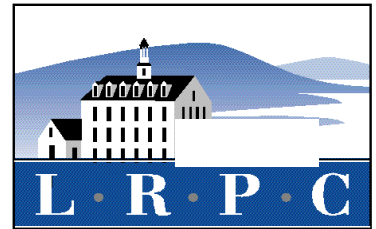


LAKES REGION PLANNING COMMISSION

103 Main Street, Suite #3
Meredith, NH 03253
phone (603) 279-8171
fax (603) 279-0200
www.lakesrpc.org



TAC Meeting Minutes

Wednesday February 1, 2017

Humiston Building 103 Main St, Meredith, NH 03253

Voting Members Present

Sheldon Morgan (Chair), Gilford
Brad Harriman (Vice-Chair), Ossipee
Nic Strong, Alton
Robert Pollock, New Hampton
Malcolm Tink Taylor, Holderness
Steven Favorite, Bristol
John Edgar, Meredith
Lloyd Wood, Tuftonboro
John Gotjen, Tamworth
Paul Hazelton, Hebron
Peter Nourse, Gilford
Rick Ball, Belmont
Chris Theriault, Moultonborough

Others Present

Michael IZard, LRPC Principal Planner
Jeff Hayes, LRPC Executive Director
Laurel Briere, LRPC Executive Assistant
Tim White, NHDES
Liz Strachan, NHDES
Bill Rollins, NHDOT – District 3
Michelle Marshall, NHDOT
Carol Macuch, NHDOT

Call to Order – Introductions – Past Minutes

Chairman Morgan called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM. After introductions, a motion was entertained to approve the draft minutes of the 12/7/16 meeting.

M/S/Passed – Taylor/Gotjen. (Abstaining: Edgar)

No public comment was provided.

Regional Updates

M. IZard shared a statewide Scenic Byway Marketing Forum is being planned for April 12, 2017 in Meredith. He and J. Edgar will brainstorm about who to send notices to for good representation.

Transportation Alternatives Program:

M. IZard provided a handout summarizing TAP funding allocations statewide. He noted the Ashland TAP award totaling \$320,000. He reviewed allocation tables in the handout: three RPCs received multiple awards, the combined total was over \$1 million for each. The Lakes Region ended up on the low-end of funding compared to other RPCs. He suggested, the availability of funds allowing multiple projects in region is something to think about for the future.

Pavement Edge Markings:

M. IZard spoke about two letters draft letters about pavement edge markings and rumble strips. He thanked N. Strong for providing review comments and noting grammatical changes and opened the floor to comments or concerns about content. He noted that he did talk to William Lambert of the Bureau of Traffic about the issue. Some of our Tier 4 roads may exceed the 6,000 vehicles per day (VPD) threshold requiring fog lines. M. Lambert pointed out focus on Tier 4

highways would exclude other state highways. J. Hayes has agreed to sign the letter when it's approved by the TAC. Discussion ensued and resulted in the following recommendations: 1) C. Macuch suggested bringing up the topic to HSIP Committee to see if there were funds available; 2) J. Edgar asked about coordinating with other RPCs and M. IZARD suggested copying them on the letter.

M. IZARD requested motion to adopt drafted letter with grammatical changes and copies.

M/S/Passed Edgar/Favorite. Unanimous approval.

Ten Year Plan

M. IZARD provided an update on the Ten-Year Plan (TYP). The TYP was adopted on June 24, 2016 but a 2-year cycle is starting for updates. He reviewed the process for updates, starting with RPCs prioritizing projects and sending a list of recommendations to DOT. In Fall 2017 a series of GACIT hearings will be held for public input. He pointed out that Laconia had the greatest participation in the GACIT hearings of 2015 and that our TAC had solid representation. He shared the list of project applications received in 2015, pointing out several things including that the number one regional project (Alton/Gilford NH11) received only partial funding after advocating for inclusion, because it exceeded the available funds. He shared a list of improvements that we can influence through the TYP. A list of priority projects needs to be submitted to NHDOT by April 30 2017.

Motion to use the same criteria and weighting used in the application process in 2015.

M/S D. Ford/R. Ball

S. MORGAN opened floor to discussion of motion. Discussion ensued. Points considered:

- Consideration of different weightings for criteria
- Possibility of using Decision Lens
- Possibility of using current criteria, then discussing them once review period was over to consider changing them for next time

S. Morgan brought motion to vote. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion ensued about next steps:

- A letter will be sent to municipalities to introduce the TYP and update the process.
- There will be some exploration with DOT on existing projects.
- The letters should be received back from communities before the April TAC meeting.
- Possibility of having an additional meeting between regular meetings to complete process
- M. IZARD will send out proposed schedule and draft letter by email. J. Hayes pointed out that a meeting cannot be held by email. Members can reply to M. IZARD but not each other.

Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)

(Michelle Marshall, NHDOT Safety Engineer)

Rumble Strips

M. Marshall recommended that rumble strips could probably warrant a separate meeting with Ronald Grandmaison from DOT. The DOT executive office has put the rumble strip program on hold. There's a committee that is regrouping this summer to work on marketing for projects that

have rumble strips in them. They're working on a noise study to get a base line for the rumble strips so they know how loud they truly are. Then they can compare that to what other states are doing, possibly strips that are quieter but have a lot of vibration.

Program Update

Congress created the HSIP, the Federal Highway Administration (FHA) regulates it, DOT implements it. The program is guided by a HSIP Committee. The program has \$9 million annually for low cost safety improvements. The Strategic Highway Safety Plan provides guidance for roadway improvements. There are three ways to get into the program. The traditional approach, systematic and Road Safety Audits (RSA). She will forward her presentation to M. Izzard to share with TAC.

Road Safety Audits (RSA)

She reviewed the RSA process which focus on crash history and attempts to identify patterns. Review includes types of crashes, days of the week, seasonal traffic etc. In the past, they accepted anyone who wanted to have a RSA done; specific criteria have now been developed:

- There must have been a fatal or serious injury in the past 10 years;
- The intersection can't have had another type of report or construction in the past 5 years;
- Applications ask for speed and ADT so they can rank them;
- Applications include crash data; and
- Application must be complete to be considered.

The deadline for new RSA applications is December 1st. Four RSAs are conducted per year and there are different types and levels that can be done including confusing configurations, serious hazards, or a specific crash type. They are looking at low cost safety improvements and their decisions for those locations are data driven. She reviewed a list of RSAs done in the past and compared them to the new criteria as well as before and after photos of completed RSAs from across the state. The website to visit for more information and to get applications and other documents is www.nh.gov/dot/projects/specifics.htm

Presentation: NHDES VW Settlement and Air Quality Update

(Given by Tim White and Liz Strachan, NHDES Air Resources Division)

Air Quality Update

T. White and L. Strachan shared preliminary results of a NH wood smoke study from the Laconia air monitoring station. The study is measuring Particulate Matter (PM) in the air. The EPA set a national standard of 35 micrograms per cubic meter ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) of air over a 24-hour period. The data reviewed was from October through December 2016 and included the following results:

- There were a couple periods over $35 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, but not for a full 24-hour period
- Minimal wind direction difference so PM was unlikely from another source
- PM was less when there was wind to disburse it
- Not enough information to say, yet, but results are likely from people burning wood at their homes
- Peaks in the average PM during the evening were possibly due to people getting home and stoking their wood stoves

They answered some questions, confirming the results are based on new data being collected and barometric issues are being considered but don't seem to have an effect over a long period.

VW Settlement

T. White spoke about the VW Settlement. He requested people visit the DES website for more information, to comment on an initial proposal for use of the funds, and to submit ideas for projects. The deadline for comments was February 10, but he said they would likely continue to take comments after that point.

He reviewed what the violations were and how they were discovered. A Consent Decree was signed and finalized last year. He reviewed several major components:

- Appendixes A and B -Buyback and Emissions Modification Program
- Appendix C – a \$2 billion program promoting the use of zero emission vehicles and infrastructure (suggest visiting the Electrify America website for more information).
- Appendix D – the Environmental Mitigation Trust

NH will potentially be receiving a little over \$30 million for the Environmental Mitigation Trust - “The goal of each eligible mitigation action shall be to achieve reductions of NOx in the U.S.”

The current process is as follows:

- The Governor's Office must decide if they'll become part of the settlement or file their own suit.
- Once they decide, the court will put a trustee in place who will be responsible for administering the trust.
- After the trustee is in place the states will have 60 days to certify themselves as beneficiaries of the trust
- Once they're beneficiaries they will have an additional 90 days to write their mitigation plans
- If things continue the way they should, the state might have access to the funds in 2017.

The beneficiary mitigation plans must include:

- NOx reductions that can be quantified for each specific project;
- The categories of projects they intend to implement; and
- Information pertaining to air quality benefits.

He reviewed eligible mitigation projects and the types of engine models eligible for reimbursement. He shared that funds from the Environmental Mitigation Trust can be used as the nonfederal match for DERA projects. They aren't planning to exclude any eligible mitigation actions but their focus will be on larger projects (\$300,000 - \$500,000) so they want to see groups of smaller projects submitted by a lead agency like an RPC.

Some topics and questions that they would like input on:

- Development of EV Charging infrastructure
- Should focus stay within NH or should they look regionally, like at railways?
- They use EPA diesel emission quantifier to measure air quality – are there any other tools they should be using?
- Are there other benefits (i.e. improved mobility) that should be taken into consideration in terms of quantifying the benefits of the projects?

Some of the questions that were addressed:

Q: Will this cripple them or put them out of business?

A: No. Part of the Consent Decree includes investments they must make that will help them eventually and was a “bone” that was given to them.

Q: Are we sure they’ll be able to pay the penalty?

A: Yes. There was an agreement signed by the courts.

Q: What about possibility of a consortium of communities applying for a large amount of funding to focus on public works or school busses or other public fleet type vehicles?

A: There might be a requirement to be able to effectively manage these projects. It’s something they would like to see considered because it’s very important.

Q: Regarding railways – would that apply to commuter rails under the transit category?

A: Potentially. They were thinking more in terms of older freight railroads that needs replacement like Pan Am Railroad.

Q: What about a commuter rail from Lowell into Nashua?

A: That depends on how they decide to define the criteria. If they look regionally as opposed to just in NH it could be a consideration. The idea is to get some of the old diesel equipment off the road so we have the benefits of the reduced NOx. Some of the existing railroad stock in the state is some of the worse culprits as far as that’s concerned

Q: In past decades, the state of NH has received Medicare funds, a substantial settlement, and money from tobacco companies, and the legislature and NH government hijacked some of those funds. Is that a possibility?

A: No. That wouldn’t be a possibility because the trustee of the Environmental Mitigation Trust program will be responsible for administering those funds only to submitted projects that are within the guidelines of the consent decree.

He will the send links to Mike. Information is also available under “What’s New” section of the DES website

Other Business

Next meeting will be March 8 in the Humiston building. S. Morgan recommended during the TYP update it would make sense to keep meetings central - he does not favor the option to move the meeting around. M. Taylor suggested holding the meeting at 1:00PM to allow for more time. S. Morgan decided they would use that recommendation as they get closer to the deadlines.

Motion entertained to adjourn at 3:59 PM.

M/S/Passed – Favorite/Taylor