated that he wants data indicating whether the HOT lanes have helped or hurt the commuters within this region. Mr. Connors stated that the CTB is also concerned about the increased traffic congestion as a result of the HOT lanes project opening up. He stated that he has met with Mr. Charlie Kilpatrick to determine at least if the project cannot be fixed then how it can at least be modified with smaller fixes for improvements from Route 126 to Route 152.

Ms. Parker stated that VDOT has looked at the traffic data maps. The data prior to the construction phase back to 2009 is not as accurate as the data that is available today. Ms. Parker stated that a lot of the initial back-ups were as a result of the construction. Now that the construction phase is over, the back-ups and traffic congestion have moved further south on the I-95 corridor. Ms. Parker stated that both VDOT and TransUrban have recognized that there are additional problems and that VDOT is looking at utilizing safety funds, etc. to correct some of the back-ups that are occurring further south. Ms. Parker stated that if some of the safety funds can be utilized that there will be three fixes applied to Route 3 and one to Route 17 south-bound in Stafford County which again will resolve some of the current back-ups being experienced.

Ms. Sellers stated that the traffic back-ups are not only just occurring Monday through Friday but occur on the weekends as well. Ms. Sellers stated that the I-95 corridor is a parking lot on the weekends. Mr. Milde stated that he does not understand why this committee would not want to have the HOT lane project extended to Route 126.

Mr. Ross stated that if Route 3 is worse now than before then why would we want to spend any more money on the project. Mr. McLaughlin stated that the main lines are now broken because of the HOT lanes moving traffic more effectively from Exit 143 to Exit 152. Mr. McLaughlin stated that the first step in the process is to hear from VDOT that the HOT lane project is not working and that now everyone is being penalized as result of the project.

Mr. Harf stated that if the HOT lane project will be re-evaluated as a project for consideration then FAMPO needs to recommend that it be moved forward. Mr. Robinson reminded the committee that

project submissions to the CTB will occur from August to October so the committee needs to proceed quicker rather than later.

Mr. Connors stated that the CTB will continue to monitor the situation and Ms. Parker stated that information that is available to them will be brought to the table for review at the upcoming June meeting. Mr. Robinson stated that staff will also provide an update at the June meeting.

ACTION ITEMS

a.) Approval of FAMPO Minutes of April 20, 2015 – Mr. Lloyd Robinson

Upon motion by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Ms. Sellers, the minutes from the April 20th meeting were approved as submitted.

b.) Approval of Resolution No. 15-12, Adopting the Fiscal Year 2016 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) – Mr. Lloyd Robinson

Mr. Robinson advised that the UPWP has been discussed at all three FAMPO committees for the past several months and disseminated to the public and there were no public comments made at tonight's public hearing. Staff has received only one documented listing of feedback from a citizen in Spotsylvania County (Mr. Robinson stated that the citizen is also an active CTAG member). Mr. Robinson advised that the citizen's comments are included in tonight's agenda packet and are not changes that required changes or updates to the actual UPWP document. Mr. Robinson stated that the recommended changes included typo-graphical errors and recommendations that land use factors be considered. Mr. Robinson advised that the comments have been addressed by staff and that staff has also provided comments and feedback to the citizen accordingly. Mr. Robinson stated that it was staff recommendation that Resolution No. 15-12 be adopted as submitted.

Mr. Withers stated that he had in fact read the comments that were submitted and he too agrees that land use issues, conditions, and concerns need to become more of a focal point for inclusion within the plans.

Mr. Connors advised that with VTRANS and HB2 negotiations also concurring and that the CTB is also addressing more land use scenario issues. Mr. Withers stated that he thinks it is important for a region to be able to determine where people are going. Mr. Kelly stated that he does think this region has been pro-active in these attempts as in the 2035 LRTP this was the first time that regional transit systems were addressed. Even though the region is still suburban in nature, the 2040 LRTP is being released that also includes increased data in regard to transit and land use. Mr. Milde stated that land use issues for each locality within the region continue to be a concern and need to continue to be addressed.

Mr. Kelly stated that just one comment in regard to Mr. Farley's comments made earlier is that not only are transportation dollars and "asphalt" dollars being reduced state-wide that also reductions are being made as well into the transit dollar allocations.

Upon motion by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Mr. Romaello, with everyone in consensus, Resolution No. 15-12 was adopted.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

a.) CTAG Representation on the Policy Committee – Mr. Lloyd Robinson

Mr. Robinson advised that TAG was created by the FAMPO Policy Committee as a citizen advisory group in 1992. The TAG's purpose was to have an appointed group of citizens who were interested in transportation related issues, and who would provide input and feedback to the Policy Committee and to the citizens on regional transportation issues and projects.

Mr. Robinson stated that in years past, TAG's participation, interest, and membership had been less than optimal. However, today TAG is much more robust; membership continues to grow, and there has been a strong record of active and sincere member participation at their monthly meetings.

Mr. Robinson stated that over the last several months TAG has discussed and debated its role and relevance to FAMPO and its relationship to the Policy Committee. Mr. Robinson advised that staff was asked to compile data on citizen's advisory groups on both a state-wide and national level. The results of this data showed that even though the name of the group varied from region to region that most MPO's contacted do in fact have a supporting citizen advisory group. Mr. Robinson also relayed that the majority of those who have a TAG organization that most of them are also represented by a non-voting, ex-officio member of their respective policy committees.

With that being said, Mr. Robinson stated that he was presenting a letter that has been addressed to the FAMPO chairman asking that two specific points be considered and endorsed by the Policy Committee. (Mr. Robinson advised that Mr. Art Snyder, CTAG Chair was going to be here tonight to present the requests but he was apparently tied up in traffic heading south-bound from Northern Virginia).

Mr. Robinson advised that in TAG's own by-laws, they have also recently implemented a new name and now are being known as CTAG (Citizen Transportation Advisory Group). The two requests being presented tonight are as follows:

that CTAG be given a permanent non-voting seat on the Policy Committee and that this seat will be held by either the CTAG chair or a designee; and

that CTAG be given a standing item on the Policy Committee agendas that allows for a brief report, re-cap, feedback, etc. as needed on a specific transportation project, etc. as the need arises (it was noted that these comments would be presented as representing the CTAG committee as a whole and would not be given as individual member comments)

Upon motion by Mr. Barnes and seconded by Ms. Sellers, with all unanimous, the two requests submitted on behalf of CTAG were accepted and endorsed by the FAMPO Policy Committee.

b.) FAMPO Workshop – Mr. Lloyd Robinson

Mr. Robinson advised that the FAMPO workshop meeting came about as a result of members from each of the localities requesting that a workshop be held in coordination with VDOT on regional transportation projects, alternatives, etc. Mr. Robinson stated that per the request from the MPO, that there were to be two separate forum type meetings held. The first was to explain how FAMPO determines which projects get included into the region's TIP, LRTP, etc. and to have explanation from VDOT on how a project gets from being an idea, to being funded, to being constructed. The second meeting is to be a policy "brain-storming" session. This session will focus on current projects in the plans; whether these are still the highest regional priorities; how to get new projects considered, etc. Mr. Robinson stated that this session will be scheduled to occur in early summer (June or July) as projects that the CTB will vote on will be submitted in the August to October time frame.

Mr. Robinson advised that email notifications were sent to all of the elected officials on the Policy Committee; the workshop meeting was posted on FAMPO's website; and was advertised in the Free Lance Star as a meeting that was also open to the public as well. Mr. Robinson stated that there were approximately 25 people who were in attendance.

Mr. Milde stated that he was disappointed that there were no Spotsylvania representatives who participated in the first meeting. Mr. Ross apologized and stated that he must have somehow missed the emails.

Mr. Robinson advised that the minutes and re-cap from the first session are included in tonight's agenda packet. Mr. Robinson stated that six policy committee members attended as well as two CTAG members. Mr. Robinson stated that the meeting consisted of a thirty-minute presentation and then concluded with an hour and half question and answer period.

Mr. Connors also apologized for not attending and asked if the Policy Committee felt it would be helpful for the second session if local delegates and legislators were also invited. There was consensus that this certainly would not hurt and that the region wants to do everything it can to be heard.

Mr. Withers expressed his appreciation to both staff and VDOT and thought the presentations were well done. Mr. Withers stated though that there was a lot of material presented the night of the meeting and that possibly for the second session that the meeting materials could be forwarded in advance so those attending have a chance to review the presentation before the actual meeting night.

Mr. Milde stated also that he thought the meeting was very well done and even with him being a supervisor for nine years that he learned a lot from the meeting. Mr. Milde asked for concurrence that the meeting presentation was also going to serve as an education session for newly appointed MPO members. Mr. Robinson stated that FAMPO already provides a "new member" orientation packet but this presentation could be included as part of this packet. Mr. Robinson asked that Ms. Donley forward a copy of the presentation to the members. Ms. Donley stated that she would get this sent to everyone and that it is also on FAMPO's website under the "presentation" icon.

Mr. Robinson stated that the first session occurred from 6-8 p.m. in the evening and he asked if this time frame worked the best for everyone. It was consensus that this time frame would be fine. Mr. Robinson also relayed that for the second session that this meeting will be facilitated by someone from the outside and that both FAMPO staff and VDOT staff will still be on-hand as needed but will not be actually running the meeting.

EXECUTIVE CLOSED SESSION

DISCUSSION OF FAMPO PERSONNEL

Upon conclusion of the Executive Session, by unanimous consent, the Policy Committee agreed to hire Mr. Paul Agnello as the new FAMPO Administrator, effective June 3, 2015. Mr. Agnello was asked to speak and he thanked the Policy Committee for hiring him, discussed his family and his background and pledged to do his best for FAMPO.

FAMPO CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence is included in packet and self-explanatory.

STAFF REPORT

Mr. Robinson advised that FAMPO received six proposals for the on-call consultants. Mr. Robinson relayed that interviews with these firms are scheduled for next week and two of the six firms will be selected. Mr. Robinson advised that the interview team consists of staff, a VDOT representative, a FRED representative and a member from each of the locality's planning department staff (who are currently active members of the Technical Committee). Mr. Robinson advised that the two firms who score the highest will be presented to the Policy Committee at the upcoming June meeting for endorsement.

Mr. Robinson advised that staff has conducted initial interviews with applicants interested in the regional transportation planner's position. Mr. Robinson stated that over thirty-five applications were received. The search has been narrowed down to two candidates and they will be coming back in next week for a second interview and then a decision will be made.

Mr. Robinson stated that the Congestion Management Program (CMP) is being finalized and data and software will be available soon that will allow this document to be on-line hopefully by the end of June. Mr. Romanello asked if this series of software and data will also include data for the Route 610 corridor. Mr. Robinson concurred that yes it would.

Mr. Robinson advised that at the upcoming June meeting it will be time again for the Policy Committee to elect its new officers. For the FY2015-2016 year, the chair's position will be held by Spotsylvania County and the Vice-Chair by the City of Fredericksburg.

MEMBER REPORT

Mr. Milde stated that both Mr. Barnes' membership and Mr. Harf's membership to the FAMPO Policy Committee meeting would be coming to a close; Mr. Barnes effective tonight & Mr. Harf

effective in June. Mr. Milde thanked them both members for their participation and wished them the best with their future retirement endeavors.

Mr. Harf stated that he would like to express his appreciation for the regionality and sense of common purpose that gathers around this table. Mr. Harf reminded those who will continue to serve that they need to not lose sight of the “give and take” of the local processes. He encouraged everyone to take the opportunity to embrace situations as they arise and to make them become opportunities instead of set-backs. Mr. Harf stated that he appreciated the opportunity of serving as member to the FAMPO Policy Committee over the years.

FAMPO COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Tech is included in packet & once CTAG minutes have been finalized, these will be forwarded to the Policy Committee for their review.

ADJOURN

The FAMPO meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m. The next meeting will occur on June 15, 2015 at 7:15 p.m.