

Meeting Minutes
Sturgis Small Urban Area Meeting
April 15, 2021

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 10:09 a.m. The meeting was held on Microsoft Teams in accordance with the Kalamazoo County State of Emergency allowing remote participation by parties subject to the Michigan Open Meetings Act.

Introductions

The following individuals were in attendance:

Alan Balog, St. Joseph County Transit Authority

Barry Cox, City of Sturgis

Michael Hughes, City of Sturgis

Garrett Myland, St. Joseph County Road Commission

Fred Nagler, Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study for Southcentral Michigan Planning Commission

Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items

No Comments were offered.

Review of Voting Members

Voting members, entitled to a single vote each, were identified as Myland for the County Road Commission, Balog for the Transit Authority and Hughes for the City of Sturgis.

HIP/COVID Funding

Nagler presented an overview of the recently approved Highway Infrastructure Program, (HIP/COVID) funding. The Michigan Department of Transportation has allocated \$81,204 in federal HIP/COVID funding with no local match required to each Small Urban area in the state. Funds cannot be used to match other federal funding but may be applied to overmatch amounts on previously programmed and unobligated projects. Agencies have until fiscal year 2024 to obligate funding, though MDOT has encouraged those Small Urban areas not in line for funding in 2024 to obligate funding for approved projects as early as possible. Eligibility for funding is the same as for regular STP federal funding. In addition, there are specific special eligibilities outside of typical projects. If agencies are interested in programming one of the special eligibilities, they must be approved by the Federal Highway Administration. Currently there is not much guidance available on how to program and document the special eligibilities, but agencies can contact Mark Kloha, Michigan Department of Transportation Small Urban Program Manager, and he will help them navigate the process.

Myland stated the Road Commission is also eligible for HIP/COVID funding through the Rural Task Force program and as such they feel that the Small Urban funding is more appropriately use for the municipal or transit agencies.

Discussion/Action on Projects for FY 2021 - 2023

Cox said that their 2021 project is designed and ready for obligation. Since the project was originally programmed, estimated costs have increased significantly. As a result, they have held off on requesting obligation in order to request approval to add the full available amount of HIP/COVID funding to offset the increased amount of over-match. They are concerned that the process of changing the programming to add the HIP/COVID funding will delay obligation and letting. If the process will take longer than they are comfortable with they will submit the project as-is and will request another meeting to reconsider use of the HIP/COVID funding. Balog indicated that the Transportation Authority is amenable to the proposal.

MOTION by Myland, SUPPORT by Balog, ***“to approve adding the full amount of \$81,204 in HIP/COVID funding to the City of Sturgis’s 2021 Small Urban Project.”*** Motion approved unanimously on a roll call vote.

Cox and Myland discussed the possibility of swapping their projects for 2023 and 2024 respectively in the event that the City runs into problems with the railroad or property acquisition that would delay their ability to certify control of right-of-way. Myland said that as long as the decision is made within the next year they would be able to accommodate the switch.

Public Comments

No public comments were offered

Other Business

No other business was brought forth for consideration.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:35 a.m.

Minutes prepared:
April 15, 2021