

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE
EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD OF THE
GRAND FORKS/EAST GRAND FORKS
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

**Thursday, May 22nd, 2008 – 12:00 Noon
East Grand Forks City Hall Council Chambers**

CALL TO ORDER

Punky Beauchamp, Chairman, called the May 22nd, 2008, meeting of the MPO Executive Policy Board to order at 12:03 p.m.

CALL OF ROLL

On a Call of Roll the following members were present: Punky Beauchamp, Gary Malm, Warren Strandell, Art Bakken, Dick Grassel, Steve Adams, and Doug Christensen.

Staff present were: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Nancy Ellis, GF/EGF MPO Senior Planner; Teri Nelson GF/EGF MPO Planner; Ali Rood, GF/EGF MPO Intern; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF Executive Assistant.

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Chairman Beauchamp declared a quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 11TH, 2008, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD

MOVED BY GRASSEL, SECONDED BY MALM, TO APPROVE THE APRIL 11TH, 2008 MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS SUBMITTED.

Voting Aye: Malm, Grassel, Strandell, Bakken, Adams, and Beauchamp.

Voting Nay: None.

SUSPEND AGENDA

Haugen requested that the agenda be suspended at this time in order to allow for Ms. Rood, who will be presenting the first agenda item, to finish running copies. Chairman Beauchamp suspended the agenda to act on the second agenda item.

MATTER OF NDDOT STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION NEEDS AND FUNDING WORKSHOP

Haugen reported that the NDDOT hired Upper Great Plain Traffic Institute personnel to hold eight regional workshops to involve the public in discussion on transportation needs and funding.

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He explained that attendees were given the opportunity to voice their opinions concerning current and future system and program needs, funding options, and future decision-making processes at local state and federal levels. He said that one of these workshops was held in Grand Forks, and Mr. Beauchamp and several MPO staff members attended.

Haugen commented that representatives from NDDOT were present at the last Technical Advisory Committee, and gave a brief presentation on the findings from those workshops. He pointed out that a copy of that presentation was included in the packets.

Haugen stated that there has been a real effort in North Dakota to try to bring this issue to the legislative session. He explained that the North Dakota Association of Counties submitted a proposal requesting that funds be transferred to the Highway Distribution fund to help close the current estimated \$400,000,000 funding gap. He added that currently most of the funds generated by transportation related taxes and fees and are going into the general fund, and if it were put into the distribution fund it would allow for about \$130 million extra dollars.

Haugen referred to the power point document (a copy of which is included in the file and available upon request) and went over it briefly.

Information only.

Christensen reported present.

MATTER OF DRAFT FREIGHT STUDY

Ali Rood, GF/EGF MPO Intern, introduced herself and explained that she is here today to introduce the scope-of-work for the Freight Study.

Rood referred to a power point presentation (a copy of which is included in the file and available upon request), and went over it briefly.

Rood reported that back in November the MPO Executive Board adopted the 2035 Street/Highway Plan, acknowledging at that time that we would need to become compliant with SAFETEA-LU requirements. She explained that for the most part we are in compliance, however, in a letter from NDDOT, a request was made for us to do an independent freight study for our 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan.

Rood pointed out that the study goals include:

- 1) Creating a freight map that includes:
 - a. Rail networks.
 - b. Truck routes.
 - c. Truck crash locations.
 - d. Truck traffic volumes.
 - e. Freight dependent land uses.

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- 2) Collecting stakeholder input by:
 - a. Surveying the freight community.
 - b. Meeting with representatives from the Mill, UPS, and/or FedEx.
 - c. Holding a public open house.
- 3) Putting together an independent freight study document.

Rood then went over the timeline for the project, pointing out that the final document is expected to be completed in May.

Information only.

MATTER OF 32ND AVENUE TRAFFIC OPERATIONS STUDY

Haugen reported that our 2008 Work Program originally identified that we would retain A.T.A.C. to assist us in a signal coordination study for our arterial networks, however we have since been informed that A.T.A.C. will not be able to proceed with that study at this time, therefore staff determined that because of some major issues with the 32nd Avenue Corridor, we would instead do a traffic operations study on that corridor.

Haugen commented that an RFP was sent out, and four proposals were received. He explained that the selection committee did meet, and interviewed all four firms, and are recommending that the MPO Executive Policy Board enter into a contract with Alliant Engineering, with Ulteig Engineering as a sub-consultant, not to exceed \$25,000.00.

MOVED BY BAKKEN, SECONDED BY ADAMS, TO APPROVE ENTERING INTO A CONTRACT WITH ALLIANT ENGINEERING TO PERFORM THE 32ND AVENUE TRAFFIC OPERATIONS STUDY NOT TO EXCEED \$25,000.00.

***Voting Aye: Malm, Grassel, Strandell, Bakken, Adams, Christensen, and Beauchamp.
Voting Nay: None.***

MATTER OF RIGHT-OF-WAY IMAGING RFP

Nelson reported that the MPO Work Plan identified an update to the 2003 Right-Of-Way Digital Imaging. She explained that this is necessary for the upkeep of our pavement management system, which allows us to rate our pavement conditions for maintenance purposes.

Nelson commented that because the May Technical Advisory Committee meeting was held earlier than normal, staff was not able to get the committee's input and approval on the RFP, however it was sent out via e-mail and no comments or concerns were received. She added that a request was made to include an option to have pricing done to measure sign retro-reflectivity as well.

Nelson stated that the budget for this project is \$50,000.

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MOVED BY MALM, SECONDED BY BAKKEN, TO APPROVE THE RIGHT-OF-WAY DIGITAL IMAGING RFP TO PROVIDE 2008 DIGITAL IMAGERY SERVICES WITH THE INCLUSION OF THE OPTION FOR SIGN RETRO-REFLECTIVITY.

***Voting Aye: Malm, Grassel, Strandell, Bakken, Adams, Christensen, and Beauchamp.
Voting Nay: None.***

MATTER OF UPDATE ON COLLECTOR/COLLECTOR CONTROL STRATEGY STUDY

Haugen reported the 2007 Work Program identified that we hire a consultant to assist in reviewing our standard of traffic control for intersections between two functionally classified roads that are not currently signalized. He explained that this was not completed in 2007, and has been amended into our 2008 program year. He stated that a public meeting concerning this was held on May 15th.

Haugen referred to slides illustrating the intersections being studied, and went over the various options suggested for the four intersections it is felt need to be addressed the most (a copy of these slides are included in the file and available upon request).

Haugen stated that this has to go through the City of Grand Forks' approval process, and needs to be approved by the Technical Advisory Committee as well.

Information only.

MATTER OF MPO RETIREMENT CHANGE

Haugen reported that the City of Grand Forks recently approved changing their employee pension plan to NDPERS. He explained that, as you all know, the MPO tries mirrors the City of Grand Forks' benefit plan as closely as possible, so staff inquired as to whether or not MPO employees would be able to be included in NDPERS as well. He stated that Grand Forks City Staff were told by NDPERS that the MPO would need to submit answers to a questionnaire in order for them to determine whether or not we would qualify for the NDPERS plan. He said that this was done, however after consideration and review by the Attorney General's office, we were told that we do not qualify for the NDPERS plan, therefore staff is now looking at what alternatives might be available that will allow us to remain on par, as closely as possible, with the City of Grand Forks employees.

Christensen asked how many full-time employees the MPO has. Haugen responded that there are currently four full-time employees, however Ms. Nelson has not yet been with the MPO for a full year and is not, therefore, eligible for pension until August. Christensen asked what the legal status of the MPO is. Haugen responded that the MPO was created through Memorandum of Understanding between the Governors of Minnesota and North Dakota.

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Haugen gave a brief overview on the current pension status for both himself, as a department head, and for the remaining staff.

Christensen asked what would happen if the MPO employees were to become city employees. Haugen responded that we would be treated in the same manner as any new city employee, and would be able to be included in the NDPERS plan. Christensen stated that this is something that he feels should be looked into, as it is counterintuitive to continue in a defined contribution plan if there is any possibility of getting into a defined benefit plan.

After some discussion, Bakken requested that staff continue to explore all options, including the possibility of becoming city employees, and bring that information back to the board.

Information only.

OTHER BUSINESS

1. T.I.P. Administrative Modification To FY2008-2011 T.I.P.

Haugen distributed copies of a letter he drafted to Dave Leftwich, NDDOT-Local Government, concerning a T.I.P. modification. He explained that the City of Grand Forks received FTA New Freedom funds to allow for earlier Saturday transit service, which will still occur with this modification, but, because the cost of the earlier service has been reduced due to a change in how late the service is provided, those remaining funds are now going to be used to purchase a demand response vehicle that was identified as being funded from a different source. He stated that because this is a modification, the financial constraint of the T.I.P. has not been compromised, but we do need action by the MPO Executive Policy Board.

***MOVED BY BAKEN, SECONDED BY GRASSEL, TO APPROVE THE T.I.P.
ADMINISTRATIVE MODIFICATION TO THE FY2008-2011 T.I.P..***

***Voting Aye: Malm, Grassel, Strandell, Bakken, Adams, Christensen, and Beauchamp.
Voting Nay: None.***

2. June MPO Executive Policy Board Meeting

Haugen reported that the next MPO Executive Policy Board Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 19th, 2008.

3. Crosswalks

Grassel commented that the City of East Grand Forks put in an in-ground crosswalk by the golf course. He said that he was skeptical when it was decided to go with that type of crosswalk, but he has found that it works very well, and urged everyone to take a look at it when they have time.

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ADJOURNMENT

***MOVED BY GRASSEL TO ADJOURN THE MAY 22ND, 2008, MEETING OF THE MPO
EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD AT 12:50 P.M.***

***Voting Aye: Malm, Grassel, Strandell, Bakken, Adams, Christensen, and Beauchamp.
Voting Nay: None.***

Respectfully submitted by,

Peggy McNelis, Executive Assistant