

**OZARKS TRANSPORTATION ORGANIZATION  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES  
JANUARY 18, 2024**

The Board of Directors of the Ozarks Transportation Organization met at its scheduled time of 12:00 p.m. in person.

The following members were present:

Chuck Branch, Christian Co Citizen-at-Large	Lynn Morris, Christian County
Greg Chapman, MoDOT (non-voting)	Andrew Nelson, City of Republic (a)
Cecelie Cochran, FHWA (not-voting)	John Russell, Greene County
Jerry Compton, Citizen-at-Large	Martha Smartt, City of Strafford (a)
Travis Cossey, City of Nixa (a)	Dan Smith, City of Springfield (a)
Mark Crabtree, City of Battlefield	Donna Stewart, City of Willard (a)
Brandon Jenson, City of Springfield	Kelly Turner, City Utilities
Derek Lee, City of Springfield	Richard Walker, Springfield Citizen-at-Large
Rusty MacLachlan, Greene County	

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

The following members were not present:

James O’Neal, Springfield Citizen-at-Large	Brian Weiler, Springfield-Branson Airport (a)
Jeremy Parsons, City of Ozark (a)	Vacant, FTA
Mark Schenkelberg, FAA	

Others Present: Erin Engelmeyer, Senator Hawley’s Office; Tucker Jobes and Mike Ussery, Senator Schmitt’s Office; Mike Ruesch, City of Willard; Frank Miller, MoDOT; Sean Matlock, OWN, Inc.; Garrett Brickner, Wilson & Company; Steve Childers, City of Springfield; Skip Jansen, former CU Transit Rep; Mary Kromrey, Ozark Greenways; Dave Faucett, Sara Fields, David Knaut, Natasha Longpine, Debbie Parks, Nicole Stokes, and Jen Thomas, Ozarks Transportation Organization.

Chair Lee called the meeting to order at approximately 12:02 p.m.

**I. Administration**

**A. Welcome and Roll Call**

By-law Position	Member	Attendance
BOD Citizen-at-Large	Jerry Compton	Present
Christian County Citizen-at-Large	Chuck Branch	Present
Christian County Elected Official	Lynn Morris	Present
City of Battlefield Elected Official	Mark Crabtree	Present
City of Nixa Elected Official	Travis Cossey (a)	Present
City of Ozark Elected Official	Jeremy Parsons (a)	Absent
City of Republic Elected Official	Andrew Nelson (a)	Present
City of Springfield Citizen-at-Large	Richard Walker	Present

City of Springfield Citizen-at-Large	James O’Neal	Absent
City of Springfield City Council Member	Dan Smith (a)	Present
City of Springfield City Council Member	Brandon Jenson	Present
City of Springfield City Council Member	Derek Lee	Present
City of Strafford Elected Official	Martha Smartt (a)	Present
City of Willard Elected Official	Donna Stewart (a)	Present
City Utilities Transit Representative	Kelly Turner	Present
Greene County Commissioner	Rusty MacLachlan	Present
Greene County Commissioner	John Russell	Present
Springfield-Branson National Airport Board Member	Brian Weiler (a)	Absent

A quorum was present.

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

Richard Walker moved to approve the January 18, 2024 agenda. Andrew Nelson seconded the motion. The motion passed.

**C. Approval of November 16, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

Brandon Jenson moved to approve the November 16, 2023 meeting minutes. Richard Walker seconded the motion. The motion passed.

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

The Chair advised there were public comments included in the packet and then asked for comments and questions.

**E. Executive Director’s Report**

Sara Fields presented Skip Jansen and Steve Childers with service recognition plaques for their service to the OTO Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors Strategic Planning Meeting will be held February 26<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am. The Board will be setting a five-year action plan.

The Safe Streets and Roads for All public meetings have been set. This is the beginning of the planning process for the SS4A Safety Plan. The public meetings are January 29<sup>th</sup> from 11:30 am – 1:30 pm at the Library Station, January 29<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm at the Ozark Community Center, and January 30<sup>th</sup> from 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm at the Republic Community Center.

There is a Right-of-Way Acquisition Workshop with MoDOT on March 25<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am. Invitations have been sent out.

Board members were requested to fill out the provided contact information sheet, conflict of interest form, and Title VI form, which is information requested by FTA.

Staff continue to work on project facilitation. There are 27 projects currently underway utilizing federal funds. Eighteen of those are trail and/or sidewalk projects. Staff are planning to release funds planned for the MoDOT sidewalk cost share program, if no applications are received by this fall.

Staff are working on two grants, more details to come in the agenda. Member jurisdictions were reminded to reach out to OTO staff if interested in grant application assistance.

Applications for funding for vehicles for human services agencies, 5310 funds, are open.

The OTO hired a lobbyist which has been working at the State Capitol toward the OTO priorities that were identified. More updates to come as the Legislative session gets underway.

There are meetings scheduled in February with the Technical Planning Committee for the STIP Prioritization Criteria revisions that were discussed at the last Board meeting.

OTO staff is looking forward to the year ahead.

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

Greg Chapman shared that Kenny Voss was hired as the State Design Engineer.

There have been 29 rural projects which were approximately 10% under what was programmed. There have been 16 urban projects awarded at \$25 million. This is approximately 20% over what was programmed. These are trending in a positive direction. Overall, 45 projects were awarded at \$87 million, 3.8% under programmed for the fiscal year.

The James River Freeway widening project will have some traffic shifts coming up. The work should be done over nighttime hours and will last approximately two months.

Glenstone ADA improvements have been affected by the weather. Work will continue as the weather permits. The focus is between Grand and Sunshine Street.

Bridge work continues with the Route 65 bridge widening and resurfacing of CC just south of 14.

The trail between Republic High School and Farm Road 182 is underway.

Route 14 capacity improvements in Nixa is close to completion.

There is a public meeting scheduled for the Sunshine Street ADA and safety improvement project, from Glenstone to County Road 199, for February 6<sup>th</sup> from 4:30 pm – 6:00 pm at the Schweitzer Student Center.

There was \$20 million in general revenue that was set aside for the I-44 Environmental Study. MoDOT has selected two consultants for the project.

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

Erin Engelmeyer with Senator Hawley's office reported Senator Hawley remains on the Judiciary, Energy and Natural Resources, Homeland Security, and Small Business committees.

Tucker Jobes with Senator Schmitt's office stated the Senate is currently considering a continuing resolution that would extend the short term CR's that were passed last year for funding of the government. Friday, January 19<sup>th</sup> is the deadline for transportation, VA, HUD, agriculture, and energy. For the rest of the government, the deadline is in early February. They are considering two

CRs that would extend until March 1<sup>st</sup> and March 8<sup>th</sup>, respectively. The Senator would like to return to a budget where they are voted on individually. There is discussion beginning on a National Security supplemental funding bill. This bill includes funding for Ukraine, Isarel, and border security. The Senator would like to see these voted on separately. The Senator continues to serve on the Senate on Armed Services and the Commerce Committee which includes transportation.

#### **H. Ozark Greenways Update**

Mary Kromrey shared an update on the activities of Ozark Greenways from February 2023 to the end of 2023. Ozark Greenways' purpose, for regional trail planning in the OTO service area boundary, is to increase regional trail connectivity by focusing on refining existing alignments identified in the 2017 OTO Regional Trail Study; to engage with landowners; to engage with OTO municipalities; and to increase community interest in trails. Ozark Greenways utilized \$748,000 in construction funds and \$125,000 in planning funds. There were 16 presentations made and 3 open houses reaching more than 150 residents. They contacted 8 landowners with more than 70 total touchpoints. They had print and electronic media exposure with 282,656 readerships. Ozark Greenways' UnGap the Map initiative focuses on expanding and closing gaps within the regional trail system. UnGap the Map promotes completing vital trail connections that leverage and enhance outdoor recreation and ecotourism opportunities, foster healthy communities and neighborhoods, and support economic development by increasing property values and assisting workforce attraction efforts. There have been 18.6 miles of greenways constructed which resulted in 71 miles of places for people that want to walk and bike.

## **II. New Business**

### **A. FY 2023 Independent Financial Statement Audit**

Travis Cossey presented a summary of the FY 2023 Independent Financial Statement Audit Report.

Dan Smith made a motion to accept the FY 2023 Independent Financial Statement Audit Report. Rusty MacLachlan seconded the motion. The motion passed.

### **B. Resolution to Approve Contracting with an Independent Financial Advisor**

Sara Fields reviewed the resolution authorizing the Executive Director to utilize the services of an Independent Financial Advisor.

Martha Smartt made a motion to approve a resolution to contract with an independent financial advisor. Jerry Compton seconded the motion. The motion passed.

### **C. Resolution to Approve Certificate of Deposit Investment**

Sara Fields reviewed the resolution authorizing investment of OTO operational funds into a collateralized public deposit account (Certificate of Deposit).

Andrew Nelson made a motion to approve a resolution to invest in certificates of deposit at Arvest Bank. Martha Smartt seconded the motion. The motion passed.

### **D. FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment 2**

Natasha Longpine shared there was one revision requested for I-44 pavement improvements (GR2302-24A2) as part of Amendment 2 to the FY 2024-2027 TIP. MoDOT requested an increase in the amount programmed for this project, due to an increase in estimated costs. The new

programmed amount is \$9,616,800.

John Russell made a motion to approve Amendment 2 to the FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program. Chuck Branch seconded the motion. The motion passed.

**E. Federal Discretionary Grant Support**

Sara Fields highlighted the resolutions and certifications to be added to the TIP, for the support of federal discretionary grants being applied for by the City of Springfield and OTO.

Rusty MacLachlan made a motion to approve the resolutions and certifications for trails and MM. Kelly Turner seconded the motion. The motion passed.

**F. Federal Funds Balance Report**

Natasha Longpine presented the Federal Funds Balance Report. It is important to obligate funds as quickly as possible, due to policy changes by MoDOT. Members were requested to review the report and advise staff of any discrepancies.

This was informational only. No action was required.

**G. Appointment of 2024 OTO Officers and Executive Committee Members**

Sara Fields presented the Board of Directors Nominating Committee's 2024 Slate of Officers and Executive Committee members.

Skip Jansen made a motion to appoint the 2024 OTO Officers and Executive Committee as presented. Dan Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed.

**H. Board of Directors 2024 Meeting Schedule**

Sara Fields shared the 2024 Board of Directors meeting schedule.

This was informational only. No action was required.

**III. Other Business**

**A. Board of Directors Member Announcements**

There were no member announcements.

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

Brandon Jenson asked if it was the Board's responsibility to create a unifying vision for transit service throughout the region that could help guide each of the municipalities' and counties' decisions in how funding is utilized for the transit system.

Sara Fields shared the OTO has a long range plan that looks at the overall picture of transit. OTO partnered with City Utilities previously [2012] to do a plan that looked at regional connections and gave a dollar amount to the communities to be able to provide that service. It is a subject that the Board can discuss.

Kelly Turner with City Utilities stated that the study that was just completed may provide answers to some of the questions. More details will be provided once the study has been presented to the City Utilities Board.

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

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

**IV. Adjourn meeting**

With no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:44 p.m.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Martha Smartt". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Martha Smartt  
OTO Secretary