



**Southwest Rural Planning Organization
Joint Executive Board and Technical Committees Meeting Minutes
December 13, 2023**

Call to Order

Executive Committee Chair Mike Creasy called the December 13, 2023, Joint Executive Board and Technical Committee Southwest RPO meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. without a quorum being established. Mayor Creasy subsequently asked the coordinator to render the opening prayer and Mayor Greg Billings the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

RPO Coordinator Shelton Merrell provided a roll call with the following members present:

Executive Board members – Mayor Mike Creasy, Chair, Mayor Greg Billings, Mayor Jeff Griggs, Mayor David Livingston, Mayor Barry Hutcherson, Mayor William Rawls, Joe W. Barker, SWTDD Executive Director

Technical Board members - Randy McKinnon P.E., Chair and Dianna Turner, Vice Chair

Others in attendance were Shelton Merrell, RPO Coordinator, Antoine Hawkins, TDOT, OCT, Ashley Owens, TDOT OCT, Thiera Taylor, TDOT OCT, Steve Sellers, P.E., TDOT, Lisa Dunn, TDOT, Bethany Brock, NWTDD, Alexis Morris, MSTDD, and John Malone

Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the May 17, 2023 meeting were approved.

Tennessee Department of Transportation Updates

Mr. Antoine Hawkins, TDOT OCT Region 4 Supervisor, provided a presentation on the TDOT Transportation Modernization Act which highlighted the following:

- \$3 billion in public-private partnerships – 40% cost savings
- \$750 million to be distributed per region

Mr. Hawkins also provided a briefing on the 10-Year Plan to be announced on December 18, 2023 and announced the 2024 Transportation Planning Grant that will have an application deadline slated for January 19, 2024. The grant opportunity would allow a community or county to receive a maximum of \$200,000.00 with a 10% match requirement. Economically distressed and at-risk communities and counties would be exempt from paying the 10% match. The grant would fund the following planning documents:

- 1) Complete Streets Plan

- 2) Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan
- 3) Transportation System Management & Operations
- 4) Corridor Studies
- 5) Resurfacing and Striping Plan
- 6) Community Mobility Plan

Following the presentation offered by Mr. Hawkins, Mayor Livingston stated there would be a huge amount of traffic generated on Interstate 40 leading to the Mega-site. He subsequently asked Mr. Hawkins whether or not Haywood County would receive more funds than other counties located in the region. Mr. Hawkins stated there were several improvements already happening in Haywood County, but he would find out the answer to that question. Additionally, Mr. Hawkins reported the Tennessee Department of Transportation had a contract with an entity to produce a four (4) County Transportation Study. The counties included within the study were Haywood, Tipton, Fayette and Hardeman Counties. Chairman McKinnon asked would Transportation Modernization Act would replace the Improvement Act created under the Haslam Administration. Mr. Hawkins stated the Transportation Modernization Act would not replace the Improve Act.

Ms. Thiera Taylor rendered a presentation on traditional funding sources which included a transportation funding database. Ms. Taylor reported there were 43 transportation -related funding programs. Furtherly, she stated there would be a link regarding funding sources sent out via email.

Ms. Lisa Dunn, with TDOT provided a presentation on the State-Aide Program. She stated there were 40 contracts funded. Highlights included the following resurfacing miles per county:

- Chester – 28.86
- Decatur – 25.49
- Hardeman – 2.7
- Hardin – 25.58
- Haywood – 0
- Henderson – 25.57
- McNairy – 11.37

She also presented on the new State-Aide Dashboard which included the following highlights:

- Mileage – 15,148.164
- All roads – 96,500.024
- State-Aide route counts – 3,597
- Mileage – 15%

Mayor David Livingston inquired about the percentage that Counties would receive. Ms. Dunn answered by stating up to 20% maximum.

Mr. Steve Sellers provided a presentation on the Blue Oval City Transportation System Improvement Plans which included the following highlights:

- A new State Route 468 within the Megasite that will be open to traffic on 1-31-2025
- State Route 222 Northern Improvements (from Fredonia Road to Intersection of SR-222) that will be open to traffic on 11-30-2025

- Interstate 40 Exit 42 Improvements that will be open to traffic on 11-30-2025
- State Route 194 Extension (G1 Section) which will include a new interchange connecting I-40 to Blue Oval City (Exit 39); A two mile connector road, and extension to State Route 468 to State Route 222 that will contain 3.6 miles. The anticipated start on construction is early 2025
- State Route 194 Extension (G2 Sections) G2 South includes SR 194 extension from I-40 to SR 59 containing 3.5 miles (anticipated start of construction 2026); G2 North SR 194 extension from connector road to SR-1 containing 2.3 miles (anticipated start of construction 2027); a two-lane Rural Roadway Section. The delivery method will be the traditional design -bid-build method.

The following plans were mentioned during the presentation regarding Blue Oval City:

- TDOT – Interstates 40 and 81 Multimodal Corridor Study;
- Freight Industry Issues and Trends Memo;
- Transit Study

Election of Officers

It was motioned by Mayor David Livingston and seconded by Mayor Jeff Griggs to keep the Southwest RPO Executive Board Chair and Vice Chair as well as the Technical Committee Chair and Vice Chair the same by acclamation. The said motion was carried by unanimous vote subsequent to the call for question and vote. The 2024 officers are the following:

Executive Board Chair –	Mike Creasy
Executive Board Vice Chair –	Blake Whalley
Technical Committee Chair -	Randy McKinnon, P.E.
Technical Committee Vice Chair-	Dianna Turner

Other Business

Shelton Merrell, RPO Coordinator stated he was informed that the multimodal access grant award will be announced by the end of the 2023 year.

Public Comment

None.

Adjourn

Following the call for public comment by the Chair, the meeting adjourned at 12:08 p.m.