

**OZARKS TRANSPORTATION ORGANIZATION  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES  
February 28, 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	Mayor Debra Hickey, City of Battlefield
Mr. Steve Bodenhamer, City of Strafford (a)	Mr. Skip Jansen, City Utilities
Mr. Chuck Branch, Citizen-at-Large	Mr. Travis Koestner, MoDOT
Mr. David Cameron, City of Republic (a)	Mr. Andy Mueller, MoDOT (a)
Mr. Jerry Compton, Citizen-at-Large	Mr. Jim O'Neal, Citizen at Large
Mr. Travis Cossey, City of Nixa (a)	Commissioner Ralph Phillips, Christian County
Commissioner Bob Dixon, Greene County	Mr. Dan Smith, City of Springfield (a)
Ms. Jan Fisk, City of Springfield	Mr. Brian Weiler, Airport Board (a)
Mr. Brad Gray, City of Willard (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	Ms. Laurel McKean, MoDOT (a)
Mr. Steve Childers, City of Ozark (a)	Mr. Bradley McMahan, FHWA
Mr. Chris Coulter, Greene County (a)	Mr. Daniel Nguyen, FTA (a)
Mr. John Elkins, Citizen-at-Large (a)	Mr. Mark Schenkelberg, FAA
Mayor Ashley French, City of Strafford	Mayor Brian Steele, City of Nixa
Mayor Rick Gardner, City of Ozark	Mayor Jeff Ussery, City of Republic
Mayor Corey Hendrickson, City of Willard	Mr. Richard Walker, Citizen-at-Large
Mr. Michael Latuszek, FHWA (a)	

Others Present: Mr. David Hutchison, Springfield Bike Share; Mr. Frank Miller, MoDOT; Ms. Jennifer Thomas, TREKK; 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 12:14 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. Cossey moved to approve the February 28, 2019 agenda. Mr. Smith seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

**C. Approval of the December 20, 2018 Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Bodenhamer moved to approve the minutes of the December 20, 2018 Board of Directors' meeting. Mr. Jansen 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**

Ms. Fields noted that prior to the Board Meeting, the OTO had hosted a training session for the new members. Ms. Fields stated that as part of that training the Guidebooks had been updated and if anyone who was unable to attend wanted an updated manual, to let her know.

Ms. Fields stated the website development was underway and is anticipated to be completed this summer. She added it is the intent of the OTO to ensure the new site is more user-friendly for the public and yet still provide usability for the members. It is also anticipated that it will make it much easier to locate important documents.

Ms. Fields noted that on Tuesday, March 5, the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce is taking the Transportation Committee to Jefferson City for an education day. She added she is not aware of any legislation that is transportation related except for the Governor's proposed bridge program. She said she is anxious to hear the views of the Legislators on the proposed bonding for transportation projects, using General Revenue, and she hopes to be able to relate more information to the Board following the March 5 meeting.

Ms. Fields stated the Highway Commission will be in Springfield on April 2, but she is not aware of the time of the meeting. She added this information should be available about a week or two before the meeting. Travis Koestner, District Engineer, MoDOT Southwest District, stated the Commission meeting will be in the morning. He added this information should be available through the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce, as they will be hosting a reception for the Commission. Ms. Fields stated she will work with the Chamber to determine what will be presented to the Commission. She added in light of the new funding distribution, she is unsure what will be discussed.

Ms. Fields stated that she had distributed an email to the Board last week addressing the funding distribution adopted by the Highway Commission and indicated she would be happy to answer any questions the Board may have. She noted the new distribution will have significant ramifications on new projects in the OTO area. She clarified that the projected figures are from her, not MoDOT, but she estimates that rather than \$25 million being added to the budget, that amount will be reduced to between \$5 and \$10 million. She added that while the OTO hasn't received the final number, there will be a drastic reduction in the funding for new projects.

Ms. Fields said she had distributed a copy of the letter she had jointly signed with the St. Louis and Kansas City MPOs. She said the letter was not complaining about the distribution per se, but that it was changed without notification or public notice. She added that St. Louis pointed out that in 2003 the MPOs worked together to ensure an equitable distribution of funds between the rural and urban areas. She noted the Commission has abandoned this distribution formula without notice or public hearings.

Mr. Cossey asked if she believed this funding change was due to a lack of urban representation on the Commission. Ms. Fields responded she could only state her opinion and that was “yes,” she believed that did have an impact. Mr. Cossey asked if there was an effort by the three urban MPOs to recommend possible candidates for the two positions that will soon be open on the Commission.

Chair Bob Dixon noted he had discussed the Commission positions with the Governor’s Chief of Staff and had expressed an interest in having someone from Southwest Missouri appointed to the Commission. He noted that the two appointees will need to be from the Democratic party, or an Independent, as it already has the allowed number of Republicans. Mr. Dixon noted that even if there is a candidate from this area, there is no guarantee that individual will be appointed. Ms. Fields added that it is important that the Mayors, Commissioners, and other elected officials discuss with the Governor and the Legislators the importance of the Southwest area being represented on the Commission.

Ms. Fields noted that staff is continuing to work on the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Prioritization. She indicated that while there is little money available for projects, what is available must be spent quickly. She briefly reviewed the projects that are being considered for inclusion in the STIP.

Ms. Fields stated that staff is continuing to look at the prioritization criteria for projects, noting they are working with a group of traffic engineers to ensure the appropriate issues are being considered. She added the group will also look at the Regional priorities to ensure the OTO is focusing on the right priorities and is adhering to the Mission Statement.

Ms. Fields noted the Highway Bill expires September 2020, with a built-in rescission of July 1. She noted staff is monitoring the rescission closely due to the impact it will have on both MoDOT and the OTO. She said at the next meeting, she anticipates having a letter for the Board’s approval regarding the impact of the rescission.

### **MoDOT Update**

Travis Koestner, District Engineer MoDOT Southwest District, stated he wanted to discuss the funding changes that had taken place recently. He said to understand the new distribution, transportation funding as a whole needed to be understood. He reviewed the transportation funding issues that affect the budget, such as rescission, BRO, etc. He noted that in 2020 the FAST Act is to be renewed, but there have been no discussions on transportation at the Federal level in recent months. He also added that there is a faction in the House and Senate that do not want to see the FAST Act continued unless it is funded by means other than the

fuel tax as there is not enough revenue from that to fully fund transportation. This means less money being sent back to the States for transportation.

Mr. Koestner stated there would be an extra step in the STIP this year and that is marking the jobs that will not be able to be constructed if the FAST Act is not renewed. He added that MoDOT does not plan to slow down on planning of jobs, however, they will be noted as being dependent upon receiving the funding from the Federal government.

Mr. Koestner briefly reviewed the funding that MoDOT receives; noting that while some indicated the wording on the ballot for the proposed fuel tax was confusing, the Highway Patrol has always been funded from the gasoline tax, adding he is confident most citizens do not realize this. He briefly discussed the Governor's proposal for borrowing money to repair/replace the necessary bridges in Missouri.

Mr. Koestner spoke about the distribution of the construction money. He stated that maintenance is a large portion of the proposed \$1.5 billion for MoDOT. He noted that \$232 million is for roadwork, or chip and seal, done by MoDOT. He said some of this will be bid for contractors, but some will be done by MoDOT. This also includes striping, roadside maintenance, and salting and snow removal.

Mr. Koestner reviewed the changes in funding for MoDOT over the past few years and noted that Asset Management is still a concern for many; making sure MoDOT takes care of what they have and keeping that in good repair. He noted in 2017, MoDOT did an Asset Management deficit program for those areas that were not meeting their goals, apart from bridge maintenance.

Mr. Koestner noted that bridges and the many that are in poor to failing condition is the reason the Highway Commission chose to take the recent action they did. He added that the Southwest District is the second worst in the State, with the Northeast District being the worst. He noted that Missouri is doing great in meeting the federal guidelines on road maintenance but is "pushing the boundary" for the condition of bridges. He briefly reviewed the current number and condition of the bridges in the Southwest area.

Mr. Koestner stated that starting in 2022, the total construction funds are going to be up somewhat, but MoDOT is spending down the deficit balance. He noted MoDOT is spending down the cash balance in the road fund to \$250 million. He added that while this sounds like a lot of money, repairing one bridge over a river could consume \$200 million of that. He added that special programs would be the same, but that Engineering costs would be split out.

Mr. Koestner reviewed the past funding and proposed funding beginning in 2022. He added the roads and bridges in the OTO area are in good condition, including the three major bridges. He noted it was not an easy decision of the Commission but is one they believe will best address the needs of all of Missouri. Mr. Koestner noted that the OTO does not have any bridges in very poor condition, so there will not be a spike in funding like some of the other areas will receive in a few years.

Mr. Koestner stated he would be happy to answer any questions the Board might have. He also said he wanted to let them know that MoDOT has awarded the last concrete replacement job for Hwy 65 to Emory Sapp & Sons.

Chair Dixon noted that he had learned that there is proposed legislation that would increase the fee for vehicle registration and the monies would go to MoDOT.

#### **F. Legislative Reports**

There were no representatives present to give updates.

## **II. New Business**

### **A. Transportation Alternative Project (TAP) Award Recommendation.**

Andy Thomason stated staff is looking for final approval on the proposed TAP funding. He noted that the background information had been provided in the Board Orientation that had occurred just prior to the Board Meeting. He briefly reviewed the program and the projects for proposed funding. He added two of the projects have already been approved by the Board of Directors for inclusion in the TIP in December 2018.

Mr. Bengsch moved the Board of Directors approve the proposed Transportation Alternative Project Award Recommendation. Mr. Jansen seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

### **B. Amendment Number Three to the FY 2019-2022 TIP**

Natasha Longpine stated this amendment includes ten projects that Mr. Thomason just reviewed. She added that in addition to these projects, there are four other projects and briefly reviewed these projects for the Board.

There was a brief discussion on how these recommended TAP projects move the region closer to implementing the regional trail study. Mr. Thomason commented that some of the trail and sidewalk projects, though minor, move the region in a positive direction. Mr. Smith moved the Board of Directors approve Amendment Number Three to the FY 2019-2022 TIP. Mr. Cossey seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

### **C. Amendment Number Four to the FY 2019-2022 TIP**

Natasha Longpine explained that when the previous amendment was prepared, the federal government was experiencing a shutdown. She noted that while the Federal Highway Administration was working, the Federal Transit Administration was not. She explained staff had prepared these two amendments to ensure that some of the projects could proceed and not be held up by the shutdown. She briefly outlined the five projects being proposed in this amendment, noting the 5310 funding source had been discussed in the Board training.

Mr. Weiler moved the Board of Directors approve Amendment Number Four to the FY 2019-2022 TIP. Mr. O'Neal seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

**D. Major Thoroughfare Plan Variance Request**

Natasha Longpine noted that staff had received a request for a variance for Pawnee Road in Christian County. She explained there is a new development being constructed and a new access road is needed. She said that due to the terrain and the low volumes of vehicles on Pawnee, both Christian County Planning Commission and staff support this request.

Mr. O’Neal moved the Board of Directors approve the Major Thoroughfare Plan Variance Request. Mr. Bodenhamer seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

**E. Financial Statements for 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2018-2019 Budget Year**

Kimberly Cooper stated that due to Mr. Cameron having to leave the meeting, she would be presenting the second quarter financials. She highlighted a few of the expenditures noting the expenses exceeded the revenue for the second quarter, but this is due in large part to the amount paid to LAGERS for the retirement plan. Ms. Cooper noted the deficit in the UPWP portion of the budget is due to the decrease in MoDOT salaries. She explained that the OTO had budgeted for MoDOT salaries to be considered in-kind services, but this is no longer a possibility. She stated that the OTO is being reimbursed for about 82% as opposed to the 90% that had been budgeted. She said that even with this change, the OTO is still well within budget.

Mr. Jansen moved the Board of Directors accept the Second Quarter Financial Statements. Mr. Compton seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

**F. Update on Bike Share Program**

David Hutchison, Vice Chair of Springfield Bike Share, informed the Board that the Springfield City Council had approved for bike racks that were owned by a bike share organization to be placed on City right-of-way. Mr. Hutchison said that bike share offers a cost-effective way of providing transportation for trips that are too far to walk, yet public transportation or driving a personal vehicle is not convenient. He explained how the bike share program works and stated that Springfield’s program is being operated by a not-for-profit organization called Springfield Bike Share. He noted there will be six stations in downtown Springfield, including the Missouri State University campus. He stated the cost for sponsoring a station for two years is approximately \$6,000.

Mr. Hutchison provided the Board with the current status of the Springfield program and noted that once the system is up and running, there is a desire to expand it beyond downtown Springfield.

In response to a question regarding the expansion, Mr. Hutchison stated Springfield Bike Share would be happy to work with other communities to provide a similar program. He noted that areas that are relatively dense are the most ideal for this type of program. Mr. Hutchison said that of the six stations that are being planned, one is on private property and five are on public property.

In response to a request to clarify the cost of a bike station, Mr. Hutchison reiterated the cost is \$6,000 for two years per station.

Mr. Hutchison briefly discussed the cost for daily rides, the cost and benefits of membership, the rules governing where bicycles can be left, and the ability to sponsor stations. He noted that membership would allow access to programs in other cities that are operated by the vendor.

Chair Dixon thanked Mr. Hutchison for his presentation.

### **III. Other Business**

#### **A. Board of Directors Member Announcements**

Travis Cossey thanked Executive Director Sara Fields and all the OTO staff for their work on the Board training.

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

Chair Dixon stated he believed it might be beneficial to request that Southwest Missouri have an appointee on the Highway Commission. Mr. Cossey stated he believed it was important that the urban areas have a voice on the Commission as most of the current members are from rural areas. Mr. Cossey moved that Ms. Fields draft a letter based on this discussion and send it to the Board for their approval. Mr. Compton seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Mr. O'Neal moved Ms. Fields draft a letter to send to the Board of Directors for approval regarding BRO funds. Mr. Compton seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Additionally, it was determined that Executive Director Sara Fields will monitor proposed legislation to ascertain any transportation bills that the Board may want to discuss with their elected representatives.

#### **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. Jansen seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:45 p.m.