

Rural Task Force #3 Meeting

March 5, 2021

Online Microsoft Teams Meeting

Members in Attendance:

Jay Miller	Branch County Road Commission
Ryan Minkus	Road Commission of Kalamazoo County
Garrett Myland	St. Joseph County Road Commission
Kristine Parsons	Calhoun County Road Department
Jake Welch	Chair - Barry County Road Commission, Chair
Brian Sanada	MDOT SW Region Planning

Others in Attendance:

Bill Voigt	Barry County Transit Authority
Brian Kernstock	Calhoun County Road Department
Paul Larose	Marshall Dial A Ride
Allen Balog	St. Joseph County Transportation Authority
Josh Grab	MDOT – Rural Task Force Program Manager
Fred Nagler	Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study/SMPC

Call to Order

Chair Welch called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. The meeting was held online to comply with State of Michigan legislation and Health and Human Services rules allowing virtual meetings in response to the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic.

Approval of December 21, 2020 Rural Task Force #3 Meeting Minutes

No changes were suggested.

MOTION by Minkus, SUPPORT by Parsons, ***“to approve the December 21, 2020 Rural Task Force #3 Meeting Minutes.”*** Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

Review of 2021 - 2023 Projects

Nagler shared the current fiscal constraint tracking spreadsheet.

Parsons summarized the status of the Calhoun County Road Department’s 2022 Union City Road project. She said that the project programmed through RTF #3 is contiguous with another that extends into the Battle Creek Area Transportation Study (BCATS) area and that the County considers the two segments essentially the same project with two different project numbers and in different TIPs. Cost estimates based on the designs necessitate the transfer of programmed Rural funding from the RTF #3 TIP project

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to the one in the BCATS TIP. Doing so will require approval of the RTF #3. In addition, Parsons indicated that the Road Department would like to program their allotment of the recently released Highway Infrastructure Program (HIP)/COVID funding to their 2023 28 Mile Road project.

MOTION by Parsons, SUPPORT by Minkus, ***“to approve the reallocation of \$264,600 in STL funding and \$118,484 in EDD funding from project number 206776 to project number 207425 programmed in the Battle Creek Area Transportation Study. Also, to add \$281,471 in HIP/COVID funding to project number 207765 in 2023.”*** Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

LaRose said that Marshall Dial A Ride was informed by Fred Featherly in the MDOT Office of Passenger Transportation that there are \$15,577 in unspent transit funds that were flexed from RTF #3 STL that will be lost if not spent soon. Marshall Dial A Ride would like to repurpose the funds to the purchase of office furniture and needs RTF #3 approval to do so. It is currently unclear from which project the funds are left over. Several voting members expressed reluctance to grant permission without knowing the original details for which they were approved. Nagler and Grab indicated that they would assist Marshall Dial A Ride with finding the details for discussion at an upcoming meeting.

MOTION by Welch, SUPPORT by Parsons, ***“to table consideration of the request from Marshall Dial A Ride to repurpose \$15,577 in flexed transit funding to the purchase of office furniture until the next Rural Task Force #3 meeting.”*** Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

Voigt stated that Barry County Transit has \$21,058 in flexed funding that they would like to repurpose. They have not yet decided on a specific project for the funding but were hoping to get approval from the Task Force. Several voting members were again reluctant to vote on a motion to approve without knowing the intended purpose for use of the funds. Voigt indicated that he will come back with a specific proposed use for consideration at a future meeting.

MOTION by Welch, SUPPORT by Parsons ***“to table consideration of the request from Barry County Transit to repurpose \$21,058 in flexed transit funding until the next Rural Task Force meeting”*** Motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

HIP/COVID Funding

Grab discussed details of the recently announced HIP/COVID funding that has been allocated to the RTF #3. He indicated that MDOT is encouraging eligible agencies to program and obligate funding as quickly as possible, as it is intended to help entities affected by the economic downturn from the COVID-19 pandemic. Also, it is possible there will be more stimulus funding in future federal legislation and it is important that the ability to make use of the funding is well demonstrated. Some discussion was held on items that are permitted under the “special eligibilities” category outside of normally allowable RTF federally funded activities. Members discussed ways to most easily ensure that the funding is programmed and spent in the fastest manner. It was decided that a meeting of the full RTF will be scheduled in the near future to consider and approve HIP/COVID programming as well as resume consideration of tabled items.

Public Comment

No public comment was offered.

Other Business

Minkus and Grab discussed the status of MDOT all-season maps. Grab indicated that updating of the maps has languished lately but that they are renewing efforts to bring them up to date. Minkus will submit any proposed updates to the RTF for approval, which will then be submitted to Grab via meeting minutes.

Minkus also thanked those who had responded to his inquiry on signing plan cover sheets. He said that the RCKC is changing to having the Managing Director and Engineer sign sheets rather than the previous practice of having each member of the Road Commission Board sign each cover sheet.

Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Minutes approved: April 7, 2021

Questions or comments on these minutes can be directed to:

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