



Policy Committee Meeting Minutes August 17, 2006

The meeting was held at the Chicago Area Transportation Study, Cook/Cunningham-Williams Conference Room, 233 S. Wacker Drive, Chicago, Illinois. Those present at the meeting were:

Policy Committee Members Present

Timothy Martin, Chair	Illinois Department of Transportation
Marty Buehler	Lake County
Tom Cuculich	DuPage County
Paul Fish	Chicago Transit Authority (Representing Frank Kruesi)
Jack Groner	Metra (Representing Phil Pagano)
Cheri Heramb	Chicago Department of Transportation
Ken Koehler	McHenry County
Jon-Paul Kohler	Federal Highway Administration
Wally Kos	Cook County (Representing James Eldridge, Jr.)
Karen McConnaughay	Kane County
Sheldon Latz	Will County
Ed Paesel	Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission
Mike Payette	Railroad Companies
T. J. Ross	Pace (Representing John Case)
Jeff Schielke	Council of Mayors
Steve Schlickman	Regional Transportation Authority

Policy Committee Members Absent

John McCarthy	Private Providers
John Rita	Mass Transit Districts
Marisol Simon	Federal Transit Administration
Anne Vickery	Kendall County
Rocco Zucchero	Illinois Tollway

Visitors

Chris DiPalma	FHWA
Bruce Gould	Will County
Andrew Gruber	RTA
Chalen Hunter	NWMC
Joe Korpalski	McHenry County
Tam Kutzmark	DMMC
Hugh O'Hara	WCGL
Mark Pitstick	RTA
Bill Reynolds	RTA
Tom Rickert	Kane County
David Seglin	CDOT
Mike Walczak	NWMC
Deanna Zalas	CTA

Staff

Ralph Coglianesi, Don Kopec, Gordon Smith
Jill Leary, Joy Schaad, Patricia Tinnelle

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Martin called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

II. OLD BUSINESS

A. Approval of Minutes for June 8, 2006.

On a motion by Mayor Schielke, seconded by Mr. Buehler, the minutes of the meeting on June 8, 2006 were approved.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. CATS Executive Director

Chairman Martin began by mentioning that Mr. Kopec has officially retired from the State and is now working for the CMAP board. He noted that the Policy Committee is charged with appointing the CATS Executive Director, so he thought it appropriate to revisit the Executive Director position.

Mayor Schielke asked if Mr. Kopec can stay on as the Executive Director after his retirement. Secretary Martin explained that he could and that some Executive Directors in the past were not IDOT employees.

Mr. Groner moved that Mr. Kopec be named the Executive Director and was seconded by Mr. Ross. Mr. Buehler asked Mr. Kopec to explain his current position and how that fits with the Policy Committee. Mr. Kopec explained where he fit in with the new organization and how the staff was being organized. He explained that his relationship to the Policy Committee has not changed because of his moving from the state payroll to the CMAP board's payroll. The motion was then approved.

B. Job Access and Reverse Commute and the New Freedom Initiative Programs

Mr. Schlickman noted that the RTA has the responsibility for administering the Job Access and Reverse Commute and New Freedom programs and have been developing a process to implement them. He introduced Mr. Reynolds of his and asked him to update the committee on the progress made.

Mr. Reynolds mentioned that there were two initiatives going on simultaneously the development of the FY2006 JARC and New Freedom programs and the Human Services Transportation Plan. JARC is in transition from a discretionary program to a formula funded program. For 2006 there must be a coordinated planning process and a competitive selection process. They have worked closely with the service boards and others in developing a set of criteria for projects. An application form was sent out last Friday and will be due on November 1st. There is about \$3.5 million available for JARC projects and \$2.5 million for New Freedoms projects. Once those projects are selected, we will go back through the CATS process to get endorsement of the MPO. For the Human Services Transportation Plan we have put together a RFP. The scope of the RFP will be reviewed by other agencies. The schedule calls for the plan to be completed by May 2007. The plan will be a policy document and will be used in developing future programs. The CATS committees involved in the process include the Community Mobility Task Force and the Task Force for Seniors and People with Disabilities. So you need action by the PC?

Mr. Ross asked about the relationship between this work and the ADA financial plan and about the new Freedom initiative. Mr. Reynolds noted that the New Freedom program goes beyond ADA requirements and would be a competitively selected program. Mr. Ross reminded the committee that Pace has a lot of resources and would like to work with you. There are a lot of needs out there and only about \$6 million is available.

Mr. Reynolds noted that the application calls for potential recipients to work with the service boards whenever possible. The Human Services Transportation Plan will consider all plans and activities currently in place. The idea is to not duplicate similar service.

Mr. Ross noted that the purpose of these programs is to provide service above and beyond that required by the ADA. The plan that is developed needs to address those issues and should consult Pace and others about what service is currently in place. Mr. Reynolds noted that an extensive public involvement process is part of the development process and includes the service boards and other interested agencies. However, the development of the scope of services did not include any of the service boards. Mr. Schlickman offered that the RTA will meet with Pace and address any concerns they may have.

The RTA will be back at the October Policy Committee meeting with an update and asking that they give the Work Program Committee authority to approve the FY2006 projects in order to meet the development schedule.

C. Report to the General Assembly from the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP)

Chairman Martin began by mentioning that recent letters between IDOT and the CMAP board did not have anything to do with the CATS Policy Committee, but rather dealt with how to phase out an arm of IDOT. Much needs to be done to make sure this transition of staff and associated records is done correctly.

Mr. Schlickman then reminded the committee that at the last meeting there was an extensive review of the approach CMAP was taking at that time. He reviewed the motion approved at that meeting which expressed a general comfort with the CMAP board's approach to governance. However, there are details yet to be worked out. There are questions about the committee structure and there is a reference to an interagency agreement between the CATS Policy Committee and CMAP board to work out many of those details. He then asked Mr. Blankenhorn to explain the draft report.

Mr. Blankenhorn emphasized that this is a policy document for the General Assembly and the Governor. The most important thing to look at is if it contains the right policy hooks to which detail can later be added onto. He mentioned that if the document does not address the right policy issues correctly, then that is what he needs to know.

He then described the organization of the report covering the vision, staff and initial committee structures – that there will be a need to committees like CMAQ and UWP. On transportation issues, the Policy Committee will have the final approval before things are sent to the federal agencies or the Governor. Staff will be reporting to the Policy Committee and its subcommittees. There will some changes in committee structure. That has been discussed since this merger started to take place.

The next section on funding has caused people some concerns. He mentioned that the examples used may cause headlines and should be avoided. The intention is to give the General Assembly options and alternatives on how to fund planning. There needs to be other funding other than from transportation that supports planning. The major issue for funding is not the transportation side, but the non-transportation planning activities. We need to get financial support from other sectors. This section will change significantly in the next ten days without specific examples and a greater emphasis on the non-transportation related sources of funding.

The section on options and priorities might be titled legislative initiatives but it goes beyond that. It addresses working with our other government partners like IDOT, DCEO and others. In the fall veto session if we look for anything it will

be technical fixes to the existing act that are completely agreed upon by the entire region. There are some fixes dealing with retirement that need to be addressed now, but anything serious will be addressed in the spring.

Mr. Groner inquired about the responsibility of the directors of the CMAP as they relate to the transportation issues of CATS. Mr. Blankenhorn referred to chart that was previously distributed that has a clear line from staff and committees to the MPO and to CMAP providing concurrent information. He feels the report should not be too detailed to allow us flexibility in how we deal with it. He also noted that there will be a clear link between the Council of Mayors, the Policy Committee and the CMAP board. The mayors role in programming STP and CMAQ funds will not change. That relationship to the MPO will stay in place. But there needs to be an agreement covering operating procedures between the two agencies.

Chairman Martin recommended a Joint Statement of Understanding between the Policy Committee and the CMAP board that would be renewed annually. Mr. Blankenhorn mentioned that they are looking at just such an agreement. A draft could be developed for the October Policy Committee meeting and be finalized in January. Items that should be addressed are staff support for committees, committee reporting structure, communication between the boards, possible membership for CMAP on the MPO as there is for the Policy Committee on the CMAP board, the approval process – who does what when, and conflict resolution . There may be others.

Mr. Cuculich thanked Mr. Blankenhorn and the staff for their work the time they have put in putting this report together. He asked for a clarification of the statement on page 12 that says both boards must approve regional transportation plans. He felt this contradicted federal rules. Mr. Blankenhorn responded saying that for major plans and programs like the TIP and RTP, the CMAP board approves and recommends to the Policy Committee their approval just like the Work Program Committee does today. The CMAP board approves that there is consistency with the comprehensive regional plan. NIPC does a similar thing today. He indicated that, through an agreement, the Policy Committee will bind itself to a conflict resolution process if there is not consensus. He noted that many MPOs have a similar type of relationship with a council of governments and hoped this would be part of the final document submitted at the end of the month.

It was suggested that a subcommittee take a look and provide final comments on the document before it is submitted to the General Assembly and the Governor.

Mayor Schielke mentioned that the biggest issue the mayors had was the suggestions about the funding mechanisms, specifically as it applies to sales tax and to the tapping the motor fuel tax. One suggestion was to look instead at an assessment on building permits. He mentioned that since it was the General Assembly formed this agency they need to provide a source of revenue

Mr. Schlickman brought up the subject of the UWP funding which historically has been allocated to other agencies besides CATS and NIPC. This committee needs to address that issue in terms of using these funds for the new agency.

Mr. Blankenhorn noted that the UWP Committee had met earlier in the week and discussed this same issue. It was felt that if the region was going to be asking the legislature for additional funding that there had to be defensible reasons for providing other agencies with UWP funding. He felt there were good reasons, but they needed to be articulated.

It was suggested that there is an allocation method of UWP funds and the tradition has been to send roughly 40% of those funds each year to members of the MPO other than CATS or NIPC, for them to do regional planning; that the allocation is appropriate and is justified. This should be put forward in a very clear fashion and possibly made part of this report. The discussion continued as to whether the 60/40 split should be maintained or any mention of a split be made at all. Specifying a specific split could limit what the region wants to do in the future. It was noted that the actual split varied from year to year, and was used to good regional planning such as the PL program of the Council of Mayors and work in the CREATE Program, regardless of the agency receiving the funds.

Mr. Schlickman suggested that the report reflect that the CMAP staff is not expected to do everything; that it will continue to rely on the support of the Policy Committee members for additional expertise. That way the legislature understands how things will operate here. It was agreed to add language to the report describing why the present method of distributing UWP funds is appropriate and should be continued.

Mr. Kos indicated that the member agencies of this committee should show some unity in the region by supporting the new agency and any legislative initiatives that may be necessary. Letters of support should be sent to the Governor and legislature. Mr. Blankenhorn felt that would be an excellent strategy. He indicated Chapter 7 will form the basis of what the next steps will be and stressed the importance of the partner agencies understanding it and being supportive. If there are problems, he needs to know what they are. He is going to ask Representative Hamos for a hearing by her committee where partner agencies can voice their opinions about the direction the board is taking. He mentioned an area that already has been a problem – the four-fifths majority needed to pass anything. This should be changed to allow for a simple majority for administrative type issues. For plans and programs, the super majority would stay.

The subject of promoting regional projects was discussed by the committee. It was felt that there may be some conflict with the MPO regulations if the board were to take that authority. Mr. Blankenhorn felt that this could be handled by the previously discussed agreement between the committee and the board.

Furthermore, many of the regionally significant projects the board will be looking at are not transportation projects, but will have an impact on transportation. Concern was expressed about the use of the word “must” and the implications it has. Mr. Blankenhorn agreed to take a look at the report and make sure that where “must” is used, it is appropriate.

Chairman Martin expressed a concern about the discussion of regional disaster preparedness. He noted that this is the authority of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency and a department in the city of Chicago. Mr. Blankenhorn agreed that the board does not wish to be responsible for emergency management planning but could serve as an information source for the responsible agencies.

Mr. Buehler mentioned the section about getting elected officials involved in an advisory role to the board. He indicated that there should be a way for the county elected officials to be involved also. There is an organization of county officials that should be tapped in much the same way that the Council of Mayors is involved. Mr. Blankenhorn felt they had tried to indicate that there is a role for county officials. He will take a look at the report’s language to make sure it is clear to everyone and that the county organization will be involved.

Mr. Blankenhorn reviewed the schedule for finishing the report. The next draft will be available on August 24th. There will be several meetings with partner agencies between now and then. That draft will reflect the input from those meetings. He suggested that the committee get a group together to review that draft to make sure their concerns have been addressed.

It was noted that the SAFETEA Committee was scheduled to meet on the 25th to discuss the proposed rulemaking for the planning regulations and this could be added to the agenda. It was agreed that the SAFETEA Committee would review the new draft with all members of the Policy Committee encouraged to attend.

Mr. Buehler reemphasized the need to address how funding is handled in the report. There should be less of a focus on funding the transportation side since that really needs a minor adjustment. The real issue will be funding the other areas the board needs to address. It was recognized that this section of the report will be significantly different before it is sent to the General Assembly and the Governor.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business for the Committee.

V. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Policy Committee meeting is scheduled for October 12, 2006 in the Sears Tower, 8th Floor, Chicago, Illinois at 10:00 a.m.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m. on a motion by Mayor Schielke, seconded by Mr. Buehler.

Respectfully Submitted,

Donald P. Kopec
Secretary