



POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, June 10, 2004

The meeting was held at the Chicago Area Transportation Study, Cunningham-Williams Conference Room, 300 West Adams Street, Chicago, Illinois. Chairman Martin called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Those present at the meeting were:

POLICY COMMITTEE

Timothy Martin (Chairman)
Luann Hamilton

Bruce Christensen

Tom Cuculich
Jack Groner

John McCarthy
Norm Stoner
Panos Kokkas

Michael Tryon
Chris Snyder

Sheldon C. Latz
Donald Gismondi

Thomas Rickert

T. J. Ross
Jeff Schielke
Paula Thibeault
Rae Rupp-Srch
Paul Fish

Mike Payette

Illinois Department of Transportation
Chicago Department of Transportation
(Representing Miguel d'Escoto)

Lake County
(Representing Suzi Schmidt)

DuPage County
Metra

(Representing Jeffrey Ladd)

Private Transportation Providers
Federal Highway Administration
Illinois State Toll Highway Authority
(Representing Marilyn Johnson)

McHenry County

Cook County
(Representing James Eldridge, Jr.)

Will County
Federal Transit Administration
(Representing Joel Ettinger)

Kane County
(Representing Michael McCoy)

Pace

Council of Mayors
Regional Transportation Authority
Northern Illinois Planning Commission
Chicago Transit Authority
(Representing Frank Kruesi)

Class One Railroads

Transportation Operators, Planning Officials and Municipal Staff

Randy Blankenhorn	IDOT
Larry Bury	NWMC
Steve Call	FHWA
Ralph Coglianese	NIPC
Bob Dean	DMMC
John DeLaurentiis	RTA
Neil D. Ferrari	IDOT
Jennie Grobe	WCGL
Gary Kirkman	RTA
Jon-Paul Kohler	FHWA
Mark Pitstick	RTA
Chad Riddle	IDOT-D1
Mike Rogers	IEPA
Dave Seglin	CDOT
Gordon Smith	IDOT-OPP
Daniel E. Stefanski	IDOT
Ron Thomas	NIPC

Other

Linda Bolte	Raymond Professional Group/NIPC
Jim LaBelle	Chicago Metropolis 2020
Jackie Grimshaw	CNT
Jan Metzger	CNT
Johanna Nyden	CNT

Staff

Aristide E. Biciunas, Don Kopec
Patricia Berry, Bill Kiley, Mark Thomas, Thomas Vick
Parry Frank, Ryan Herren

OLD BUSINESS

A. Approval of Minutes

Chairman Martin asked for a motion approving the minutes of the previous meetings. A motion was made by Mr. Groner, seconded by Commissioner Rupp-Srch, that the minutes of March 11, 2004 and April 5, 2004 be approved.

B. Council of Mayor's Report

Mayor Schielke reported that the Council of Mayors Executive Committee met on May 24, 2004 when they heard an update on the status of a new federal transportation bill, and established guidance for dealing with the possible shortfall in STP funding for federal fiscal year 2004. The mayor commented that he hoped that the situation could be averted if Congress acts to extend TEA-21 and the FY 2004 Appropriations through September, or passes a new Transportation Bill, shortly.

He also reported that the Executive Committee approved an advance funding request from the North Central Council of Mayors for \$2.2 million in STP funds for two projects on the June letting, heard updates on the AMPO Policy Conference from President Rupp Srch and on Swift Rail from President Kravcik, and discussed the Regional Transportation Task Force decisions. The Committee elected President John Kravcik of Western Springs as Second Vice Chairman to fill a vacancy. The next Executive Committee meeting is "on call" for September or October.

C. Executive Director's Report

Mr. Biciunas said that April 19th was the deadline for comments on the Interim Rule to implement the Swift Rail Development Act of 1994. The CATS comments as submitted were included in the Committee's packets. The submittal parallels that which was jointly sent out by the City of Chicago, the CATS Council of Mayors and the Metropolitan Mayor's Caucus, and has been developed in concert with key congressional offices.

The comments were approved by a sub-committee of the CATS Policy Committee and developed by an inter-agency Rail Working Group.

The CATS transmittal letter has six attachments – one detailing each of the four key points and two studies from Northwestern and DePaul Universities that support various points made in the text.

Mr. Biciunas thanked the many people who were instrumental in putting together the recommendations especially members of the Rail Working Group. He mentioned President Kravcik of Western Springs, Larry Bury, Laura Guillot, Steve Schlickman, Steve Laffey, Rick Cornue, Pat Higgins, Jill Leary, Parry Frank of the CATS staff and especially thanked Joy Schaad for spearheading the entire effort.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Nominating Committee for the office of Vice Chairman

Secretary Martin appointed Mayor Schielke, Mr. Fish and Mr. Tryon to the Nominating Committee and asked them to report back at the October meeting of the Policy Committee. Mayor Schielke was asked to chair the committee.

B. Authorization of Work Program Committee to act on a proposed TIP Amendment

Ms. Berry reported on the proposed TIP amendment adding an interchange project at Brisbin Road on I-80. The federally required analysis demonstrated that the northeastern Illinois region remains within its State Implementation Plan air quality budgets with the TIP amendment. The TIP Change and Project Grouping Procedures require that all TIP amendments except for signal interconnect projects be approved by the Policy Committee. On a motion by Mr. Rickert, seconded by Mr. Fish, the Policy Committee authorized the Work Program Committee to act on this proposed TIP amendment.

C. RTA Financial Capacity Analysis

Mr. Kopec referred the committee members to the RTA Financial Capacity report included with the mailing. He noted that this analysis is an annual requirement of the Federal Transit Administration, consisting of a review of the financial conditions of transit operations by examining historical trends and an assessment of the stability and reliability of revenue sources to meet anticipated future operating and capital needs. He noted that the analysis shows that ridership is down about 1% from 1999 to 2003, and sales tax revenues have increased at an annual average of only 1.6% for the same period. However, during the last year, ridership is up 1% while sales tax revenue increased 5.5%, indicating a turn around in these indicators. The analysis shows sufficient revenues to cover operating expenditures, absent major rail or bus expansion, to merit further financial federal investment in the region. On a motion by Mayor Schielke, seconded by Commissioner Rupp Srch, the RTA 2003 Financial Capacity Analysis was accepted.

D. Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) Program

Mr. Kopec informed the committee that in February, the Federal Transit Administration released the FY 2004 Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) program. Two projects from northeastern Illinois were included. These were both congressional earmarks, as no discretionary program was included. DuPage County and the Ray Graham Association for People with Disabilities both received funding. Because of this, he asked that the committee name these two agencies designated recipients for JARC funding for FY 2004, by approving resolution 04-07. On a motion by Mr. Groner, seconded by Mayor Scheilke, Resolution 04-07 was approved.

E. FY 2005 Unified Work Program

Mr. Kopec referred the committee members to the Executive Summary of the FY 2005 Unified Work Program (UWP) that was included in the mailing. He mentioned some of the highlights of the program. Of the over \$18 million in funding, \$10 million is

new funds, with the balance carried over from previous years. Of the new funds, CATS is receiving 44%, NIPC 20%, the transit agencies anywhere from 3% to 7%, the city of Chicago 10% and the Council of Mayors 10%.

Categorically, regional transportation planning will be getting 16%, the bulk of which is NIPC's work developing population, household and employment forecasts. The TIP will also be getting 16% of the investment. About 13% of the funding will be going for public involvement. Planning data and model development will receive about 19% of the total. The major effort next year in this category is the household travel survey. Special studies will receive 14% of the total and will fund TSM and ITS efforts, work on meeting the new conformity regulations and asset management studies. Subregional and project specific studies will receive about 21% of the total. Included in this category is work on the New Start projects in the region. Program management will total less than 1% of the total budget.

The substantial carryover was explained as mainly funding for project consultant projects that typically take more than a year to go out for bid, select a consultant and conduct the study. On a motion by Mayor Schielke, seconded by Mr. Rickert, the FY 2005 UWP was approved.

F. Illinois Environmental Protection Agency's Vehicle Inspection Program

Mike Rogers described a recent agreement that extends the current Inspection and Maintenance contract to January of 2007, saving approximately \$31 million dollars. The agreement with Envirotec Illinois, Inc. will take advantage of On-Board-Diagnostic (OBD) testing allowing closure of seven testing stations in northeastern Illinois. A press release prepared by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency describing the new agreement was handed out along with a map of the program area in northeastern Illinois with testing stations described.

Mr. Groner asked how the agreement was able to save so much money. The OBD testing equipment has been installed in all vehicles after model year 1996, so the portion of the auto fleet with this device is growing. As a result there is a quick "plug and play" device that allows vehicle test times to be greatly reduced. Mayor Schielke then asked about the station closings and if station locations requirements are still being met with the remaining stations. Mr. Rogers explained that 80 percent of the served population must be within 5 miles and 95 percent within 12 miles.

Mr. Cuculich suggested that if program support is not in the current state budget then the legislature needs to move on a fee structure quickly. Mr. Groner described the recent program support as coming from the Congestion Mitigation Air Quality program, and that that source will not be allowed in coming years.

Mr. Mark Thomas then described a staff survey of Inspection and Maintenance programs across the nation and a financial analysis of fees that could pay for the program in the future. Of 34 nationwide programs, Illinois' program is one of twenty enhanced programs. Test fees for centralized (facilities based) and decentralized (private garages)

programs ranged from \$14 to \$100 dollars biannually. Two states charge a small (\$2 dollar) license plate fee to support program administration and no states use a license fee to support the entire program.

Using data from the Secretary of State registration files, Mr. Thomas suggested that a \$34 dollar test fee would be required for vehicles tested in the program area (1.78 million) to support a \$60 million dollar program. The figure was described as on the high side of the probable cost range as it is believed that there could be about 5 percent more vehicles tested, and because the cost of the overall program is going down.

License plate fees would range from \$17 dollars per test vehicle in the program area to \$5.75 if the cost was shared with all vehicle registrations in the state. If costs were added to the sale of gasoline the cost would be about 2 cents a gallon in non-attainment areas or about 0.9 cents a gallon for both diesel and gas across the whole state.

Mr. Martin suggested that staff provide tabular data that clarified options on splitting the program cost between registration fees and test fees. These calculations should be based on a reduced \$54 million dollar program in response to new OBD testing opportunities. It is likely that there would be additional administrative fees required by the Secretary of State in order to charge test fees to a subset of motor vehicles but at this time that additional cost can not be determined.

Mr. Cuculich asked about exemptions for vehicles that do not pass tests. Mr. Rogers explained that once a maximum cost incurred by the vehicle owner they are exempt from further repairs until the next test cycle.

Mr. Ross suggested that a fuel tax was not politically feasible and that charging at test sites would significantly complicate the process and likely add administrative costs. Ms. Hamilton agreed and suggested that the test fees could also be collected by Secretary of State. Mr. Martin was concerned about test compliance issues related to charging test fees at the test site. Mr. Rogers explained that there is a series of test requirement notifications mailed to test vehicle owners.

Ms. Grimshaw asked if it would be possible to charge a fee to drivers that live outside the non-attainment area and work within. Mr. Martin suggested that charging these drivers may not be feasible, along with the notion of charging down-state residents license plate fees for a program outside their area.

G. Implication of the 2000 Census in northeastern Illinois

Ms. Berry reviewed the actions that have already occurred in response to the 2000 Census, noting that the urban boundary was approved and that RTA and SEWRPC have reached agreement on FTA funding for 2004 and 2005. The subregional planning staff for McHenry and Lake Counties, Pat Schroeder and Bruce Christensen, have completed polling the twenty eight Illinois communities in the new Round Lake Beach-McHenry-Grayslake IL—WI urbanized area. The result was that only one of the communities was interested in pursuing steps to form a separate MPO. Staff from the MPO for

southwestern Wisconsin and CATS staff have been working to develop an agreement documenting the cooperative process that exists between the two organizations. She concluded her report, noting that meetings will be scheduled to discuss a recommendation on the metropolitan planning area.

H. Non-attainment Boundary Designation for the 8-hour Ozone Standard classification and new conformity determination

Mr. Rogers explained that last April the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency designated northeastern Illinois not in attainment of the 8-hour ozone standard. The region must meet the standard by the year 2010. The non-attainment area will be identical to the current 1-hour ozone non-attainment area. Significant is the requirement for the region to conduct a conformity analysis on the existing RTP and TIP by May 2005. It must include the analysis year of 2010, a year that is not currently modeled.

I. CMAQ Proposal from CATS

Ms. Berry reported on the rideshare/carpool park and ride lot project submitted for the FY 05 CMAQ program. Much of the work in support of this project has been accomplished by a working group of the Air Quality and Transportation Management Task Force (AQTM). The AQTM recommended that a CMAQ application be submitted by CATS as a place holder to begin development of a Park n Ride Lot program for the region as the first phase program was being finalized. The working group's recommendation was to focus on employment centers. A meeting is scheduled for this Friday to finalize the list of projects and lot sizing. If the proposal is selected as a funded project for FY 05 it will be handed off to IDOT or Pace as the implementing agency. Mr. Ross said that the project development has been an interesting process with staff from many agencies involved, including Pace, IDOT and FTA. The project can serve the many areas that don't have transit service. Mr. Vick noted that much commuting is not centrally oriented, though sites could include a park n pool to a Metra lot. Mr. Martin asked if Metra is invited to Friday's meeting. Mr. Vick replied affirmatively and added that Metra is represented on the AQTM and on the working group.

J. Reauthorization of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21)

Secretary Martin offered that it was really anyone's guess as to the direction that reauthorization will be going. The three proposals are all being discussed. The House and Senate conference members have been named and the conference staff report is due on June 23rd. It is unlikely that there is enough time to enact a new law before the end of June when the current extension expires.

K. Regional Transportation Task Force

Secretary Martin referred to a letter from Speaker Madigan on the resolutions passed by the Regional Transportation Task Force. He introduced the letter from President Smith of NIPC, noting that he felt this committee should not get out ahead of the legislature on this issue.

President Rupp Srch remarked that NIPC is simply asking for the Policy Committee to form an ad hoc committee to work with NIPC's ad hoc committee to begin examining issues involved with some type of coordination between the two agencies. She also asked that the CATS staff be directed to assist in the effort. She felt that the information gained by such an effort would be beneficial to the legislature. Mr. Tryon asked if this would look at the internal structure of the organizations. President Rupp Srch felt it should be more than that, and try to identify cooperative ventures and where efficiencies could be made. Ms. Thiebault agreed that this would be a productive effort, getting critical information to the legislature, and be conducted by the people who are involved in the day to day activities of the agencies.

Mayor Schielke offered the position of the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus that would be looking to this ad hoc committee to come up with some recommendations that would likely form the basis of the Caucus position. Mr. Cuculich asked if there was anything concrete from Speaker Madigan at this time. Secretary Martin noted that immediately following the passage of the resolutions by the Regional Transportation Task Force there was a flurry of activity. The Speaker Madigan announced there would be no action taken on the resolutions during the spring session. Several legislators have expressed an interest in participating in the additional hearings, including Senators Garrett and Sullivan and Representatives Miller and Hamos. Mr. Stefanski noted that Representative Hamos chairs a transit subcommittee that would like to hold hearings on the resolutions, but is waiting for Speaker Madigan to agree. Ms. Thiebault asked that the ad hoc committee look at all possibilities of the two agencies working together and not just concentrate on a merger. On a motion by President Rupp Srch, seconded by Ms. Thiebault, an ad hoc committee was formed. Secretary Martin directed Mr. Blankenhorn to chair the group and asked interested members to notify Mr. Blankenhorn of their interest in participating.

Ms. Metzger asked how the public would be informed about the meetings of the ad hoc committee. Secretary Martin felt this would be a day to day operations activity and the outcome would be made public during the hearing process. Ms. Metzger then asked for a clarification about recommendations for governance. Secretary Martin directed the ad hoc committee not to make any recommendations concerning governance. The directive is to catalogue activities, identify duplication and suggest efficiencies.

IV. Other Business

Secretary Martin introduced a letter he received from the Center for Neighborhood Technology concerning the RTP development process. Ms. Metzger of CNT stated their intention is to improve the process. She noted that nearly 25% of the update cycle is complete and no evaluation of the process has been completed as had been promised by Mr. Blankenhorn. There is no plan to improve the process. Ms Grimshaw stated that each plan cycle we say that we will be doing things differently, but this does not happen. There are no options made available, and she questioned when and how the public gets involved.

Mr. Blankenhorn replied that there are really two tracks of evaluation taking place. The first being done by the RTP Committee, and the second effort headed by Mr. Kopec, who will be interviewing a number of participants in the past plan development process and provide a report to the RTP committee. That effort is still in progress. Mr. Kopec noted that he was indeed behind on this project but expected to be completed by this summer. Secretary Martin asked if the report could be completed by late September, to which Mr. Kopec replied that it will be done by then.

Mr. Stoner of the Federal Highway Administration informed the committee that after seven years of service in the Chicago Metro Office, Mr. Steve Call would be taking another position within FHWA in Utah. He thanked Mr. Call for the fine work he has done in the region, noting that he was instrumental in developing the concept of the Metro Office and creating an office beneficial to the Chicago region and the state.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Policy Committee meeting is scheduled for October 14, 2004.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 A.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Aristide E. Biciunas
Secretary