

MINUTES
Rockingham Planning Commission
MPO Technical Advisory Committee
February 23, 2023

Virtual participation via Zoom
Recording Available Here: <https://youtu.be/sIUZhplj4ms>

Due to weather conditions, the meeting was held entirely virtually via Zoom

Members Present: T. Moore (Plaistow); C. Cross (Newington); B. Dion (Greenland); P. Coffin (Kingston); D. Sharples (Exeter); E. Eby (Portsmouth); M. Connors (Stratham); R. Nichols (COAST); J. Wilcox (NHDES); R. DiCillo, (NHDES); B. Watson, NHDOT; L. St. John, NHDOT;

Non-voting Members: P. Maloney (FHWA)

Staff: D. Walker (Transp Mgr/Assistant Director); S. Bogle (Sr. Transp Plnr); T. Roach (Executive Director)

NOTE: Recording of the meeting was not started until agenda just before item #2 discussing the minutes of the January meeting.

1. Introductions [0:00-0:36]: Roll call attendance was taken. Recording of the meeting was not started until after the introductions were completed. Walker indicated that the chair was not attending and that the vice-chair would be late and that he would run the meeting.

2. Minutes of 1/26/22 TAC Meeting [0:36-0:56]

As no quorum was present minutes were tabled until the next TAC meeting.

3. Project Priorities for the State Ten Year Plan – D. Walker [0:56 – 37:32]

Walker presented a short overview of the project solicitation and prioritization process for the State Ten Year Plan and covered the guidance from NHDOT regarding that process. Walker indicated that the formal comments from NHDOT regarding the project proposals were not available however some indications of NHDOT's position on the projects was available as NHDOT recommended a higher inflation rate and that one project was not ready for the Ten Year Plan (Hampton High Street). Options were discussed for prioritization with higher assumed costs and four projects still in contention. With the inflated costs, the top priority project is greater than the regional share and so options were discussed as to whether NHDOT would support paying the additional amount beyond the regional share or if the MPO should plan to use multiple cycles to pay for the project, or select other, less expensive projects. The change in inflation rate was discussed as was NHDOT's receptiveness to contributing to the Portsmouth

Circle project. The communications from New Castle residents regarding the NH 1B causeway that flooded during the December 23, 2022 storm was also discussed as there were many calls for the improvements to the causeway to be added to the Ten Year Plan. Consensus was reached that the TAC would recommend to the MPO Policy Committee that the Portsmouth Circle project be added to the Ten Year Plan. No vote was taken.

4. CMAQ Project discussion/prioritization – S. Bogle [37:33 – 1:03:30]

Bogle discussed the projects from the region submitted to the latest CMAQ funding round and an overview of the air quality analyses and benefits of the projects. Bogle noted that NHDOT had set aside the electric vehicle charging facilities waiting for additional guidance from the USDOT. With the removal of these projects from consideration, the remaining projects can be accommodated via available CMAQ funding and so a ranking is not required. There were 5 remaining projects in the region that were not EV charging related and analyses were completed to demonstrate air quality benefits for each. A draft regional ranking was assigned utilizing the scoring criteria developed by NHDOT and discussion by a TAC subcommittee. A final TAC ranking was tabled based on discussion with NHDOT and a revised timeline. No action.

5. 2024-2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) – D. Walker [1:03:30 – 1:20:35]

Walker discussed the purpose and organization of the UPWP, MPO planning priorities, as well as those of FHWA and FTA. Contents of the draft 2024-25 UPWP were discussed and broad changes from the current program identified. Distribution of time and level of effort amongst the six task areas were covered as well as an overview of the proposed budget. Timeline for finalizing the UPWP and getting it approved were noted as well as the process for that approval.

6. Project Updates: Walker/Bogle [1:20:36-1:35:37]

- Walker shared information on an upcoming workshop on the Hampton Ocean Boulevard project that will cover intersection and other improvements.
- DiCillo provided some information on the NHDES Clean Diesel (DERA) Program current grant round. <https://www.des.nh.gov/business-and-community/loans-and-grants/dera>
- Nichols provided some information on the Statewide Public Transportation Coalition and the work that they are doing to advocate for state public transportation funding to support operations.
- Bogle provided an update on working with NH Seacoast Greenway communities on submitting a proposal to New Hampshire's congressional delegation for trailhead facilities and connections.
- Moore noted the need for additional funding to address coastal resiliency in New Hampshire is needed.
- Efforts to bolster attendance at TAC meetings were discussed.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 10:36 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
David Walker, Recording Secretary
