

**MINUTES
OF
THE OZARK FOOTHILLS TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**AUGUST 14, 2014
OZARK FOOTHILLS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

WILLIAMSVILLE NUTRITION CENTER, WILLIAMSVILLE, MISSOURI

I. Call to Order

Chairman Brain Polk called the meeting to order at 6:26 p.m. A moment of silence was held for long time Butler County Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) member and retired MoDOT Engineer Frank Carroll, who passed away on August 4, 2014.

II. Open for Public Discussion

Chairman Polk brought forward an issue involving tree limbs that are hanging over roadways throughout the region. As Presiding Commissioner of Wayne County, Mr. Polk said he has had numerous people express concern over areas that are dangerous due to limbs.

Matt Seiler, MoDOT Southeast District, said the agency makes an effort every year to clear limbs, but they can only reach a certain height with their trimmer. He mentioned that they will be testing a new trimmer that will reach higher on several routes and if that is a success, it will be used in other areas of the District.

Wayne Gibbs, Carter County, asked if the trees could just be cut down. Often times the tree is not on MoDOT right of way, but hangs over the roadway.

III. Adoption of April 17, 2014 Minutes

Minutes of the April 17, 2014 TAC meeting were reviewed. The minutes were adopted with a motion by Harold Ellinghouse, Wayne County, and second by Darrell Dement, Reynolds County.

IV. Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) Reports

David Wyman, MoDOT Southeast District, said that although MoDOT was disappointed that Amendment 7, the $\frac{3}{4}$ -cent sales tax initiative was defeated, MoDOT would continue forward. There will be three areas of focus moving forward. First, safety will be the number one issue. Second, keeping the system as good as it can be kept for as long as it can be kept. There will be about \$700 million let this year, \$650 million next year, and then just \$300 million the year after. Third, MoDOT will continue to provide outstanding customer service.

Although new projects will be limited and the focus will be on maintaining the system, MoDOT still needs the help of the TAC. Each TAC member represents their county and MoDOT needs and wants to know the opinion of the people they serve. Moving forward it will be the duty of the TAC to help identify needs, rather than wants.

Mr. Wyman stated that MoDOT is currently advertising for a possibility of a public hearing in Wayne County over McGee Creek. Without an expression of interest, however, a hearing will not be held.

Highway 67 South in Butler County has been completed other than some driveway work. Utilities are being relocated along Highway 160 in Butler and Ripley Counties.

Chris Rutledge, MoDOT Southeast District, emphasized the importance of the TAC and its prioritization activities. MoDOT will need the TAC to identify what is most important to maintain. The Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) only added 30 projects this year instead of the typical 300. There is not enough money to expand the system with shoulders and redesigned intersections.

Mr. Rutledge provided updates on work in Reynolds County, including overlays and shoulders on Highway 21 and Highway 106. Both projects are major corridor improvements that will benefit the area. On Highway 106, the road is being overlaid with asphalt and rolled compacted concrete is being laid for shoulders.

Elquin Auala, MoDOT Southeast District, announced that Transportation Enhancement and Safe Routes to School grants have been combined into what is being called TAP (Transportation Alternative Program) grants. Applications are expected to be taken in early September and will be available online. All grants require at least a 20% match commitment.

Chris Rutledge said that federal transportation funding was set to expire at the end of September, but Congress extended funding through May 2015. This extension of funding has allowed MoDOT to pursue the TAP; and, he encouraged cities and counties to apply.

Felicity Brady, Ozark Foothills RPC Executive Director, asked for clarification if the TAC will need to prioritize projects this year, and, if so, should the prioritization be of only maintenance needs. Matt Seiler informed the TAC to proceed with the process that is already in place. Joe Killian, MoDOT Southeast District, said it would be beneficial to continue to prioritize, as work on the next STIP will occur in December. David Wyman said scrutiny of potential projects would be intense given the limited funding. Andrew Murphy, Ozark Foothills Transportation Planning Coordinator, informed the TAC that there will be a prioritization at the next meeting, but to what degree is not yet known.

Joe Killian brought everyone's attention to information regarding the annual GIS symposium in Cape Girardeau on September 17. The event is free, but seating is limited. The symposium is a daylong conference with a mix of people from state and local government.

Matt Seiler stated MoDOT is having a hard time buying salt. Many of their storage facilities are full, but they are 2,000 tons short from last year. To make matters even worse, no replenishment bids were submitted. This means that once all the salt is used, there will not be any more available. Last year's winter is to blame in part, as states that usually do not purchase salt had severe winter weather. This will affect cities and counties in the same manner that it is affecting MoDOT. Expect to see more use of rock and sawdust during the upcoming winter.

V. Transportation Planning Coordinator Report

Andrew Murphy reported that Ozark Border Electric Coop. has finished the installation of street lighting along the Poplar Bluff Industrial Park By-Pass. Once final invoices are received, this project can be closed out.

The Doniphan Sidewalk Project still needs a couple of drop inlets to be placed near the construction site of the walking bridge. This will delay completion of the project until the bridge is in place.

The Doniphan Quick Creek Park LWCF project has been completed and is closed out.

Elquin Auala and Bill Kirkpatrick, Wayne County, informed the TAC that the Piedmont Sidewalk Improvement Project is completed and closed out.

Mr. Murphy announced that he submitted three grant proposals to the Community Development Block Grant program through the Missouri Department of Economic Development. A proposal for the City of Williamsville was submitted for \$250,474 for a pedestrian bridge crossing over Williams Creek on Highway 49. The City of Bunker applied for \$223,261 for the paving of various city streets. Finally, the City of Doniphan applied for \$168,974 for a low water crossing on Spring Street.

Copies of the Semo Port marketing package were provided to any TAC members that were interested in the material. This packet is sent to prospective industries and freight customers of the Port, which is located in Scott City, MO.

It was brought to the TAC's attention that it is time to begin updates to the Regional Transportation Plan. Andrew Murphy will begin updating the plan in a few weeks and continue until the February TAC meeting when it will be submitted for review. The updated plan will also be submitted to the OFRPC Board of Directors in March. The TAC will vote for acceptance of the finalized plan at the May meeting. The plan will then be officially approved by the Board of Directors in June. After all approvals, the updated document will be submitted to MoDOT.

Mr. Murphy mentioned that he has been participating in this year's Delta Leadership Institute Executive Academy Class from the Delta Regional Authority. The Institute has been a great experience that started in November 2013 and ends this September. Murphy said that transportation has been the theme for the last couple of sessions, which occurred in Washington,

DC in June and Paducah, KY in July. Both meetings went well; and, while in Washington, DC, the Missouri contingent from the program was able to meet with US Representative Jason Smith and the Legislative Directors for both Senators Blunt and McCaskill. One of the issues expressed in those meetings was the need for a long-range transportation bill from Congress. All seemed receptive and aware of the need.

VI. Old Business

Andrew Murphy provided a reminder that any Local Public Agency receiving or working with grants involving federal or state transportation funds needs to have a trained individual on staff recognized as the “Person of Responsible Charge.” This includes local government, project administrators, engineers, and contractors. Everyone who received training in 2012 will need to be re-certified in 2014. There are a couple of opportunities still available this year. One of the trainings will be taking place at the OFRPC office on September 18, 2014, from 8 am to noon.

VII. New Business

Mr. Murphy provided results from transportation surveys that were conducted in April during the Merchants Showcase at Three Rivers College in Poplar Bluff. There were 52 responses with the most comments regarding public transportation and a stop light at PP Highway and Physicians Park Drive.

A letter addressed to Director Brady from Amtrak was provided to the TAC. The letter offered a free Amtrak ride to Memphis to attend the Great American Stations Civic Conversation on Thursday, September 11, 2014. Neither Director Brady nor Andrew Murphy can attend. The opportunity was presented for TAC members to go as alternates. Discussion ensued for possible attendees.

Mr. Murphy re-emphasized Mr. Rutledge’s earlier statement that Congress has passed a stopgap measure to fund transportation on the national level through May of next year. With this short-term fix, much of the uncertainty regarding federal transportation funding will return early next year.

VIII. General Discussion

Chairman Polk announced that the OFRPC Board of Directors meeting would take place in two weeks on August 28, 2014, at Lake Wappapello.

IX. Adjournment

Darrell Dement moved to adjourn. Chairman Brian Polk adjourned the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

TAC ATTENDANCE ROSTER

August 14, 2014

Ms. Felicity Brady	Ozark Foothills RPC
Mr. Andrew Murphy	Ozark Foothills RPC
Mr. Don Anderson	Butler County
Mr. Steve Halter	Butler County (Alternate)
Mr. Mike Gossett	Carter County
Mr. Wayne Gibbs	Carter County
Mr. David Reynolds	Carter County
Ms. Elizabeth Reynolds	Carter County (Alternate)
Mr. Darrell Dement	Reynolds County
Mr. Brian Polk	Wayne County
Mr. Bill Kirkpatrick	Wayne County
Mr. Harold Ellinghouse	Wayne County
Mr. Matthew Seiler	MoDOT Southeast District
Mr. David Wyman	MoDOT Southeast District
Mr. Joe Killian	MoDOT Southeast District
Mr. Chris Rutledge	MoDOT Southeast District
Ms. Elquin Auala	MoDOT Southeast District
Ms. Becky Gibbs	Carter County Clerk
Ms. Lynn Schultz	City of Williamsville
Mr. Jim Schultz	
Mr. Lee Hillis	City of Williamsville
Ms. Elizabeth Hillis	
Ms. Gloria Dement	

THOSE NOT IN ATTENDANCE

Mr. Ed Strenfel	Butler County
Mr. Bill Robison	Butler County
Mr. Jeff Darnell	Butler County
Mr. John Bailiff	Carter County
Mr. Joe Loyd	Reynolds County
Mr. Doug Warren	Reynolds County
Ms. Renee Horn	Reynolds County
Mr. Ben Pickett	Reynolds County
Mr. William Kennon	Ripley County
Mr. David Johnson	Ripley County
Mr. Jerry Halley	Ripley County
Mr. Steve Burke	Ripley County
Mr. Nick Ederer	Ripley County
Ms. Angela Smith	Wayne County
Mr. Fred Bennett	Wayne County