



Policy Committee

Date: Wednesday, February 10th, 2021

Time: 3:00pm

Location: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting was held as a Virtual Public Meeting.

Attendance:

Voting Members

City of DeKalb: Jerry Smith
City of DeKalb: Bill Finucane
City of DeKalb: Bill Nicklas (Vice-Chair)
City of Sycamore: Brian Gregory (Chair)
City of Sycamore: Maggie Peck
Town of Cortland: Brandy Williams
DeKalb County: Derek Hiland
NIU: Jennifer Groce (Secretary)
IDOT District #3: Not Present

Non-Voting Attendance

DeKalb Transit: Marcus Cox
IDOT OP&P: Doug DeLille
DSATS Staff: Nathan Schwartz, Brandon Geber

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order: Chair Gregory called the meeting to order at 3:00pm.

1. Roll Call

2. Approval of Agenda (Action)

Motion to approve the February 10, 2021 meeting agenda made by Mr. Smith; seconded by Mr. Nicklas; Motion approved unanimously.

3. Approval of Minutes (Action)

Motion to approve the December 9, 2020 meeting minutes made by Mr. Nicklas, seconded by Ms. Groce; Motion approved unanimously.

4. Public Comments

No public comments.

5. New Business

a. Election of Officers (Action)

Mr. Schwartz explained that the current Chair, Mr. Gregory, is leaving his position at the City of Sycamore and that normally the Vice-Chair, Mr. Nicklas, would fill the Chair role. However, Mr. Gregory's new position at DeKalb County confirms that he will still be a voting member on the committee, leaving the committee the option of either retaining Mr. Gregory as Chair upon recognition of his new position on March 1, 2021 or having the Vice-Chair serve as Chair for the remainder of the term. Mr. Nicklas recommended that Mr. Gregory remain Chair if he is agreeable, and Mr. Gregory confirmed. Motion to retain Mr. Gregory as Chair upon serving in his new position at DeKalb County made by Ms. Groce; seconded by Mr. Hiland; Motion approved unanimously.

b. SFY 2022 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Update

Mr. Schwartz reported DSATS is currently working on their annual UPWP. Mr. Geber presented on the draft budget and budget narrative for State Fiscal Year 2022 (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022) and detailed projects and activities included within the work program. Mr. Schwartz provided additional detail on multiple larger budget items. The draft budget will be sent to IDOT by February 16th, 2021, and will go before the committee again for recommendation in mid-to-late spring. No other feedback was provided.

c. Public Participation Plan (PPP) Update

Mr. Geber presented on the update process underway for the MPO's PPP, including key items to consider, existing plan requirements, and recommendations to modify current public participation activities. Staff recommended to reduce the general 45-day public review period to 28 days for applicable documents and to move required public hearings to optional. Mr. Geber mentioned the document will be going out for public review and a public hearing by February 17, 2021, and will again come before the committee for recommendation in April. No other feedback was provided.

d. Title VI Program Update

Mr. Geber presented on the update process underway for the MPO's Title VI Program, including required program elements, non-discrimination policies, limited-English Proficiency standards, and environmental justice procedures. Mr. Geber mentioned the document will be going out for public review and a public hearing by February 17, 2021, and will again come before the committee for recommendation in April. A questionnaire will also be sent to committee members to document the demographic composition of the committee. Mr. Nicklas suggested that if possible, staff try to finalize these items by April so existing elected members can vote before the end of their terms. Ms. Groce commended DSATS staff on their efforts to make MPO documents and the website easily understandable to the public and other stakeholders who are not transportation planning practitioners. No other feedback was provided.

6. Other Business

a. Staff and Project Updates

Mr. Schwartz reported that DSATS will soon begin updates to the region's Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), including the creation of an electronic TIP that illustrates regional transportation projects. Staff has continued making edits and additions to the DSATS website. The traffic count report for 2020 is available on the DSATS website and includes experienced traffic changes due to the ongoing pandemic. Staff is also looking to purchase additional video traffic counters to better meet count study needs.

Mr. Schwartz also reported that DeKalb County is interested in pursuing an IDOT Statewide Planning and Research (SPR) grant to purchase equipment to collect Google Street View video footage for roadways with either no data or outdated data. However, in response to the 2021 SPR call for projects being cancelled, DSATS will pursue the project as a pilot to larger efforts as the project would benefit multiple planning programs in the urbanized area. DeKalb County, in partnership with multiple adjacent counties, will potentially pursue the project again next year.

Mr. Cox reported that Transdev officially took over the provision of paratransit services at the beginning of the year and has been communicating with partner organizations to ensure the transition has been smooth. City staff and Transdev have been working through a fixed-route driver shortage. In total, the fixed-route system experienced an approximate 54% ridership decrease for 2020 due to the ongoing pandemic, which is less severe than most large urban area ridership decreases. At last, staff is working with their architecture and engineering vendor to make progress on a new transit facility.

b. What's New with our State and Federal Partners

No updates.

c. Additional Business

No additional business.

7. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Nicklas, seconded by Ms. Groce; meeting adjourned at 3:37pm.

Note: These minutes are not official until approved by the Policy Committee at a subsequent meeting.