

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD
OF THE GRAND FORKS/EAST GRAND FORKS
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
Wednesday, January 26, 2022 - 12:00 Noon
East Grand Forks Training Conference Room/Zoom Meeting**

CALL TO ORDER

Jeannie Mock, Chairperson, called the January 26th, 2022, meeting of the MPO Executive Policy Board to order at 12:00 p.m.

CALL OF ROLL

On a Call of Roll the following members were present: Jeannie Mock, Marc DeMers, Warren Strandell, Bob Rost, Mike Powers, Clarence Vetter, Al Grasser, and Ken Vein.

Absent: None.

Guest(s): Meghan Arbegest, Grand Forks Herald.

Staff present: Earl Haugen, GF/EGF MPO Executive Director; Teri Kouba, GF/EGF MPO Senior Planner; and Peggy McNelis, GF/EGF MPO Office Manager.

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Mock declared a quorum was present.

MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 15TH, 2021, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD

MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY ROST, TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 15TH, 2021, MINUTES OF THE MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD, AS PRESENTED.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MATTER OF UPDATE ON FUTURE BRIDGE TRAFFIC IMPACT STUDY

Haugen reported that included in the packet is a presentation that was provided to the Technical Advisory Committee two Wednesdays ago.

Haugen referred to the presentation (a copy of which is included in the file and available upon request), and commented that there was an Open House in December as well as an on-line version of it that was available until January 6th, so this presentation captures all of the feedback they received from those two events.

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Haugen stated that this is the last month on the contract with Alliant, and so any comments on the Draft Report that has been available to this board and the Technical Advisory Committee, were due at noon today. He said that they didn't receive any comments this morning, but they got comments from about five or so other people so the Final Report will be finalized and posted on January 31st.

Haugen commented that the Open House itself; again we were showing people the study from start to the point it was at at the time of the open house, and explained that we were looking at three scenarios; no added bridge, a bridge at Elks location and a bridge at 32nd location, and then we were showing them a matrix that we used to try to show the differences for each of the three scenarios.

Haugen stated that we used the typical methods of advertising. He said that the in-person event had fairly low attendance, 20 people or so attended, but the weather that day was not the best, it was bad early that morning, but it did improve somewhat by that evening, but still it wasn't the best. He stated that on-line participation was a bit better with over 360 people filling out the survey, but we also have several thousand people view the open house material.

Haugen said that getting into the specifics of the survey; we didn't ask many questions, he thinks there were five total. He went over the questions and the responses briefly. He stated that comments officially ended on January 6th, but these responses also included a few that were received prior to January 12th, so they went a little beyond the closing date.

Haugen commented that one thing they did was to develop a word cloud from the online responses. He explained that this shows the word or words that came up the most often, and the biggest word is bridge, which isn't too surprising, but then you will also see that the words traffic and school are also larger as well. He said that these are all the things most people are concerned about or commented about the most.

Haugen said that demographics, specifically race, age, gender, are things that we have to ask on our survey. He stated that they didn't ask them for a place of residence, but in the survey responses most of it was online, and so the IP address, or the cell tower, would register so we do get some sense of where people that were filling out the survey were located. He said that he can't tell you that these equate exactly to the place of residence of the person, but when we look at just the place where Grand Forks was identified as the city the response was coming from, there were a total of 208 out of the 360 responses from Grand Forks, and 75 said that 32nd Avenue did not fit the purpose and need well, but 118 said that it fit very well or well, and then there were 10 that were neutral and 5 that left it blank.

Haugen reported that the Ad Hoc Group met on January 17th here in this room and we presented these findings and went over the information with them, and he thinks each one of the Ad Hoc Group members kind of gave their perspective of the study and the answers received to the question of which alternative do you prefer, and it probably reflects as much as this does, the majority of the members favored 32nd Avenue, with Elks second. The no build option didn't have

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anyone advocating for it, so there wasn't 27% of the Ad Hoc Group saying don't build another bridge.

Haugen stated that basically the report is identifying all the traffic impacts, it is identifying cost considerations, some benefit considerations, and unlike the hydraulic study, which did eliminate and weed out some site choices, this report was not able to find any fatal flaws to Elks or 32nd. He said that both sites could achieve a purpose and needs statement, but the report also identifies that 32nd Avenue has more pluses behind it than Elks does.

Haugen said that, again, there will be a few tweaks, the comments they received don't cause any real significant changes to the essence of the document or the findings of the document or anything, they are editorial changes for the most part, adding some things that have been built since we started the study to get it up to date in that respect, so that report will be posted and finalized at the end of January, so from an MPO Executive Board point of view what we would ask you to do is to approve the report, and that way we can close out the contract, and then you can have discussion as to what we do next with the report.

Mock stated, then, that in terms of today it is just discussion, we won't take action until next month when we have the final report, correct. Haugen responded that, again, we have in essence 99.9% of the report provided to you, there are just those few editorial things that are being done to it, so you do have the option of tabling this for a month when you would have the true final report which will be posted on the January 31st, or if you are comfortable you can approve it today so that we can close out the contract.

Vein commented that he feels we do need to have more discussion but he is also perfectly satisfied with approving the study so we can take it to the next level. DeMers asked if the study is complete. Haugen responded that it is 99.9% done, it is some editorial comments and adding on some bike facilities that were added the last 18 months, none of which would force a real change to the results of the study.

MOVED BY VEIN, SECONDED BY DEMERS, TO APPROVE THE FUTURE BRIDGE TRAFFIC IMPACT STUDY AS PRESENTED, SUBJECT TO EDITORIAL CORRECTIONS AND ADDITION OF NEW BIKE FACILITIES NOT ALREADY INCLUDED.

Voting Aye: Mock, DeMers, Powers, Rost, Strandell, Vein, Grasser and Vetter.

Voting Nay: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: None.

Vein asked for a brief summary of how we got to where we are today, and what he means is this is currently in the transportation plan, which has been adopted by both cities, and we brought it back and did the Ad Hoc, we did the Hydraulic Study, so it is currently on our plan, we've done additional studies, and now we need to move it on right. Haugen responded that the only thing he would possibly add to that is that since the early 2000s, 32nd Avenue and Merrifield Bridges have been part of our official transportation plan; to add two new structures over the river, and

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that has been updated every five years, as required. He added that the only major thing that would highlight the 2018 transportation plan action, is that perhaps that was the first time, specifically on the Grand Forks side where there was not just a vote to keep the federal funds flowing, but a vote to actually identify and confirm locations of additional bridge crossings, so that would be the major change from the early 2000s, in 2018 he thinks the action from the Grand Forks side was more specific in identifying sites. He stated that since the 2018 Transportation Plan, we were going to review more specifically the City to City bridge location, and we were going to do a similar study that we did for Merrifield back in the mid-2000s, and that was termed a Feasibility Study but we included hydraulics and traffic impacts, and our State and Federal Partners said that yes we were able to do that using MPO funds then, but that is no longer the case now so we couldn't do the hydraulic study. So then both Cities took that on as a cost share. He said that instead of looking at just Elks and 32nd they looked at other sites, including 47th, from a hydraulic point of view, and had some different specific alignments related to 32nd, and at the end of the hydraulic study was an agreement that the two corridors that we studied were the two promising ones to move forward, but before we issued the final RFP you asked if there were any other sites that people wanted to support and there was some thought that perhaps 17th would be brought back in but in the end no one made a move to bring anything else back except for Elks and 32nd, so we studied those two corridors and the matrix table identifies that 32nd has more pluses behind it than Elks does, but in general there is a potential to build one or the other, preferably it seems that the general public is also supportive of 32nd, so it is affirming the decision made in 2018.

Vein agreed that in 2018 we did a full transportation study, and they did a traffic analysis and that identified 32nd as the preferred location and both Cities and the MPO approved that, correct. Haugen responded it was correct. Vein said that since then we have done additional studies just to maybe further support or answer questions like could that work; we needed to know the hydraulics if that could work, that report has been done, so this was an Ad Hoc process, and some of that was restudied as part of the Ad Hoc process, and the Ad Hoc process was only intended to serve as a recommendation and to try to obtain public input but the Ad Hoc Group has no authority, correct. Haugen responded that that is correct and added that the Ad Hoc Group was just formed to assist with the study process, it was not granted any authority to make any recommendations even, but just to help guide us through the process and to get word back to their respective neighborhoods and entities that they were serving on the committee. He said that the study itself was set up to see if there were any fatal flaws from an early environmental point of view that we could identify, and with two locations we were not able to find any fatal flaws to say that we should no longer look at "x" because there is a spotted frog located there, or whatever other environmental issue might have come up, but we were able to show that comparing the two sites there were some pluses and minuses that showed a lot of similarities between the two sites, but when we looked at the differences 32nd had more pluses than Elks, and then we got more public input and we shared more information and education to the public and the we received more favorable responses for 32nd than for Elks or for the no-build option.

Haugen commented that if you look at the December minutes, it asks "where do we go from here", it seems that the next step would be to go through the NEPA process and get a document that delves deeper into the details from a more specific site location. He added that as he

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described last month, you have some options within that project development process, you can be as narrow as saying that 32nd Avenue Corridor, work within “x” feet of that corridor alignment to find out and finalize the alternative alignments and review all of them and get feedback and comments and the details done on that. Or you can be wider and still include Elks, but it doesn’t make sense to include other sites, but that would be an option. He stated that it really something that is lead by both Cities, just like the hydraulic study was led by both Cities, the next step in the project development would be something that would be lead by both Cities that is really not a State Highway or a County facility, so you are the most logical authorities to take charge for the next step. He said that you will have to probably identify, as you do in most of these joint efforts, a lead City, and then because it is a Bi-State issue you would also have to identify a Lead State and a Lead Federal Highway Division, and typically when the Lead City is on the North Dakota Side the NDDOT and Federal Highway North Dakota follows as a lead.

Vein stated that it sounds like there is a role for the Cities and a role for the MPO; are they separate, does the MPO give a recommendation to the Cities, how does that work. Haugen responded that if the Cities go through the project development and they weren’t going to look at 32nd Avenue the role of the MPO would be to say to them that they are no longer being consistent with our Transportation Plan and until we change our Transportation Plan we aren’t going to support any bridge that isn’t on 32nd Avenue if it is not being part of any further study between the two Cities, so as long as the Project Development is still consistent with the Transportation Plan, it flows well, and if the Project Development starts to take turns away from being consistent with the Transportation Plan it starts to become more cumbersome to have the federal funds flow towards the project. He added that at some point you will have to agree that the project development is still consistent with the plan and then at some point, assuming funds will flow to it, you will have to prioritize it within your Transportation Plan and TIP document.

DeMers said, from a pragmatic standpoint, we should decide that if we want to move forward with the NEPA process, between Grand Forks and East Grand Forks, which is the best route to go. He said that the last path we took, Grand Forks took the lead, and he thinks we consulted with AE2S on the hydraulic study, but it was led by Grand Forks. He added that he thought that worked well, he was happy with the process, although there was a slight timing issue when information came out in Grand Forks before it came out in East Grand Forks, but that kind of thing happens and he understands that, so he doesn’t have a problem with Grand Forks trying to take the lead on this if that is in their interest, but if that is the case is that something that will pass through your council or the powers that be over there. He said that it might be a good thing because he would imagine that the test will be on the North Dakota side anyway, so if you can’t get that through, for East Grand Forks to start doing the work on our side and then it isn’t approved on the North Dakota side, it would make more sense to put it to the test right away and then he would think that East Grand Forks would be willing participants in the same manner we were on the hydraulic study.

Grasser commented that what he thinks he is hearing; he thinks that the process should involve, because they are doing this now on the 42nd Grade Separation and the 47th Interchange, and what happens is you end up having to up-front the money to kind of develop a project, you are past what you can get planning money for, you aren’t really into necessarily what you can program

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projects from, and then he would suspect that we would probably need a Joint Powers Agreement between the two Cities that would start to actually identify those things that we are talking about like whose the lead, how much money do you put in, all of those things. He stated that that process, from what they have seen like on the 42nd Grade Separation and what not, we are going to be into the \$200,000 to \$500,000 range. DeMers agreed, adding that he was thinking with the river that it would be in the million-dollar range. Grasser said that it would depend on how far we take it, but the point is it will be at least a six-figure activity, and we won't know all the numbers until you go through and define the scope and such, but just to give a sense of what it might entail. DeMers asked if, on an interstate bridge, is typically the structure of a Joint Powers type of agreement or is it done in other ways. Haugen responded that with the State structures there is a Master Agreement that is in place and then each structure has each take it turn; here the Point Bridge is a local structure, and he really doesn't know how that is organized, is there a formal agreement on the Point Bridge itself. DeMers said then, that to your point we should probably just have your attorney go through it. He added that Grand Forks has taken the lead on a lot of these kinds of things, and have more manpower, so if you think we should.

Vetter stated that there is more buy-in on the Minnesota side of the river so if we took the lead, it might get done faster. DeMers responded that that is true, but his only fear is that we get so far and decide we are going to put money towards it and we start putting money towards it and then Grand Forks has a 4-3 vote or a veto and then it stops, we are out a lot. Grasser commented that he thinks that any of these types of projects, and again he is thinking of 47th and 42nd, that money is at some level of risk as to whether or not that project will actually happen, or if it will happen quickly enough so you can actually use the environmental documents that you produce because they have been caught on that, on the 47th Interchange they had an Environmental Study ready to be filed basically seven or eight years ago, but they have a shelf life of about three to five years, and now that they are looking at it again they had to restart the whole process over, so again, just recognizing there is a level of risk on some of the dollars that would be coming out through the process. Vein stated that the only advantage is with the infrastructure monies that may be available now, this may be an opportune time that we wouldn't otherwise have, and we need to get them shovel ready, so it would seem like we need to do this NEPA process. He added that he has seen where some pieces of the NEPA only last a year or six months, and you have to redo certain pieces of it. DeMers said, then, that maybe the best approach is to concurrently go back and talk to administrators and have them start talking together about who wants to take the lead and then maybe they would have a better understanding of the feasibility of doing the process. Vetter stated that he can contact Mr. Murphy and have him put it on their next work session as a topic of discussion and get everyone's feelings on it and then go from there. He added that he thinks that time is of the essence here to get something done.

Mock commented that with the Grand Forks side leading the Hydraulic Study, you could argue that it should again lead this, but she can also see an argument to have East Grand Forks lead to make it a joint effort. DeMers said, again that his fear is; he agrees with Mr. Vetter, he thinks that East Grand Forks can get this going faster than Grand Forks, but his fear is that, based on comments in social media, that the perception is that it is all driven by East Grand Forks, so if we take the lead and it seems like we are pushing Grand Forks, it just because another part of that narrative, and that is one of his fears that it will seem like this is an East Grand Forks driven

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project, so maybe somehow working on it concurrently, and getting the administrators involved, and try to have the conversation at the same time, and really which agency or which side takes the lead on the staff and the actual work part of it, isn't very important because we are going to come to the same type of fiscal breakdown roughly, plus or minus, so it is really just how do we make sure it is approved on both sides.

Vein stated that that is why he asked, where are we going, he thinks it is our responsibility to take it to that next level and to recommend that. He said that he likes the idea that the administrators need to get together on how we do that, but he wouldn't mind a motion coming out of here to both City's Administration that we are supportive of implementing the transportation plan as has been approved, and can we get together and outline that process. He added that he would agree, it is our city council that will make the final decision, and he is assuming it is yours too, so do we vote to support this. He asked when the next Transportation Plan update is scheduled to occur, we did it in 2018 and it is a 25-year plan, correct. Haugen responded that that is correct. Vein said, then, that 2023 is when it should be coming up. Haugen responded that actual date we need to have an updated plan is January of 2024, when it has to be signed, sealed, delivered, reviewed, commented on, corrected, etc. He said that for the plan itself the RFP is currently being reviewed by our State and Federal partners to hire a consultant, and it may be before you at your March meeting to release, you will have that consultant on board and on the ground maybe by June of this year and it takes a year and a half to complete.

Vein said that at a minimum he thinks that each City Rep has to go back to their respective City Council and see what kind of agreement we need to write. DeMers agreed, adding that he thinks the initial focus should be that NEPA document; isn't our primary concern right now is getting that started. He said that if it is the goal of this board, or the Cities, to have a completed project we need to know what steps we need to do and the biggest one is that NEPA document and having that ready to go in the event that dollars do become available.

Powers asked if Mr. Vetter is going to have this put on the next council agenda. He said that he wants to see it move forward. Vetter responded that he could do that.

Grasser commented that, if he can, there might be a piece in there that might even precede the NEPA document, and that is identifying where the desired funding might come from. He said that, for instance, East Grand Forks may get State monies, and if we are looking at federal funding, there are different rules that you have to meet so we may need to validate, through the DOT, the process in which we would actually be able to get the money qualified. DeMers said that that is why he is suggesting we get a concurrent path set by the two councils or the representatives of the councils to get this process going but with the idea of having them address staff, administrators, engineering and say that our goal is to get this document going, let's lay out the plan, and then fund that knowing that; and yes, we may be eligible for State bonding for some of this and we have legislatures that are looking at this currently, so maybe we end up being the default lead because of that, but we aren't going to be able to do that talking in this room, he thinks the goal is to have sort of resolution either here or in both councils that says that

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we need to get these people on board with this goal in mind, and we need this document as a deliverable.

Mock commented that she would like to see part of that discussion though, if there is a possibility for Minnesota State funding, there are Minnesota Environmental rules that are more stringent than North Dakota, so she would like to see that as part of the discussion and it leads to consideration in case Minnesota needs to be the lead because, to your point, if they would receive state funds they would have to follow Minnesota rules. DeMers agreed that he would imagine that they would have to follow Minnesota rules if you are on the Minnesota side, but he would imagine the personnel is probably the biggest issue, whose doing it is probably different from one side to the other. Mock agreed, but added that Minnesota is more stringent, and specific State of Minnesota rules if there are State projects at a hand.

Grasser said that this potential funding source may bring in some nuances that have to be addressed in the process so that will be an interesting process. Haugen stated that you may want to request your State partners to come to one of your meetings, give them six weeks to prepare what you want, and then have discussion as to what financing they envision on their side, and help you formulate the next steps for you to inform you councils. Vein said that it is just critically important that we figure out, what he is going to say is, the proper procedure to bring the project forward, there are a lot of Ad Hoc groups out there that are doing some of their own thought processes, and even meeting with officials, but whether that is right or wrong, he isn't going there, but the idea of how do we now move this project forward that we have done all this work so far, and have the results that we think substantiate going to the next level, what is does that process actually look like and how quickly can we implement it so we can take advantage of funding while we can. He said that it isn't necessarily an MPO issue, it is more of a City issue from here on forward, is that what your are saying. Haugen responded that it is more "lead" by the cities now. He said that the MPO still makes decisions and approvals, but most of it now is lead at the local level.

Powers stated that, now that you brought up these other groups, what is the Chamber trying to accomplish. Rost responded that Mr. Whilfart from the Chamber is trying to get a meeting of those people, and himself, to go to Bismarck to talk to the NDDOT. Powers said that that is excellent. Strandell added that they are trying to meet with MNDOT as well.

Vein asked, just for his clarification, what is the intent of these meetings. Strandell responded that they want to investigate some issues with both financing of both bridges. He added that the Chamber group is pushing the Merrifield Bridge more so than the inter-city bridge. Vein said that when we did our transportation study did look at all the bridges back in 2018, and each one, from his point of view, has a different potential benefit, and so that is probably what each group may be looking at but each one has it own different benefits and we do know our transportation plan has identified, from the city perspective, an intercity bridge is what is needed, and he thinks everybody, from his perspective, is in favor of both bridges, the problem he sees is do they compete with each other for funding, and if they are going to compete with each other for funding then we better try to make sure we are all on the same page, and that is why he is supportive of what we've done with the MPO, which is a metropolitan idea, not trying to pit one

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against the other, how do we do that. Haugen commented that the one meeting he went to with the Chamber, before Christmas, he thinks there was an agreement on four big projects that they want to discuss, both bridges were included as part of the four and the other two, and this would be mainly on the North Dakota side, was the 42nd Street Grade Separation and the 47th Interchange, so all four projects were being discussed and were said to be their priorities to try to get help financing them. He said that, as has been described many times, Merrifield has maybe a little more push because there is less controversy, it has the hydraulic and feasibility reports completed, but right now it is almost on par with 32nd Avenue because there really hasn't been any additional work done since that feasibility report, and now with the hydraulic study for 32nd being done, they are more on par. Vein asked when the Merrifield Feasibility report was done. Haugen responded that it was done in 2005 or 2007. Vein said that that was almost twenty years ago. Haugen agreed but added that there isn't much change in the NEPA information for that location. Mock asked if this means that Merrifield couldn't receive federal funds right now either. Vetter responded that it isn't a shovel ready project. Haugen added that both bridges could receive federal to advance the NEPA process, but it is a little more tricky on the Minnesota side as MnDOT's policy is that their federal funds only go towards construction, on the North Dakota side they allow federal funds to go toward project development; in fact you now see on our TIP every year a lumping of project development, mainly for North Dakota State Highway projects, but on the North Dakota side, certainly federal funds can be used, on the Minnesota side about the only way you get federal funds is through an earmark, and that is still an option through the appropriation process on an annual basis.

Grasser said that on the competition thing, he thinks that is a very valid concern, and correct him if you see it much differently, but the Merrifield Bridge is, he understands would be a county led project and the counties, even though there may be federal money, the State of North Dakota treats it a little bit like a different pot, unless they go after the bridge money, so he doesn't think it is a given that there is a real head-to-head competition for federal money between the Merrifield and an intercity bridge. He stated that he isn't saying it is or isn't, he is saying that we shouldn't decide or assume right now that it is one or the other because there is enough wiggle room in there that they may not be directly competing with each other. He added that he isn't advocating anything with this statement, per say, but one of the things that has come up with the intercity bridge is the comment that we wish would have built this thing 30 years ago, right before development came in, yada yada, and he is a little afraid on the Merrifield bridge that if time goes by there is already some development out there, there is some discussion about other developments in that area and the more that it gets developed, when the time comes to build it you are going to have push back, so he thinks timing is an issue out there, he thinks the sooner the better, how that fits in the financing he doesn't know, it is a conundrum that he doesn't have an answer to but he hates to kick that one too far down the pipe because he thinks it is doable now and he doesn't want to end up with another 32nd Avenue saturation in 20 years and then have to have that fight. DeMers commented that at least there is signage that says it is a future bridge corridor.

Haugen stated that the only thing he would add is the New Reauthorization crafted out two new programs specifically for bridges, and so our recent history in North Dakota for funding wasn't a separate program of money just for bridges, now that is being introduced into the program so we

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aren't sure how that will shake out but there is \$45 million dollars in here to North Dakota for bridges; and then the second bridge programs is a national program, and in the law it guarantees that each State will receive one mega bridge, or the State can choose to split it into two bridges, so you are guaranteed in the national competition that one of your causes will be funded out of that pot and that is separate from the annual bridge program. He added that Minnesota has \$225 million a year.

Vein said that it does seem like each City Representative needs to talk to their respective administration, and he doesn't know if we do it separately or if all four of us come together to have that discussion, that would be one of his questions; and then decide a path of how you bring it back to each of our councils. DeMers stated that that may be something that we can discuss outside of this Board; it becomes a City issue and not necessarily an MPO Board issue. Vein agreed and said that we need to start talking about that as a separate issue of what we are going to do with the 32nd bridge.

Mock said then that we maybe don't need a formal motion, we just need future discussion after those conversations. DeMers said that he would defer to Mr. Vein's thoughts. Vein stated that he can go either way, but he does think there is some value to having the MPO supporting what we want to do to move forward, not choosing it, but moving forward with the process. He added that we are in agreement that the City reps need to go talk to their Administration and City Councils, and determine a path forward. Haugen suggested that you might want to ask the MPO to try to get the DOT people to come to your March meeting and give them that six weeks prep time and to allow them to add it to their schedule. Vein asked if we could do both things, make a motion that we ask the DOTs to come and meet with us and at the same time, in parallel, have the two communities start working together administratively. He said that he would be willing to make a motion to that effect.

MOVED BY VEIN, SECONDED BY DEMERS, TO APPROVE MPO STAFF CONTACT THE NDDOT AND MnDOT REPRESENTATIVES TO REQUEST THEY ATTEND THE MARCH MPO EXECUTIVE POLICY BOARD MEETING.

Grasser commented that he is okay with the motion as long as we aren't implying that this excludes the Elks Drive location, he isn't quite ready to give up on that one yet, so as long as we are studying the process. He added that he understands that 32nd has got all the technical engineering that says that that is where it should go, but 32nd is also going to have the most determined push back, so he is struggling with which one can we ultimately deliver, so he just isn't quite ready to give up, so as long as this doesn't specifically exclude Elks he is okay with it. Vein said, though, that it doesn't specifically include it either. Mock agreed, adding that she doesn't think it determined at this point.

Voting Aye: Mock, DeMers, Powers, Rost, Strandell, Vein, Grasser and Vetter.

Voting Nay: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: None.

Mock stated that before we move on, there were a lot of comments about school safety, and she knows we have some Safe Routes to School planning and different plans, is that something, and that might be beyond the MPO and more of a City issue, maybe more for Mr. Grasser, but is that something that we can get brought to council to look at those school safety plans and what we need to do to actually address those issues regardless of any other action or inaction. Grasser responded that he has to think about how run that because that was vetted through this process, so he isn't exactly sure what we would do, and he isn't saying we shouldn't, he just doesn't have a path forward right now. Vein added that he thinks we can talk about that at the same time. Mock agreed, adding that there were a lot of concerns about school safety and she thinks we have some plans that Safe Routes To School have done, and she doesn't know for herself what lies with the School District, what lies with the City, she would just be interested if there are things that we should be implementing in terms of public safety, so she would like to see that move forward as a council member. Grasser stated that he would agree, adding that he thinks that maybe part of that discussion of what we don't want to have is that the School Board take a stance that that would be problematic. Mock said that no matter what, no bridge action has even occurred at Merrifield and that has been in the works for how long, so she doesn't think we can sit here for five years and not address school safety, so she would like to see some of that addressed, if it is a concern today it should be addressed today. Haugen commented that you will see on another agenda item that there is going to be more planning funds flowing through the MPO, certainly school safety planning would be an eligible activity, so depending on how it is framed you could initiate a work program study on that. He added that he knows that Grand Forks Engineering has hired a firm to look closer at some of these issues, and he thinks school crossing was one of the items they are looking at, but he isn't sure where that is at, and how the two would merge together. Mock said that she doesn't think we need a formal motion, she just wants to put it out there as something that we should look at, and that may be more on the Grand Forks side than East Grand Forks, so if there is a desire for a study, we can bring it back.

MATTER OF DRAFT REP FOR BIKE/PED ELEMENT UPDATE

Haugen reported that we have three elements that comprise our Transportation Plan; the Transit Development element, which is underway to being updated to 2050; the Bike/Ped is a separate element that needs to be updated to 2050; and then the Street and Highway element is one that you may look at in March to release.

Haugen stated that this is the first time that the Bike/Ped update will be going through a consultant process, before it was always done in-house with local staff, so in the packet was an RFP that has been vetted through both staff. He said that there is one difference that perhaps the MPO staff has with the Technical Advisory Committee. He stated that that difference deals with a term called "Complete Street Policy". He explained that the difference is that the Technical Advisory Committee is saying not to even have that as part of the consideration in the process, and staff is saying to keep it as a part of consideration, not necessarily that is the outcome, but it is one tool in the toolbox that MPO staff would suggest we keep in but a technical committee might say to take that tool out at this time and not have it included in this process, that is the only real difference he can state between the two recommendations, otherwise it is \$120,000 consultant costs. He said that we also, because this meeting date was moved back a week, have

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already communicated with the local staff on the Selection Committee as to whether the new schedule fits them and they are comfortable with that new schedule and it will still be scheduled for a March execution of a contract from a scope of work, so if the RFP is approved today it will be released out through the NDDOT process, due the first Friday in March, and vetted through and before you at your March meeting for execution of the contract to hire a consultant.

Haugen reiterated that the only real decision other than approving the RFP is whether or not you want to keep the tool in the toolbox or do you want to take it out of the toolbox before we start the process.

DeMers said that in the minutes of the last Technical Advisory Committee meeting it sounded like a lot of the hesitancy was coming from Grand Forks Engineering; what is the nature of the hesitancy or what is the fear of including it. Grasser responded that Complete Streets is a term that can mean a whole lot of different things. He said that the City of Grand Forks actually has a Complete Street Policy that they think adequately addresses the elements of vehicular transportation, pedestrian; the concern is when you get in some of these federal programs they start to expand things greatly and their concern is we could end up with a document that could start tying their hands in the future and committing them to funding that they may or may not need or are comfortable with on a local level. DeMers said that he was just wondering. He added, though, that ADA has requirements, and he knows that people say there are a lot of definitions for ADA, but if you look at the guidelines there are specific standards and all those types of things, but he would imagine that Grand Forks has an ADA Program for your streets, and do you see that same type of thing happen with that program. Grasser responded that he isn't sure if he is following; they have to meet ADA requirements no matter what, that is part of the process, but. DeMers said he is just wondering if that is the fear that all of a sudden if there is a requirement for Complete Streets, even though they aren't federally funded, he would imagine. Grasser stated that the question is, they have a Complete Streets Policy, do we want to initiate a policy which we have limited control over that may dictate a policy that we ultimately are going to follow. DeMers responded that at some point your policy is going to have to merge itself with the federal policy if you want to access those dollars anyway, correct; you aren't going to be able to say "well we have our policy, and even though its standards don't meet what the federal standards are, we have this policy so still give us the dollars", they are going to say no, we want you to hit our policy so change your policy anyway. Grasser commented that everything that they have currently meets all of the federal regulations. He said partially what the concern is is are they internally going to end up adopting standards. DeMers stated that he is just trying to get the nature of what the concern is. Grasser said that they really don't know where this might take them, he isn't sure what the deficiencies are that they would be trying to correct with the policy, and again they have a Complete Streets Policy, he thinks East Grand Forks does not, and so, again, for instance there are a lot more streets without sidewalks and different things he thinks in East Grand Forks. DeMers commented that East Grand Forks does have a sidewalk policy now, and all those types of things. Grasser said that it is kind of an example of something that may come up that is going to drive you to another set of action items. DeMers said though, that his point is that at some point if we access federal funds they are going to require it whether we have it now or not, he would think. Grasser stated that they are going to require on the projects that they are paying for, but they aren't going to reach it down, he doesn't

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believe, into a cul-de-sac or a dead-end local street, but if we adopt a Complete Street Policy some of those more federally oriented concepts may reach down into those very much local type streets. Vein said that that is the question he was going to ask because one would be on Federal Aid Streets but the other will be on all the other streets that we have and they could easily be different if you adopt the federal one it might be applicable to all streets, where you would still have to comply with the federal one on federal projects but it then doesn't force it down to non-federal projects.

Mock asked if we approve this without the Federal Complete Streets language, are we concerned that the document wouldn't allow us to access federal dollars. DeMers said that that is what he is getting at, if we are doing this this is all for federal dollars, right. Mock asked if we are concerned at all that our plan wouldn't meet those federal standards. Grasser responded that he isn't aware that that would be a concern, necessarily, again we have to meet, on a street by street basis, we've got to meet our requirements. He added that, speaking as a more local official, the federal tentacles seem like they are driving farther and farther into the more local type activities, and it seems like this study is going to initiate that. DeMers commented that his line of questions are more along what Ms. Mock is saying; if we don't include it at this beginning point, does that taint all of our applications for federal funding based on it going forward. Haugen responded that included in the staff report is the actual language for the new federal law, and it is all tied under that phrase "complete streets", so we are required to spend 2.5% of our CPG dollars towards this activity of either doing a Complete Street Policy, which is Number One; or a Complete Street Prioritized Plan, which is Number Two; or development of essentially what our traditional Bike and Ped Plan is. He stated that as staff, what we are reacting to is we go out to the public, and public engagement, they are going to use the terms "Complete Street" and we are going to say that we aren't allowed to discuss "Complete Streets" through this process, it is eliminated from the scope of work, eliminated as a tool from the toolbox, and we are just saying let the process play out, that is the difference, in his opinion.

Haugen stated that instead of eliminating it as a possibility, you are still going to approve the document in the end, your Technical Advisory Committee is still going to vet it, both Planning Commissions and Councils are still going to vet it, so allow the process to conclude what the document should end up being. He added that it will be showing the feds that you are spending at least 2.5%, you are not eliminating the term that they are using as a possibility, but you might be directing yourself and your staff to not really do Number 1, develop a policy. DeMers said, then, that at some point when the plan comes back, if it has a recommendation to develop a City-wide policy, we could take that out then, or not approve it. Haugen responded that that would work; or quickly halfway through the process.

Grasser asked what 2.5% translates into dollars. Haugen responded that he used 2.5% of roughly \$500,000, so we are going well beyond 2.5% to do this bike/ped plan, so it is not an issue of whether we are going to spend up to 2.5% of our planning dollars, it is that we can't not do it. Grasser said, then, that the Bike/Ped Plan counts as part of the 2.5% and it would satisfy that requirement without calling that Complete Streets, or would you define Complete Streets as being the Bike/Ped Element. Haugen responded that that is one of the three options here; well there are four and five, but we are really working out of the front three, and we either adopt a

policy so if this were just addressing the City of Grand Forks and the feds said either show us you have a policy or spend 2.5% towards an effort somewhere similar to a policy, you could show them that we've already done the policy and then they will say you don't have spend 2.5%, we don't have a policy as an MPO so we have to spend at least 2.5%; so we either develop a policy, develop a Complete Streets Prioritization Plan, or develop a Bike/Ped Plan but within that plan we would be saying let the process go through and not tell people that we are taking a tool away from what some people are going to bring up, that is the difference we have, don't eliminate it before we start, let the process help you eliminate it if that is what you decide.

MOVED BY DEMERS, SECONDED BY VETTER, TO APPROVE MOVING FORWARD WITH THE RFP AS PROPOSED BY STAFF.

Grasser said that his question might be is should we send it back to the Technical Advisory Committee to try to refine a scope of work that might be more acceptable. DeMers responded that his only concern is that we already pushed it back a month, that would be pushing it back at least another month. He said that we are going to have possibly an Interim Director, and while he doesn't think we are pushed for time, but he would think we want to move it forward now. Vein stated that he likes the idea of coming up with different language. Mock asked when the Technical Advisory Committee meets, can we ask them for alternative language and even call a special virtual meeting. Haugen responded that perhaps what we could do would be to adopt a motion but then send a separate motion to the Technical Advisory Committee to work towards an effort that doesn't conclude with a Complete Street Policy so we avoid spending another six weeks spinning our wheels on what the language should be. DeMers said he could just amend his to include that direction.

MOVED BY DEMERS, SECONDED BY VETTER, TO APPROVE AMENDING THE MOTION TO APPROVE FORWARDING THE RFP SUBJECT TO DIRECTING THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO WORK ON A MORE REFINED SCOPE OF WORK.

Voting Aye: Mock, DeMers, Powers, Rost, Strandell, Vein, Grasser and Vetter.

Voting Nay: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: None.

MATTER OF TIP CANDIDATE PROJECTS ON MINNESOTA SIDE

Haugen reported that we only received one project, it is a joint project with Grand Forks. He said that you did see the application at your December meeting, and it involves work on the Point Bridge. He added that the only different is the add on of the approach work on the Minnesota side, it is not needed on the North Dakota side, so on the Minnesota application the project cost is showing this asphalt work where on the North Dakota side it is only showing the bridge only.

MOVED BY DEMERS, SECONDED BY VETTER, TO APPROVE THE MINNESOTA SIDE CANDIDATE PROJECT FOR THE FY2022-2025 TIP AS BEING CONSISTENT WITH THE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN AND TO GIVE IT PRIORITY RANKING.

Voting Aye: Mock, DeMers, Powers, Rost, Strandell, Vein, Grasser and Vetter.

Voting Nay: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: None.

MATTER OF FY2022 WORK PROGRAM

Haugen reported that the two items you've already discussed; the first one is that there will be more money available to the MPO to put out toward the 2022 Work Program. He said that, again it will be somewhere in the neighborhood of \$150,000 federal funds and there would be \$30,000 in match, so you will be close to \$180,000 total dollars in addition to what you already have in the work program.

Haugen said that the second thing is that they have now come out with a new set of planning emphasis areas. He explained that this is a practice they used to have but they don't really commit to this every year. He added that way back when it was an annual thing that we would have to include in our work program and show them how we are meeting their emphasis areas. He said that some of these things we've already been discussing in the past; the only thing here that we haven't discussed much is this being part of the Strategic Defense Network, and really I-29 and US#2, in our MPO area is part of this system it is very small, but it is our most important system from our traffic point of view, so it is already well vetted in our process, we just don't specifically call it out, but for defense purposes we will now have to use some verbiage in our documents.

Haugen commented that the other thing is that the Future Bridge Study, we took it as far as North Dakota will allow us, they don't have a formally adopted PEL process so this would be encouraging us to work with North Dakota to have them officially adopt a PEL process, and that is where we take project development of the NEPA process and the planning process and sort of meld them into gray areas.

Haugen stated that as part of the new money we will be receiving in 2022 some of these things we will have to amend the work program to include the language to show how we are dealing with them; some of these things we already have in the documents, and we have been doing it in the past.

Haugen commented that with the Bidon Administration, there is an emphasis on these things now, and it is coming down to our level and the Justice 40 Initiative is really at our level because the geography that decides those things it will never get to rural areas as much as it will urban areas to define those Justice 40 geographies.

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Haugen stated that February 1st the MPO staff are going to hear from Minnesota Federal Highway folk more specifically about these planning emphasis areas, so more information to come, but it is coming.

Information only.

MATTER OF MPO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR POSITION

Mock reported that Mr. Haugen has decided to retire, Congratulations to him, but that leaves us with coming up with how we want to advertise the position, what we want that position to say, and then the process we want to take for hiring.

DeMers commented that he may apply for this position so he will recuse himself from any conversation and discussion on this agenda item. DeMers left the room.

Grasser asked if in North Dakota are all of the MPOs managed by Executive Directors, is that the format that is generally used for the MPOs. Haugen responded that it is. He added that there the only difference is that Bismarck/Mandan is still formally housed within the City of Bismarck, but they do have an Executive Director leading MPO functions, but their staff and offices are all within Bismarck City Hall.

Vein asked if the MPO is a quasi state agency, it isn't a City or County entity, it is an MPO, right. Haugen responded that the term he would use would be quasi federal because 80% of the money is federal funds and the bulk of what we do is in reaction to federal rules and regulation laws, but we aren't federal employees, but most everything we do is governed and driven by the federal requirements, but we aren't federal employees and we aren't state or city employees, we are fully employed by the MPO. Vein said, though, that both States recognize us as an MPO and the Federal Government recognizes us as an MPO but the feds to because the States do, is that correct. Haugen responded that back in 1982, both Governors signed a document that said that this eight-member board represents the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Grand Forks-East Grand Forks Urbanized area. Vein asked who determined the make-up of the board. Haugen responded that at that time it was both City Councils, essentially, with the DOT and Feds, but both councils were primarily the ones that crafted the eight members. Vein asked if we have specific by-laws that state that. Haugen responded that we do. Vein asked if it states within the by-laws how we go about selecting the Executive Director. Haugen responded that states that you, as a board, will hire the Executive Director position. He added that it also states that the MPO follows the general practices of the Grand Forks Human Resource policies. He said that we go through and update the MPO Employee Handbook, but it is essentially the City of Grand Forks' Handbook just changing the name Grand Forks to Grand Forks-East Grand Forks MPO where needed. Vein asked if that has worked out okay. Haugen responded that it has pretty well. He said that the last 10 years definitely, the first 5 to 6 years of our employment with the MPO it wasn't necessarily the case and we got the MPO Board to recognize the inequity, and since then it has been pretty good.

Discussion on how to proceed with the hiring process ensued.

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Haugen stated that when he first discuss his retirement with the Chair, he utilized the Finance Committee as the Selection Committee; we have job applications, we have a job description that identifies the minimum qualifications, we have staff that can help weed out who is qualified and who isn't qualified, and the Finance Committee could be a structure that you already have in place that could do the interview and recommend a selection but in the end the full board has to hire the next Executive Director. He said, though, that it isn't spelled out anywhere that you have to follow that process, you can use a different process if you wish, but it is possible to keep it all within the MPO organization.

Mock commented that she thinks the Finance Committee could be one option; another option could be representatives from this body and representatives from the Technical Advisory Committee to get more of a technical perspective, so having maybe four members, two from this body and two from that body come together and do the interviews and make a recommendation to the board, she would envision that as more of a tactical recommendation that we can then authorize the salary range for and then the second choice in case that falls through, just to give us the most flexibility knowing that hiring sometimes goes back and forth and things like that.

Grasser said that he likes the idea of having two members from the board and two from the Technical Advisory Committee, and to him it is a little bit reminiscent of how we go through a consultant selection process for federal projects, they try to get a cross section of people that are going through the selection so you get multiple view points and multiple inputs, so he thinks it is important, quite frankly, to expand beyond just the Executive Policy Board or the Finance Committee. He stated that quite frankly the biggest players in the MPO, on a day-to-day basis, is Grand Forks and East Grand Forks and he thinks the representation from each of those local governments, at minimum would be good.

Mock stated that she would be pretty confident in having Mr. Vein and Mr. Vetter represent this more policy perspective side, and then we can approach members of the Technical Advisory Committee to select representatives from each side from their committee members for the technical perspective. She said she would like to keep it small so scheduling can actually happen efficiently. She stated that she was contacted, and she knows that the Chamber would be willing to assist from a business perspective, but she is more interested in getting the policy and technical design and keeping it going because we are going to lose Mr. Haugen's expertise very soon so she sees this as needing to happen within four to six weeks to get a recommendation and offer a position so she would like to see kind of a small tight group that can move it forward and make a recommendation.

Grasser commented that just to allay any fears or concerns or whatever, he isn't using this to get into the selection process, he won't be in that process, but Dave Kuharenko works very closely with the MPO on a technical basis, so this isn't a lead to get into that, but his recommendation to the City would be, if we chose to go this route that Mr. Kuharenko should be considered.

Vein agreed that keeping it small makes sense, and we know that the full board gets the final decision, so whatever recommendation will go to the full board, so keeping it small is just more efficient up front; utilizing the City of Grand Forks' Human Resources Department he thinks will

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be critical to do the ongoing administration and some of the reviews, he thinks that will be kind of a given. He added that Mr. Grasser said a little bit about the lion's share of the works is between the Cities of Grand Forks and East Grand Forks, and Ms. Mock and himself have had some discussion about how the makeup would be, potentially a person from each council would be part of the group, but he is interested in whether you have a strong desire from the county level or do you feel comfortable with the cities doing what we talked about. Strandell responded that he likes what you're suggesting. He added that he thinks maybe when you get down to the final candidate maybe the whole group should be involved before a final decision is made.

Mock stated that we can have a virtual meeting, so if we need to, we can call a special meeting to discuss a final recommendation or something of that nature. Haugen responded that unless you, it can be described as an Executive Session of the MPO Board, and even then, you would have to announce that your meeting agenda is closed for Executive Privileges, you need to have five-day notice to the public that the Board is meeting, that is the only thing that would limit you otherwise you could do it all virtual. Mock said, then, if we have a selection committee like that they can meet without that public notice, but if we want to have all of the MPO Board interact with any candidates, that will have to be advertised. Haugen responded that that is correct, you would just have to say it is Executive Privilege and it can be closed.

Kouba said that you are talking about having Grand Forks Human Resources start doing some sort of shortening of the list; do they completely understand what those factors are that are needed for the MPO and the understanding of the Federal Laws and Regulations as well as the State Laws and Regulations that need to be followed. Vein responded that he agrees with what she is saying, that it is going to be very significant and very important, and we would obviously have to follow that, but what they had talked about is maybe going to see if they are able and capable to do what needs to be done because somebody is going to have to do the advertising, receiving the applications, and even if we decide not to go through and get the numbers down, that is the administrative part, the compliance part has to be a given. He said that he may go as far as to say is the job description current or should it be updated at the same time, and do you understand the federal process is going to have to be followed, but nobody here, individually has that kind of time, so the idea would be could the Human Resource Department be that conduit.

Grasser stated that he was just going to kind of reiterate that it is more that they become kind of an implementing agency. He said that what has happened in the hiring process in Grand Forks is they will work with the individual departments or whatever to determine what is the criteria in which you might short-list somebody or eliminate somebody based on qualifications, so what he would envision is that they would get together with the knowledgeable MPO staff and probably work on the qualifications, education, etc, that might weed somebody out, but he would see that as being an iterative process because you're right, they don't necessarily all the criteria, so again he thinks it is a collaboration, it is a matter of who, and he doesn't care if the MPO wants to do all the advertising but they have a resource there that can go through the mechanics of the process, it is day to day operations for them.

Vein commented that Ms. Mock and himself talked about possibly talking to Mr. Feland and see if they are willing to help with this process. Mock added that she is just thinking in terms of

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keep it simple, but she doesn't want to make any presumptions because she considers this the MPOs decision, so however we want to structure it, so she would say it might be most appropriate for Mr. Haugen to talk to HR and then if we need to get involved she can talk to HR and/or Mr. Feland but she thinks it is in our by-laws that we go by Grand Forks HR procedures, so it this seems consistent with our by-laws. Haugen said, then, that it is his understanding that you would like him to contact Grand Forks HR and say we have a vacancy and we would like you to take it from this point to scheduling and helping with interviews, and then Ms. McNelis, Ms. Kouba, and myself are a bit removed knowing that HR will accept this they will get a list from us as to what our minimum requirements are to start weeding people out for and from, that is what he is understanding. He added that the job descriptions for the MPO were vetted through the HR process, most recently it would have been when all positions were reviewed for the salary committee, and every year our salaries go through the calculations done for the PFP process. He said that they don't review the MPO evaluations, we give them the scores and they put it through their matrix, so there is already a reliance on their staff to do some things, but we have done advertising for past MPO positions, and we haven't engaged them in that process, so it is how you want to proceed. Grasser stated that it would be nice, he thinks we owe the Mayor and Mr. Feland a heads up from the organization that we have asked Mr. Haugen to do this, or can we do this as opposed to reaching past them, just process wise he thinks we need to make sure they know what is being done. Vein agreed, adding that that is why he thought Ms. Mock and himself would talk to Mr. Feland, or the Mayor and Mr. Feland, because either way it gives them a heads up.

Vetter said that this is where he is at, he'll try to summarize it and put it all into a package; he would ask the Ms. Mock approach Mr. Feland to see if we are able to use their HR Department, if that is okay then direct Mr. Haugen to visit with HR staff, to post it he doesn't know that at this point in time if you list it with a number of organizations then he would list it with all of those except the one that has a \$350.00 fee, he thinks there will be enough interest out there and enough exposure that right now we don't have to pay for it. He added that he is comfortable with the salary range listed there the \$96,600.00 to \$105,000.00; he would want this posted within a week, and applications to close at the end of February so we can schedule interviews the first week of March, and hopefully we can have a candidate picked for the March meeting. He said that he would further ask that our Chair pick two members of our organization to sit on the interview committee and at the February Technical Advisory Committee meeting have them choose two of their members to sit on the interview committee as well, and those four would do the interviews in March and bring the top two candidates back to this group.

MOVED BY VETTER, SECONDED BY GRASSER, TO APPROVE BEGINNING THE HIRING PROCESS FOR THE MPO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR POSITION SUBJECT TO THE MPO CHAIR CHOOSING TWO MEMBERS FROM THE MPO EXECUTIVE BOARD TO SIT ON THE INTERVIEW COMMITTEE, TO SEND A REQUEST TO THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE THAT THEY CHOOSE TWO MEMBERS TO SIT ON THE INTERVIEW COMMITTEE AND THOSE FOUR WILL PERFORM THE INTERVIEWS AND BRING THE TOP TWO CANDIDATE NAMES TO THE MARCH EXECUTIVE BOAD MEETING; AND ALSO THAT THE CHAIR APPROACH THE GRAND FORKS CITY ADMINISTRATOR TO REQUEST ASSISTANCE FROM THEIR

HUMAN RESOURCE DEPARTMENT WITH THE HIRING PROCESS, FOR MR. HAUGEN TO DISCUSS WITH THE HUMAN RESOURCE DIRECTOR WHERE TO ADVERTISE THE POSITION, TO REQUEST THE POSITION BE POSTED WITHIN A WEEK, AND TO ACCEPT APPLICATIONS UNTIL THE END OF FEBRUARY.

Vein said that his only question would be do we want two from each community versus one, maybe have four members from the Executive Board and two members from the Technical Advisory Committee, or is that too many. Mock responded that that is too many. She said that she thinks four would be better. Vetter stated that as a candidate he would think it would be intimidating to be interviewed by more than four people. Mock added that she thinks it would be hard to schedule too, to get six members and a candidate together at one time.

Mock commented that she sat in on a couple of interview committees and for the most part she thinks when you've got the interview committee, and the candidates, and the questions you are asking you get a pretty good sense and it has almost always been universally agreed on; some of the discussion here or there, but there is a pretty strong sense of this is the right path so offer it to this person and if they don't accept it then offer it to the next person, so she would be surprised if all four interviewers weren't pretty set on the recommendation they recommend.

Grasser stated that we may also want to discuss how the interview process might go; for instance he knows that Grand Forks they sometimes do interviews where they sit down and hold a half hour interview and you're done and other times we run the candidates for a whole weekend and ground them up through that process, and he isn't suggesting that, but he thinks communication and presentation is very important for the next candidate, and he thinks we should, as part of the interview, we should probably have them do a power point presentation or something like that as opposed to just being a question and answer type of interview.

Kouba asked if they will put out what you want the presentation to be on. Mock responded that she thinks we will have to work with HR on that, she imagines they have different interview processes and details on interviews they have done in the past. Grasser suggested you could also use the Finance Committee to refine the details of the interview process too. Vein commented that the more you do the more complex it gets so he would suggest just have HR determine this as he thinks they can help figure out how to do this and do it well. Grasser said assuming this is a process that everybody is comfortable with. Vetter stated that if this motion passes maybe we should invite an HR representative to our next meeting to kind of sort through all those interview processes. Vein said that if we are going to move it quickly, we should determine this soon. Vetter agreed, adding that they can get the advertisement out and then come to our February meeting and discuss how we want to run the interviews and such. Mock said that would let us at least know if we are getting three applicants or if we are getting more, because if we get more, we will have to sub-select before the interview process so that could be brought to the board, or a process of weeding down or something.

Grasser stated that he does have some comments on the job description; do we want to talk about them now or he can e-mail them to everyone, but he looks at kind of what we've done on the intercity bridge and the ad hoc committee and some of the communication and collaboration that

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has gone on there, and he thinks some of that is missing in the job description so he thinks we should beef up the job description to include some of those good things that happened; again building that collaborative atmosphere or some of those things that he just doesn't think is exactly in the job description and he thinks it would be good to have. He said that he has two or three ideas, we can go through it today.

Mock asked if Mr. Grasser wanted to add this into the motion. Grasser responded that he doesn't want to add it to this motion, he thinks it would be a separate motion.

Voting Aye: Mock, DeMers, Powers, Strandell, Vein, Grasser and Vetter.

Voting Nay: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: Rost.

Mock asked if we are okay with nominating Mr. Vein and Mr. Vetter to serve on the Interview Committee. Consensus was that Mr. Vein and Mr. Vetter should serve on the Interview Committee.

Mock asked if Mr. Haugen would take a request to the Technical Advisory Committee asking them to choose two representatives from their committee to serve on the Interview Committee as well. Haugen asked if the intent is to have local representatives not federal representatives. Grasser responded that that would be his preference. Consensus was to ask the Technical Advisory Committee to choose two local representatives to serve on the Interview Committee.

Mock stated that she is okay with Mr. Grasser's job description edits if we want to add them in. She asked if everyone received them. Grasser responded that he didn't send them to everyone, and with open record requirements he can work with HR on that and come back to one of the follow-up committees. Mock commented that it doesn't substantially change the direction of the position. Grasser went over the proposed changes.

Haugen suggested that a motion to have the Finance Committee authorize the job description changes. He said that would give them the authority to act as the full board and as soon as you release the job application people want to see the job description so you want to have that available quickly.

MOVED BY GRASSER, SECONDED BY POWERS TO APPROVE THE FINANCE COMMITTEE AUTHORIZE CHANGES TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JOB DESCRIPTION.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

OTHER BUSINESS

A. 2021 Annual Work Program Project Update

Haugen reported that this is our monthly one-page report shows the updated activities for each of the agenda items, and that there isn't really much to report this month.

Information only.

B. State Rail Crossing Action Plans

1. <https://www.dot.state.mn.us/ofrw/railroad/action-plan/>
2. NDDOT Draft RR Xing Action Plan

Information only.

C. Approval Of Bill/Check List For 12/11/21 to 1/14/22 Period

MOVED BY POWERS, SECONDED BY VETTER, TO APPROVE THE BILLS/CHECKS FOR THE 12/11/21 TO 1/14/22 PERIOD.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

ADJOURNMENT

MOCK DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 1:49 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Peggy McNelis, Office Manager

Grand Forks East Grand Forks MPO
Transaction List by Vendor
 December 11, 2021 through January 14, 2022

Type	Date	Num	Memo	Account	Clr	Split	Amount
AFLAC.							
Liability Check	12/24/2021	AFLAC	501	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-517.90
Alerus Financial							
Liability Check	12/24/2021	EFTPS	45-0388273	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-2,569.18
Liability Check	01/07/2022	EFTPS	45-0388273	104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-2,602.88
Alliant Engineering							
Bill	12/21/2021	Inv. #...	Work On Futu...	206 · Accounts Pay...		565 · Special ...	-9,003.70
Bill Pmt -Check	12/21/2021	7160	Work On Futu...	104 · Checking	X	206 · Accounts...	-9,003.70
CitiBusiness Card							
Bill	12/20/2021	Inv. #...	Charges For ...	206 · Accounts Pay...		517 · Overhead	-331.71
Bill Pmt -Check	12/20/2021	CitiBu...	Charges For ...	104 · Checking	X	206 · Accounts...	-331.71
Fidelity Security Life.							
Liability Check	12/24/2021	Avesis	50790-1043	104 · Checking	X	210 · Payroll Li...	-8.40
Grant and Contract Accounting							
Bill	12/14/2021	Inv #F...	10/1/21-9/30/...	206 · Accounts Pay...		546 · ATAC	-10,000.00
Bill Pmt -Check	12/14/2021	7152	10/1/21-9/30/...	104 · Checking	X	206 · Accounts...	-10,000.00
Bill	12/20/2021	Inv. #...	Work On Traf...	206 · Accounts Pay...		550 · Corridor ...	-29,852.00
Bill Pmt -Check	12/20/2021	7159	Work On Traf...	104 · Checking	X	206 · Accounts...	-29,852.00
Kimley-Horn And Associates, Inc.							
Bill	12/16/2021	Inv. #...	Work On TDP...	206 · Accounts Pay...		548 · EGF FT...	-18,032.95
Bill Pmt -Check	12/16/2021	7154	Work On TDP...	104 · Checking	X	206 · Accounts...	-18,032.95
LSNB as Trustee for PEHP							
Liability Check	12/24/2021	PEHP		104 · Checking	X	216 · Post-Hea...	-123.75
Madison Nat'l Life							
Liability Check	12/24/2021	7156		104 · Checking		215 · Disability...	-67.34
Mike's							
Bill	12/15/2021		MPO Lunche...	206 · Accounts Pay...		711 · Miscellan...	-106.57
Bill Pmt -Check	12/15/2021	7153	MPO Lunche...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-106.57
Minnesota Department of Revenue							
Liability Check	12/24/2021	MNDOR	1403100	104 · Checking	X	210 · Payroll Li...	-200.00
Liability Check	01/07/2022	MNDOR	1403100	104 · Checking		210 · Payroll Li...	-207.00
Minnesota Life Insurance Company							
Liability Check	12/24/2021	7157		104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-111.72
Nationwide Retirement Solutions							
Liability Check	12/24/2021	NWR...	3413	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-495.89
Liability Check	01/07/2022	NWR...	3413	104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-497.71
NDPERS							
Liability Check	12/24/2021	NDPE...	D88	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-3,059.28
Liability Check	01/07/2022	NDPE...		104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-2,535.92
QuickBooks Payroll Service							
Liability Check	12/23/2021		Created by P...	104 · Checking	X	-SPLIT-	-6,383.93
Liability Check	01/06/2022		Created by P...	104 · Checking		-SPLIT-	-6,530.04
SRF Consulting Group, Inc.							
Bill	01/07/2022	Inv. #...	Work On GF ...	206 · Accounts Pay...		560 · Land Us...	-9,877.45
Bill Pmt -Check	01/07/2022	7162	Work On GF ...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-9,877.45
Standard Insurance Company							
Liability Check	12/24/2021	7158		104 · Checking	X	217 · Dental P...	-118.88
State Tax Commissioner							
Liability Check	01/07/2022	NDST...	45038827301	104 · Checking		210 · Payroll Li...	-434.00
The Exponent							
Bill	12/17/2021	Inv. #...	Open House ...	206 · Accounts Pay...		565 · Special ...	-159.32
Bill Pmt -Check	12/17/2021	7155	Open House ...	104 · Checking	X	206 · Accounts...	-159.32
WSB & Associates, Inc.							
Bill	12/22/2021	Inv. #...	Retainage Du...	206 · Accounts Pay...		220 · Retainag...	-5,998.80
Bill Pmt -Check	12/22/2021	7161	Retainage Du...	104 · Checking		206 · Accounts...	-5,998.80