

Rural Task Force #3 Meeting

April 22, 2014

Kalamazoo County Road Commission - Kalamazoo, MI

Members in Attendance:

Trent Arver	Branch County Road Commission
Darrell Harden	Michigan Department of Transportation
Tom Hohm	Kalamazoo County Road Commission
Brad Lamberg	Barry County Road Commission
Chris Minger	St. Joseph County Road Commission
Jerry Peterson	Calhoun County Road Department

Others in Attendance:

Lee Adams	Southcentral Michigan Planning Council
Christopher Bolt	St. Joseph County Road Commission
Angela Kline	Calhoun County Road Department
Sean McBride	Kalamazoo Metro Transit
Kathy Schultz	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Jodi Stefforia	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Steve Stepek	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
Bill Voigt	Barry County Transit
Jake Welch	Barry County Road Commission
Steve Yorks	St. Joseph County Transportation Authority

Call to Order

Chairperson Trent Arver called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. at the Kalamazoo County Road Commission. The meeting started off with introduction of those in attendance.

Approval of Previous Minutes

No comments or changes were presented.

MOTION by Peterson, SUPPORT by Lamberg, ***“to approve the February 24, 2014 Rural Task Force #3 Minutes as presented.”*** Motion passed.

Changes to RTF Guidelines

No changes since the February meeting to report. The task force reviewed the changes that were discussed in February. MDOT now requires financial constraint at the full rural task force level, where Surface Transportation Program (STP) must be balanced per fiscal year. Fiscal years can no longer be over-

programmed, and any remaining funds in a year cannot be carried over. Additionally, the task force now has the ability to borrow from another task force if it is repaid within the program period and with the consent of the committee. The new guidelines require managing the four years of Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) which is locked-in, giving more assurance to funding levels and allowing for increased flexibility among the counties of the task force.

Changes to Category D funding is what brings the task force together today. After previously allowing over-programming, MDOT is now requiring that Category D funds be constrained. This task force has a negative balance with respect to Category D Funds for the program. MDOT is offering two options for the task force to bring the program into compliance: option one – eliminate all use of Category D funds in FY 14 and reduce use in FY 15 so that at end of FY 15, the deficit is zero; option two – let FY 14 proceed as planned, eliminate use of Category D funds entirely for FY 15 projects and reduce use of Category D funds in FY 16 as necessary to reach a zero balance by end of FY 16. Regardless of the option selected, the task force needs to cut \$270,000 of Category D Funds in FY 17 as that year is over-programmed.

Darrell Harden opined that in MDOT's eyes the options are equal, there is no penalty to choose the second option. He added that Pam Boyd and Brandon Wilcox have stated that MDOT will make an exception to allow FY 14 to be over-programmed in use of Category D funds if option two is chosen.

He added that whichever option is chosen, the task force program needs to be balanced by the end of FY 17 and that there is no provision for carryover so the task force should not leave money 'on the table.'

Tom Hohm inquired as to what County contributed to the task force having a negative balance with respect to Category D funds. Steve Stepek replied that it was a task force decision to approve a program that overspent Category D funds and that no individual county is responsible. While historically there may have been negotiations between the counties, today's goal is to have a balanced 4-year program.

Brad Lamberg stated he is still interested in the former spreadsheet that MDOT used to prepare and would like KATS to continue its preparation so that they can see, by county, who is over or under-spending, rather than seeing it at just the full task force level. He also wants to see both STP and Category D use by County shown on a spreadsheet as both are now required to be constrained. He would like this information to go back several years.

Rural Task Force Bylaws Discussion

Steve Stepek noted that he made the changes that were suggested previously. He reminded the members that MDOT is interested in the Rural Task Forces around the State adopting bylaws to better outline the process and to resolve various administrative issues. The bylaws are from a template that other regions are following and match what is being proposed for the local rural task forces as well.

Trent Arver stated that if the task force is going to adopt bylaws, language regarding trading or borrowing of STP and Category D funds between counties should be added. Steve Stepek noted that in another region, the counties sign a document saying they agree to future payback when there is borrowing between two or more counties. He added that this type of document would address concerns about what happens when there is staff turnover. Steve Stepek further stated that he is concerned that if there are no bylaws for the task force, then parties other than the current representatives could demand to sit at

the table and have a vote. The MDOT guidelines that the task force presently follows in lieu of bylaws do not state that the representative from each county must be a County Road Commission official.

Jodi Stefforia stated that there is a minor typographical error on page one that should be corrected.

Brad Lamberg made a motion, support by Chris Minger, to ***“adopt the bylaws as presented with correction of the typographical error as noted.”*** Motion passed.

Review of FY 2014-2017 Projects

The task force then turned their attention to the issue of being over-programmed in use of Category D funds for the program and discussion of the two options ensued. Steve Stepek inquired if all the FY 14 projects shown on the STIP are still going forward. There was confirmation that all projects are proceeding. Option 1 is not available to the task force.

The task force then discussed option 2 to determine the best way to eliminate the Category D deficit. Option 2 cuts use of Category D altogether in FY 15 and as necessary in FY 16 to reach the zero balance by the end of FY 16.

Additionally, FY 17 is over-programmed by \$270,000, the task force will have to cut Category D funding from some projects in FY 17 to balance.

Trent Arver and Jerry Peterson indicated that they had minor changes to make to the STP program unrelated to the Category D discussion.

MOTION by Lamberg, SUPPORT by Hohm, ***“to approve adjustments to the STP program in Branch and Calhoun Counties.”*** Motion passed.

MOTION by Lamberg, SUPPORT by Harden, ***“to eliminate use of Category D funds from all FY 15 projects, reduce Category D funds by \$28,000 in Branch County’s FY 16 countywide preventative maintenance project, and, modify FY 17 projects use of Category D funds by reducing Barry County’s Lawrence Road project by \$101,000 and Calhoun County’s 28 Mile Road project by \$50,000 and eliminating \$117,000 from St. Joseph County’s Nottawa Road project.”*** Motion passed.

Other Business

Brad Lamberg reiterated that he would like to see a spreadsheet that shows by STP and Category D funds by County over the years. Tom Hohm stated that he agreed and feels it is important to see where the over-spending occurred given the amount of over-spending (\$733,000).

The next meeting of the Rural Task Force will be in June, 2014 to review the requested spreadsheet. The task force will review the changes made today to the program with this information to identify if changes in use of STP funds in the region can be made to offset the impact of today’s cuts to Category D Funds.

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Adjourn

MOTION by Peterson, SUPPORT by Hohm, "to adjourn the meeting." Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 11:54 a.m.

Minutes approved: January 6, 2015

Questions or comments on these minutes can be directed to:

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