

Rural Technical Advisory Committee Minutes: October 20th, 2015

Committee – Voting Members

Lucas Lyons, *JAUNT*
J.T. Newberry, *Albemarle County*
Sara Pennington, *RideShare*
Chuck Proctor, *VDOT Culpeper District*
David Cook, *VDOT Lynchburg District*

TJPDC Staff

Chip Boyles
Will Cockrell
Nick Morrison

Call to Order:

Mr. Lyons called the meeting to order.

Matters from the Public:

There were no matters from the public.

Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Lyons asked if there were any comments on the September 15th meeting minutes. There were no comments. Ms. Pennington made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Newberry provided a second. The Committee approved the minutes unanimously.

Updates and Discussions:

Mr. Boyles discussed the recent joint meeting of the Charlottesville Area MPO (CA-MPO) and the Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro MPO (SAW-MPO) to discuss common goals between the two MPO's and the importance of incorporating the rural areas into transit discussion, especially centering around regional transit initiatives.

Ms. Pennington mentioned that Ride Share week kicked off on Monday, October 19th with a radio remote at one of the park and ride locations in Waynesboro. The event was a success, thanks in part to the partnership with Monticello Media.

Mr. Newberry stated that citizens have begun to notice the impact of construction at the intersection of Rio Rd. and US. 29. Businesses are trying to work around the construction schedule and ensure their ability to operate with as little interference from the construction as possible. Mr. Lyons asked about referring businesses to other similar communities experiencing construction projects and how those local businesses were coping with construction issues and congestion. Mr. Boyles answered that there is a local committee in place whose focus is on addressing business concerns pertaining to construction issues. Mr. Newberry added that Albemarle's signage restrictions were cumbersome and that the County was working to aid businesses with new signage in the construction zone.

Mr. Proctor provided information on the US. 29 projects. Steel plates have been placed over the roadway to cover holes used for the pouring of concrete to create subterranean retaining walls prior to the excavation of the roadway. Mr. Boyles noted that this was a unique and logical approach.

Mr. Proctor also stated that project files have been collected for the Rural Long Range Plan. Updated estimates and project descriptions will be included in these files and that they will be sent to Mr. Cockrell when completed. Mr. Proctor noted that the House Bill 2 (HB2) process is keeping him busy.

Mr. Cook added that HB2 projects in Nelson County were continuing to be worked on.

HB2 Updates:

Mr. Cockrell provided an update on the HB2 project submitted by the MPO. This project is the I-64 at Exit 118 improvement project. Mr. Cockrell added that the Nelson County Administrator had asked the PDC if they could help with Nelson's HB2 applications.

Mr. Proctor stated that he worked to pull data for HB2 application submittal. Fluvanna, Louisa, and Greene County HB2 applications are complete.

Mr. Cockrell asked about the City of Charlottesville's HB2 application submittals and inquired if they would get approved for funding. Mr. Proctor responded that in their current state, the City's plans would likely not proceed past the validation phase. Mr. Cockrell also mentioned that staff had met with Louisa County regarding HB2 project selection, and that their process for selection was not prioritized or logical. Mr. Proctor noted that one of the projects, the intersection of Chalk Level Rd. and School Bus Rd., was not included in the long range plan.

Mr. Boyles stated that the PDC had received a call from a local government entity asking about referencing transit projects, specifically road projects, with a regional economic development plan. He said that currently, the region does not have one, although a study conducted by CVPED has been referenced, but it is not comprehensive or regional in scope. Mr. Proctor mentioned that projects would not receive points based on the presence of developments.

Mr. Cockrell asked about processing any park and ride lots or transit projects. He stated that there are currently no park and ride lot projects included for submittal within the district. Mr. Proctor responded that park and ride lots can be added to the projects list, but time may be prohibitive. He also stated that some projects may receive partial funding.

Mr. Lyons mentioned that the newspaper in Scottsville had discussed the HB2 process and stated that it was encouraging to see discussion about HB2 and that it could help to increase community engagement with the transportation planning process.

RLRP Online Survey:

Mr. Cockrell discussed the RLRP survey. He stated that feedback on the survey was being integrated to help refine and tweak the existing survey, and that it would be sent back out. Mr. Proctor noted that localities are good about staying in contact with VDOT and that should prove beneficial for the RLRP survey. Mr. Cockrell said that the survey is two-fold. First, how should the RLRP function and second, based on content what are the respondent's priorities. Mr. Cockrell added that an email will be sent out on the survey.

RLRP Needs Assessment:

Mr. Cockrell discussed the scope of the RLRP update. The first component that will be focused on is safety. He stated that the Rural Technical Committee will be the backbone of the process. Safety conditions will be mapped using GIS and the Rural Tech Committee will hold working meetings to aid in the mapping process. MR. Cockrell also added that safety hotspots within the region will be mapped and areas will then be identified for improvement. Recommendations can then be discussed for safety improvements. Subsequent committee meetings will focus on congestion, accessibility and its relation to JAUNT and RideShare, economic development, and finally, environmental concerns. Posters will then be developed to present information and findings to the public. Mr. Cockrell stated the RLRP's importance.

Mr. Proctor noted that the RLRP should be used more when making planning decisions. Mr. Cook added that the RLRP aids in the HB2 prioritization process. Mr. Cockrell noted that the current RLRP did not prioritize projects and focused solely on road projects. He added that the updated RLRP should focus on other project types in addition to road projects. Mr. Proctor mentioned that rail, specifically freight, was a priority in Louisa County. Mr. Newberry added that a needs assessment will help lead to a successful HB2 submission.

Regional Bike and Pedestrian Plan:

Mr. Cockrell discussed moving up the regional bike and pedestrian plan. With the update of the RLRP taking place, it provides an opportunity to run the bike and pedestrian plan in tandem with the RLRP due to the overlapping nature of the two projects. The bike and pedestrian plan would be finished earlier than the RLRP. Mr. Cockrell added that an engineering class from UVA was helping to map bike level of service so that staff could identify possible deficiencies with bike and pedestrian facilities.

Action Items & Other Business:

Mr. Cockrell stated that the Commission had approved the formation of a subcommittee on policy. He also mentioned the TJPDC was updating their website. There were no additional action items or business.

Additional Matters from the Public:

There were no additional matters from the public.