

Draft Minutes of May 1, 2019
LRPC Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting
Humiston Building, 103 Main St. Suite #1
Meredith, NH

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT

David Kerr, Barnstead
Steve Favorite, Bristol
Jeff Haines, Center Harbor
Malcolm “Tink” Taylor, Holderness
Sheldon Morgan, Gilford - Chair
Krista Larsen, Laconia
John Edgar, Meredith
Robert Ward, Moultonborough
John Gotjen, Tamworth
Joanne Haight, Sandwich

OTHERS PRESENT

Nancy Spaulding, NH DOT, District 3
Jeff Hayes, LRPC Executive Director
Susan Slack, LRPC Principal Planner
Lucy St. John, NH DOT Planning Bureau

1. Call to Order, Introductions and Approval of Draft Minutes

Chairman Morgan called the meeting to order at 2:05 pm and dispensed with introductions. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the April 3, 2019 meeting.

M/S Passed Ward/Gotjen

2. TAC Name and Membership Terms

T. Taylor suggested deleting the word “Technical” from the title of the committee. Members discussed TAC’s responsibilities as outlined in the Standing Rules and Procedures adopted by LRPC. K. Larsen said keeping “Technical” in the committee’s title better describes its function and deleting “Technical” could give the misimpression that the committee is more like a lobbying group. J. Gotjen noted that the committee has been discussing the issue of transportation funding, and members had been asked to discuss support of gas tax increases and other funding measures with their municipal governing bodies, which could be viewed as lobbying. J. Hayes said it is appropriate for TAC members to discuss issues with their municipal governing boards, but maybe not for seeking support for transportation funding sources. J. Edgar referred to Article IX of the Standing Rules, which lists the responsibilities of the TAC. Responsibilities include rendering technical advice but also states that the list is not limited to the four general responsibilities included. After further discussion, including about the differences between rural RPCs and MPOs (Metropolitan Planning Organizations), it was the consensus of the TAC not to revise the name of the committee.

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S. Slack noted that TAC representatives serve two-year terms, according to the Standing Rules, and said that staff is updating membership files and will be informing members when reappointments or new appointments to fill vacancies are needed.

3. Follow-up Ten Year Transportation Plan Proposals and Process

S. Slack referred to the results of TAC's scoring of project proposals, noting that the three proposals submitted to NH DOT for consideration in the 2021-2030 Ten Year Plan are: Moultonborough NH 25/Redding Lane intersection; Gilmanton NH 107/140 intersection; and Tilton US 3 (Main Street)/School Street intersection.

In response to a question from J. Edgar about engineered projects, S. Slack and J. Hayes confirmed that this was the first year that DOT required proposals to undergo an engineering estimate review. DOT offered two options: proposals submitted in early December 2018 could take advantage of estimate review by DOT engineers; or RPCs could have projects reviewed by a licensed professional engineer and submit them to DOT in early January 2019.

B. Ward noted that Ten Year Plan proposals are heavily dominated by highway projects and said that is bad policy not to include other modes of transportation. He said TAC could broaden its view of transportation in New Hampshire. J. Hayes noted that different funding sources are available for other modes of transportation, such as Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program. TAC members discussed various rural public transit efforts, the difficulty in sustaining ridership in rural areas, the need for ride-share programs and involving the region's large employers, Commute Smart, the needs of an aging population, and the efforts of the Regional Coordinating Councils. It was also noted that issues related to alternate modes of transportation can be taken up again as the Regional Transportation Plan is updated.

S. Slack said the process of soliciting, reviewing and scoring Ten Year Plan project proposals could be improved. The list of project proposals developed during this Ten Year Plan round can serve as the basis of proposals that can be better developed for the next round, with better supporting data and a clearer understanding of how the projects meet the requirements of the scoring criteria. D. Kerr noted the importance of field reviews, citing the Meredith Route 25 east project as an example of a proposal that would benefit from on-site review.

Referring to the Purpose and Process Outline handed out at the meeting, S. Slack discussed project reviews within TAC's normal process, including Ten Year Plan, TAP, CMAQ, and HSIP Road Safety Audits. Transportation issues that are outside TAC's normal process, such as the recent WOW Trail request to support its decision to commission a feasibility study, aren't an appropriate role for TAC.

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4. Regional Updates

Statewide Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan – S. Slack said that Alta Planning + Design sent out a “last call” for comments on the Gap Analysis Map for the Lakes Region discussed during the March TAC meeting presentation. It was noted that the map doesn’t seem to reflect the Ten Year Plan project that widened shoulders on Route 3A on the east side of Newfound Lake. N. Spaulding said there may be restrictions on bike lanes on certain major highway corridors due to traffic volume, based on federal guidelines. S. Morgan suggested considering an off-road bike path along parts of Route 11, similar to the one developed in Franconia. J. Gotjen noted that Route 25 from West Ossipee to Meredith is indicated on the map as a gap, but there are sections where shoulder width is adequate to accommodate bicycles. J. Hayes said that better data is needed on shoulder width, speed limits and level of stress (LOS) ratings. S. Slack will re-send the link to the project’s interactive map and website to TAC members.

5. Next Meeting

S. Slack said DOT’s Highway Safety Engineer Mike Dugas will give a presentation on the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), Road Safety Audits and related issues at the June TAC meeting. She urged TAC members to attend and invite others in their communities who would benefit from the presentation.

S. Morgan reminded members that TAC will not meeting in July and August, and that the election of officers will be held at the September meeting.

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded.

M/S Passed Taylor/Favorite