

**OZARKS TRANSPORTATION ORGANIZATION  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES  
April 19, 2019**

The Board of Directors of the Ozarks Transportation Organization met at its scheduled time of 12:00 p.m. in the Ozarks Transportation Organization Large Conference Room in Springfield, Missouri.

The following members were present:

Commissioner Harold Bengsch, Greene County	Mr. Skip Jansen, City Utilities
Mr. Steve Bodenhamer, City of Strafford (a)	Mr. Jared Keeling, City of Republic (a)*
Mr. Chuck Branch, Citizen-at-Large	Mr. Travis Koestner, MoDOT
Mr. Steve Childers, City of Ozark (a)	Mr. Andy Mueller, MoDOT (a)
Mr. Travis Cossey, City of Nixa (a)	Commissioner Ralph Phillips, Christian County
Commissioner Bob Dixon, Greene County	Mr. Dan Smith, City of Springfield (a)
Mayor Debra Hickey, City of Battlefield	Mr. Richard Walker, Citizen-at-Large
Mr. Brad Gray, City of Willard (a)	Mr. Brian Weiler, Airport Board (a)

*(a) Denotes alternate given voting privileges as a substitute for voting member not present*

The following members were not present:

Mr. Mokhtee Ahmad, FTA	Mr. Michael Latuszek, FHWA (a)
Mr. David Cameron, City of Republic (a)	Ms. Laurel McKean, MoDOT (a)
Mr. Jerry Compton, Citizen-at-Large	Mr. Bradley McMahon, FHWA
Mr. Chris Coulter, Greene County (a)	Mr. Daniel Nguyen, FTA (a)
Mr. John Elkins, Citizen-at-Large (a)	Mr. Jim O'Neal, Citizen at Large
Ms. Jan Fisk, City of Springfield	Mr. Mark Schenkelberg, FAA
Mayor Ashley French, City of Strafford	Mr. Jeremiah Shuler, FTA (a)
Mayor Rick Gardner, City of Ozark	Mayor Brian Steele, City of Nixa
Mayor Corey Hendrickson, City of Willard	Mayor Jeff Ussery, City of Republic
Mr. Travis Koestner, MoDOT	

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Others Present: Ms. Becky Baltz, TREKK; Mr. Matt Crawford and Ms. Brandie Fisher, City Utilities; Ms. Joelle Cannon, Senator Blunt's Office; Mr. Frank Miller, MoDOT; Ms. Kimberly Cooper, Mr. Dave Faucett, Ms. Sara Fields, Ms. Natasha Longpine, and Mr. Andy Thomason, Ozarks Transportation Organization.

Chair Dixon called the meeting to order at approximately 12:11 p.m.

**I. Administration**

**A. Introductions**

Those in attendance made self-introductions stating their name and the organization they represent.

**B. Approval of Board of Directors Meeting Agenda**

Mr. Jansen moved to approve the April 18, 2019 agenda. Mr. Weiler seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

**C. Approval of the February 28, 2019 Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Branch moved to approve the February 28, 2019 meeting minutes. Mr. Childers seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

**D. Public Comment Period for All Agenda Items**

The correspondence that had been received since distributing the packets for the meeting were laid at the places of the members. No one was present to speak to any item on the agenda.

**E. Executive Director's Report**

Executive Director Sara Fields stated she wanted to update the Board on some issues the subcommittees have been working on. She stated the first issue was the Traffic Impact Study, which had been reviewed and distributed to a few local traffic engineers for feedback. She noted the subcommittee wanted to know if the suggestions were cost effective and could be implemented. She noted the committee had received their comments and suggestions and were in the process of compiling a final draft.

Ms. Fields stated another issue that OTO is working on is the MoDOT Highway Safety Program, and its requirement that vests and cones be provided for law enforcement, tow truck drivers, and other emergency personnel that work accidents on the side of the road. The OTO has been working to help ensure the emergency personnel in our area are aware of this and who to contact to obtain this equipment.

Ms. Fields said the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee is working on the Christian County bicycle distribution plan. The STIP subcommittee has been meeting to prioritize the recommendations and to look at several scenarios regarding funding.

Ms. Fields stated the Missouri Highway Commission was in Springfield on April 2. She added that she, Matt Morrow, Executive Director of the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce, and David Cameron, City Administrator for the City of Republic and Treasurer of the OTO Board of Directors, gave presentations on the value of the partnerships that exist in this area. Mr. Cameron discussed some of Republic's priority projects and how they would be looking for some cost-share opportunities in the future. Mr. Morrow discussed the economic growth in our area, and Ms. Fields stated she discussed the \$120 million of needs for roadway improvement in the OTO area.

Ms. Fields stated staff has been attending some training opportunities and Mr. Faucett is going to be presenting on Transit Accessibility at the Missouri GIS conference and at the National Conference. She stated this is a great opportunity to highlight the work the OTO is doing.



Ms. Fields stated a recreational trails grant had been distributed, but no one in this Region applied. She stated staff doesn't like to see these opportunities pass and hopes some of the members will apply for this grant next year.

Ms. Fields noted there is a bill currently in the State Legislature that addresses the Governor's proposed bonding plan. It is SCR14, it was passed by the Senate and has been referred to the House. At the date of this meeting, it had not been placed on the House calendar. What is currently being proposed would be the funding of 215 bridges that would be in the 2020-2024 STIP. She noted that the House has added a caveat that this would only be in effect if the State received a federal grant for transportation.

#### **F. MoDOT Update**

Travis Koestner, Southwest District Engineer, stated he wanted to expound on some information Sara Fields had presented. He referred to the Governor's bonding proposal and noted the Legislature had tied it to an Info grant. He said he said that to date there is no information on the grant.

Mr. Koestner stated MoDOT is wrapping up the STIP process. He stated that staff is currently working on attaching 'unfunded' needs to actual projects. He noted elected officials are often more receptive to actual projects as opposed to unspecific needs.

Andy Mueller, Southwest District Assistant Engineer, stated there are several projects underway and reviewed those currently being constructed. He noted the last segment of the Route 65 rebuild from Sunshine to James River is anticipated to be underway in August.

#### **G. Legislative Reports**

Joelle Cannon, Senator Roy Blunt's office, stated the pending rescission of the bridge funding is being monitored. She noted that Congressional earmarks are not coming back at this time, but she encouraged everyone to have their list of projects ready in the event they come back next year. She noted there had been some discussion about a supplemental transportation package at the start of the Trump administration, but so far there is no traction for this. She noted that Senator Hawley has not hired anyone for the Southwest area at this time but does have a contact in Columbia. She noted his staff in Columbia is willing to come to Springfield for special meetings if needed.

## **II. New Business**

#### **A. City Utilities Transit Presentation**

Matt Crawford, Director of Transit for City Utilities, stated he had been asked to provide the Board of Directors with a status update on transit in the OTO area. He introduced Brandie Fisher, Grants Analyst for City Utilities. He stated he had been asked to respond to four questions, the first being what does transit look like in Springfield. He briefly reviewed the history of transit as far back as 1890. He noted that the electric streetcar is part of the reason City Utilities is in the transit business today. He noted that the streetcar needed its own electric supply, which is how City Utilities came to be in the utility business. He noted

that by the City Charter, City Utilities is required to provide transit in the City of Springfield. He briefly reviewed the bus service currently being offered in Springfield, noting it is a fixed route system. He noted it costs the Utility \$9.11 per passenger; the passenger pays \$.60 to \$1.25 for one-way fare. Mr. Crawford noted the buses run about 86% on time. This is based on being on time at every timepoint on the system. The transit service costs the Utility \$100 per hour per bus to operate.

He stated the next question he wanted to address is who rides transit. He stated the OTO had performed a study for them in 2012 and a new one will be performed in the near future. Six percent of the passengers are 65 years or older; twenty-two are 25 years or younger. Sixty percent of those utilizing the system earn less than \$15,000 per year; thirty-seven percent are traveling to and from work and do not have access to a vehicle. Mr. Crawford noted that sixty-eight percent of the passengers ride every day. Mr. Crawford noted the majority of their riders are transit dependent.

The next question is who pays for transit. He referenced a chart that indicated that City Utilities customers pay for a large part of transit. He noted the passengers pay for almost ten percent of transit. He added the State of Missouri spends \$.17 per capita for transportation.

The final question is what is the next step. He briefly discussed a low/no emissions grant for which they are applying. He noted they are also asking to purchase an electric vehicle. Mr. Crawford stated they are not eligible for a grant for autonomous vehicles as this will require changes to State legislation. He stated they are researching autonomous shuttles. He noted they are prohibited from being in the shuttle business, but they are researching what they are able to do. He added the Utility is constantly being pressured to provide more and more services that at this time they are not able to do but may be able to do with an autonomous vehicle. He briefly discussed projects the Utility is partnering with the City of Springfield to accomplish. He briefly recapped the services provided by Transit.

This item was provided for informational purposes and no action by the Board of Directors was required.

#### **B. OTO Growth Trends Report**

David Faucett reviewed the Growth Trends Report that was current through December 2018. He added this information is online and maybe accessed through the OTO website. He noted that there was an increase in single family housing permits, which is led by the unincorporated area of Greene County, the City of Nixa, and the City of Republic. He stated the building of multi-housing units has increased in the surrounding communities and not just the City of Springfield.

Mr. Faucett stated that Christian County is the fastest growing county in the OTO area based on percent. However, just based on numbers, Greene County has increased the most. He stated the growth in Springfield has outpaced the growth of all the other surrounding communities combined since 2010.



Mr. Faucett reviewed the migration charts and where the growth is coming from and the areas that citizens are migrating to.

He noted there are a lot of young adults that migrate to Springfield and Greene County from the surrounding areas for educational purposes or to begin working.

Mr. Faucett stated the majority of the job growth was in Greene County. He indicated that the medium income has also increased in Greene County. Mr. Faucett said the only issue that is a negative is that the mean travel time to work in minutes for residents of Greene County and Springfield has increased.

This item was provided for informational purposes only and no action by the Board of Directors was required.

**C. OTO Bylaw Amendment for dues increase.**

Sara Fields stated staff is requesting a change in the Bylaws due to a funding change in recent months. She added there have been three occurrences that have happened this year that will impact funding in the future. She said federal funding has always been stagnant and while they increased funding, they also increased the MPOs that receive federal funding, therefore, the funding for the OTO was decreased. She noted the federal appropriations have also been coming later, for example, the federal government passed a budget in February for a fiscal year that began in October. The OTO's fiscal year begins in July and to date has not received notification as to the funding allocation that was approved in February. She noted the last two years; the OTO has received this notification in May.

Ms. Fields stated the final issue that has impacted funding is the ability to be reimbursed by the federal grant for MoDOT's traffic staff that works on projects in the OTO area. She stated that in December of this year it significantly dropped. She noted that changes in automation have impacted MoDOT's ability to charge for traffic services.

She stated that due to these issues, the OTO is asking for a local dues increase. The local dues had been set at \$.41 per capita in 2008. She stated what is being proposed is an increase to \$.47 per capita beginning in 2020. She added that rather than increasing the dues every year, it was believed it would be better to have one increase now and then not have to consider another one for several years. This will also allow for the building of reserves as well.

Ms. Fields stated in addition to the dues increase, staff is proposing the use of STBG-Urban funds to compensate for the lack of federal funding. She added the proposal is to use \$200,000 the first year and then increase it by 5% each year. She noted the Board would have approval of this increase each year as it would be part of the STIP. She said if there is a substantial increase in federal funding, the amount of STBG-Urban funds used by the OTO would be decreased.

She noted that to accomplish these two changes a Bylaw Amendment is required. It was noted that a vote of 100% of the members is required.

Mr. Cossey moved the OTO Bylaws be amended as proposed. Mr. Smith seconded the motion and it was approved by the following roll call vote:

Aye: Bengsch, Dixon, Jansen, Compton, Walker, Branch, Phillips, Hickey, Smith, Weiler, Keeling, Childers, Cossey, Gray, and Bodenhamer.

Nay: None.

Abstain: None.

It was noted that all jurisdictions were represented, and that Mr. Jared Keeling was voting on behalf of the City of Republic, per the letter dated April 16, 2019.

**D. Amendment Number Five to the FY 2019-2022 TIP**

Natasha Longpine noted there were five proposed amendments to the FY 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). She reviewed the proposed amendments for the Board, noting the Technical Planning Committee had recommended they be approved.

Mr. Smith moved the Board of Directors approve Amendment Number Five to the FY 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program. Mr. Walker seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

**E. Major Thoroughfare Plan Variance Request**

Natasha Longpine stated the proposed request is from the City of Ozark and is for a development along 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. This portion is classified as a Primary Arterial and requires 55' of right-of-way from the center line. This variance is to allow 40' of right-of-way from the center line. MoDOT and OTO staff both support this change due to the urban character of this portion of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street.

Mr. Childers moved the Board of Directors approve the Major Thoroughfare Plan Variance Request of the City of Ozark for 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. Mr. Jansen seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

**III. Other Business**

**A. Board of Directors Member Announcements**

There were no announcements.

**B. Transportation Issues for Board of Directors Member Review**

There were no transportation issues to be considered.

**C. Articles for Board of Directors Member Information**

Chair Dixon noted there were articles of interest included in the packet for the members to review as time allows.

IV. Adjourn meeting.

With no additional business to come before the Board, Mr. Compton moved the meeting be adjourned. Mr. Cossey seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:15 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Childers", written over a horizontal line.

Steve Childers  
OTO Secretary

