

# Northwest Missouri Transportation Advisory Committee Quarterly Meeting Minutes, November 3, 2009

## Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chairman Robert Westfall at 6:05 pm in the Northwest Missouri Regional Council of Governments' Conference Room. Dinner was served.

## Roll Call

The roll was taken with the following members present:

### *TAC Members*

Bob Westfall, Nodaway County  
Carole Coutts, Nodaway County  
Joe Hertl, Worth County  
Jack Kruse, Atchison County  
Dennis Gabbert, Worth County  
Bill Gordon, Holt County  
Ken Jones, Holt County

### *Ex-Officio Members*

Shannon Kusilek, Transportation Planning Manager

### *NWMORCOG Staff*

Tye Parsons, Executive Director  
Dana Ternus, Regional Planner

## Approval of Minutes

Kruse motioned to approved the August 11, 2009 TAC minutes. Gordon seconded.  
Motion carried (7 yes, 0 no).

## Old Business

*Work Plan Update:* Ternus reported on a number of special events during the fall months. The annual Maryville Downtown Trick-or-Treat was successful despite the cold and rainy weather. Pictures of the event were shared. Approximately 425 children were served that evening, receiving glow-in-the-dark candy bags as well as information on car seat safety, pedestrian and bicycle safety, and activity books provided by MoDOT. Parsons noted that this is a good public outreach event which allows the dissemination of safety information to a large percentage of the local public. The Regional Council also hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the partnership between the City of Maryville and MoDOT to provide wider shoulders and opportunities for bicyclists in the region. Representatives of the Nodaway County Trails Association, MoDOT, and the city attended. Pictures of the event were shared. Ternus also shared that the Nodaway County Trails Association, in conjunction with the City of Maryville, made a presentation at Maryville Middle School concerning the new Safe Routes to School trail opening and pedestrian and bicycle safety. The RCOG's Annual Dinner was also held August 13<sup>th</sup>, with District 1 Engineer Don Wichern providing an entertaining and informative presentation on the history of highways in Missouri.

Ternus also reported on a number of other transportation related activities. After working with Gentry County and Miller Township to develop the best solution and funding possibilities, the Gentryville Bridge project was submitted to DED for consideration under Supplemental #2 as well as the Emergency CDBG funding streams. The bus route

update process for all school districts is underway as well. Requests were mailed to each school district, along with the previous year's map, to update any routes and bus driver information. Responses have been received from Fairfax, Northeast Nodaway, South Hold, Nodaway-Holt, Stanberry, and Worth R-III. The remaining schools have not responded to date. Ternus asked that any TAC members who have ties with their local school districts to encourage them to return the maps as soon as possible. Ternus attended a number of meetings, including meetings with the Nodaway County Trails Association, the Education Subcommittee of the Trails Association, and the Blueprint for Safety Meeting in St. Joseph. Quarterly status reports were sent to MoDOT, and the TAC meeting preparations were completed.

### **New Business**

Ternus informed the committee that reminder letters had been sent prior to the October 15<sup>th</sup> deadline for the identified needs list. In spite of this, only 5 responses were received. Parsons stated that this is the most important function of the TAC members. The RCOG seeks to have a regional needs list with wide representation. Without list submissions, the prioritization will not be regional in scope. Ternus informed the committee that prioritization of the needs list would be rescheduled to the January TAC meeting, with a two week extension for TAC members to complete and return their needs list. Reminder letters would be sent to inform those members not in attendance. Kusilek asked if the Google Earth project would be debuted during the prioritization. Ternus confirmed that Google Earth would be used for the prioritization in January.

Kusilek updated the TAC on ARRA-funded cold-in-place (CIP) routes. The cold-in-place process started as a good program with projects in Gentry County. At first, the results seemed good, but the routes came unglued. The main issue with the cold-in-place routes is that the materials used were not sufficient to create a good product. After discussion and road assessments, MoDOT contacted the contractors and halted all work on the CIP routes. With this suspension of cold-in-place routes, a new list of projects were put together, largely pulled together from the existing maintenance list. District 1 received \$6 million for concrete level courses on rural routes. Routes E and H in Gentry County have already been completed. Nodaway Routes N and U are also included. Gordon asked if Route BB in Holt County was included on the list of CIP projects and if that was the reason it was not completed. Kusilek stated that this was the cause of BB not being finished. Parsons pointed out that the issues with our rural routes will continue to decay and questioned what citizens will do 1-2 years from now when the rural routes decay to the point where they are nearly impassable. Kusilek responded by pointing out that the rescission is currently the issue. Transportation is considered important on the national level, but is considered to be a less-pressing need than dealing with other national issues like health care and the economy.

Kusilek reported that all ARRA projects to date have come in under budget. The creation of a Rural Flexible category allowed MoDOT to move projects around and ensure that all ARRA funds were utilized to the fullest extent. In the RCOG counties, Highway 46 through Maryville was added to this Rural Flexible category. It is currently scheduled to be let in January 2010. Ternus asked if any other states have been unable to utilize their

funding thus far, opening the possibility of additional funds for Missouri. Kusilek stated that, to his knowledge, it did not seem probable that any state would fail to utilize their funds. However, if Maryville and St. Joseph were unable to complete their enhancement projects from ARRA funding, the Welcome Center at Rock Port would be funded. Gabbert asked about the possibility of already completed CIP routes falling apart, if it was inevitable. Kusilek responded by saying that each route is different and they can't predict what will happen, but it is likely that the road surface will not last. MoDOT tried something new, hoping to identify a more cost-effective method of repaving rural routes. Unfortunately, this new process was neither more cost-effective nor ultimately successful. Westfall asked about other new programs being considered. Kusilek told the committee that MoDOT currently has two teams, one maintenance based team and one research based team, that have been challenged to create a resurfacing product with a ten-year life but at a cheaper cost than one mile of concrete level course. Gordon asked about the rumored closing of the Mound City rest stop. Kusilek told Gordon that the current position on maintaining rest stops was shifting to the creation Welcome Centers instead. The closing of the Mound City rest stop would be likely.

A number of other project changes and updates were also discussed. Kusilek informed the committee that the Highway 136 (Stanberry to Albany) letting will be pushed back to June 2010. Some issues with drainage and pavement through Stanberry were identified. As a result, an entire ½ mile section of Hwy 136 in the Stanberry city limits will be completely replaced. The Safe and Sound program is going well. Kusilek informed the committee that the 100<sup>th</sup> Safe and Sound bridge was recently completed. The design-build portion of the program is set to begin next spring. In March, the contractors will start in Harrison County and work west across the north section of District 1. When they arrive in Atchison County, they will drop down to Holt County and continue working east. Each bridge included in the design-build program is set to be completed in 45 days, using one team for destruction and one team for construction in order to ensure the most time-efficient replacement. Kruse complimented MoDOT on their quick, efficient redeck of the overpass at Hwy 169 in St. Joseph. Many compliments have been heard concerning this local improvement.

Kusilek moved on to explain and discuss the rescission currently affecting the state. On September 30, 2009, SAFETEA-LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users) ended. Within the bill, a rescission of \$8.078 billion was included in an effort to balance the Highway Trust Fund. Prior to September 30<sup>th</sup>, two cash infusions into the trust fund were required in order to keep it solvent. With SAFETEA-LU's end, the rescission was implemented automatically. Congress is currently working on these transportation funding issues, but both a reauthorization and a new transportation bill have been suggested without a consensus being reached. As a result of the rescission, Missouri lost \$202 million. Bridge Off-System (BRO) took a sizable impact, losing \$17 million statewide and \$2.8 million in District 1. On-system Bridge funds lost \$98 million, while STP Enhancement funds were also impacted, losing \$440,000. Kusilek reassured the committee that any projects already in the pipeline will continue. Any unobligated projects, however, will be put on hold. The rescission will be taken off the top of any future federal funding, but things are

bleak for the time being. Ternus pointed out that the Missouri Transportation Alliance is set to meet on December 9<sup>th</sup> in Jefferson City to finalize its report to MoDOT on possible solutions for the transportation challenges facing Missouri. Kusilek pointed out that change is imminent, that the state needs a new funding system in order to keep up with the increasing transportation demands. The committee discussed the issue of rural routes, with Gabbert asking about a return to gravel for lettered routes. Kusilek pointed out that farmers and the use of lettered routes for heavy farm equipment compounds the problem of rural routes. According to Kusilek, District Engineer Don Wichern has made this suggestion and is willing to agree to support a county that would be interested in returning to gravel. The major issue lies in the fact that after 2011, the choice for Missouri is roads or bridges due to the fact that funding for both will not exist. MoDOT has done a lot of work over the last 5 years, Fiscal Year 2010 being the biggest year ever in spending \$1.5 billion on construction and maintenance. Complaints have dropped significantly over the past five years, but Kusilek pointed out that without a new schema for transportation funding, everything will go bad at the same time thereby eliminating all the progress over the last 5 years.

Ternus informed the committee that Liles was unable attend this evening, but provided updates by email. Liles said that there were no major changes in active projects since the last meeting. Herzog completed the hot mix overlay on Gentry Routes E and H. Bridges on Nodaway Route PP are currently being worked on, and the Brownville Bridge is still active. Hertl asked about tubes being replaced recently on Hwy 46; Kusilek replied that Hwy 46 may be resurfaced.

### **Other Business**

The next TAC meeting will be held on January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010. Parsons reminded everyone of the importance of the next meeting in prioritizing projects. He encouraged everyone to be sure to attend.

### **Adjourn**

Hearing no further business, Hertl motioned to adjourn at 7:08 pm. Gordon seconded. Motion carried (7 yes, 0 no).

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Chairman or Vice-Chairman

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Minutes recorded by Dana Ternus