

MINUTES

Mississippi Gulf Coast Metropolitan Planning Organization

Joint Transportation Policy Committee (TPC) & Technical Coordinating Committee



Thursday, March 26, 2015 at 10:30am
 Gulf Regional Planning Commission
 1635-G Poppo Ferry Road ~ Biloxi MS 39532



I. Call to order – 39 attendees

Attendees: 2014 MPO Annual Meeting					
Hancock Co.		D'Iberville		Bus. Council	
	Vic Johnson		Leslie Robertson		None
Harrison Co.				Other Parties	
	Patrick Bonck	Ocean Springs		Mickey Lagasse	GRPC/Compton
	Jody Spires		None	Geoffrey Steptoe	Citizen/Canton, MS
		Gautier		Jerry Beasley	MDEQ
Jackson Co.			Samantha Abell		
	Brian Fulton		Chandra Nicholson	FTA	
		Pascagoula			None
			Jaci Turner	FHWA	
Waveland			Joe Huffman		None
	Brent Anderson	Moss Point		Rep. Cochran	
Bay St Louis			Sue Wright		Win Ellington
	Buz Olsen			Rep. Wicker	
Diamondhead		Coast Transit			Camille Peno
	Clovis Reed		Kevin Coggin		Andrew Hinkebein
		Intern'l Airport		Rep. Palazzo	
Pass Christian			Don Shepley		TJ Moran
	Jennifer Burke	MS State Port			
			Carlos Bell		
Long Beach		Port Pascagoula		MDOT staff	
	Mayor Skellie		Michael Smith		Kelly Castleberry
					Lindsey Netherland
Gulfport		Port Bienville			Necole Baker
	Ryan Merrill		None		David Seyfarth
	Veronica Weaver	NASA/Stennis			
			None	GRPC staff	
Biloxi		Keesler & NCBC			Elaine Wilkinson
	Damon Torricelli		None		David Taylor
	Ed Shambra				Kenneth Yarrow
		CSX, KCS, Amtrak			Stephanie Plancich
			None		Jeff Loftus

II. Introductions - None

III. Public comment - None

IV. Approval of Minutes

1. TCC – MOTION by Buz Olsen, second by Mrs. Wilkinson, no comments, PASSED.
2. TPC - MOTION by Joe Huffman, second by Buz Olsen, no comments, PASSED.

V. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The TIP application process will open this spring to allocate some funds that have recently become available. These are extremely limited, but Mr. Taylor encourages the submission of any project hoped for in the next couple of years, so as more funds become available the staff will know who needs what. He clarified that the comprehensive application process will occur in the spring/summer of 2016 to be allocated for the 2017-2021 TIP. At that time we expect approximately \$9 Million to be available. He gave a brief update on project progress to utilize our obligation authority for 2015. He reports that we are on track, although there have been a couple of hiccups that MDOT is helping to work through. Another progress meeting will be scheduled in conjunction with the next TCC meeting on May 28th.

VI. Ozone standards update & local action planning (Jerry Beasley)

Mr. Beasley discussed with the MPO several air quality related topics including: how ozone is formed and how our biogenic/naturally occurring VOCs contribute to the ozone for our region. He outlined the EPAs proposal to reduce the current ozone standard from 75ppb to 65-70ppb putting Jackson and Harrison counties in jeopardy of non-attainment and Hancock County in jeopardy of having to deal with nonattainment designation by association. In other words, and transportation conformity requirements imposed on the MPO may apply for the entire process not just those specific to any one non-conforming county.

He outlined the comments that DEQ submitted to EPA on behalf on our state which basically state that we want the standard to remain the same, that we have not seen the full impact of processes put into place under the current requirements and that the density of our biogenic sources contributing to ozone are not controllable and that lowering below our “background” levels would not be possible. Finally, he provided information on what our past annual levels have been, how they will be calculated over the next few years and the timeline for possibly being designated nonattainment.

Participants received a handout showing scores from 2011-2014, a map showing our current 3 year averages of 71, 69 and 66, as well as a synopsis of his presentation on the back of their agenda.

VII. Coast Transit Authority Update (Kevin Coggin)

Mr. Coggin gave a comprehensive presentation on the current accomplishments and programs of the CTA. He outlined the East-West Corridor study for the members. Some questions were posed as to what communities would be served and when by the corridor. He explained that the study will cover all of Harrison County. The priority of the corridor is between downtown Gulfport and Biloxi, but the study will outline additional phases reaching out to east Biloxi and through the cities of Long Beach and Pass Christian. This would be a very wide reaching regional hub of new development and activity along the existing CSX rail line.

His presentation also showed photographs of the many upgrades being put into place within the CTA system. We saw images of Bus Rapid Transit(BRT) that will offer new coastal commute options with limited stop services on vehicles equipped with carryon storage, Wi-Fi and other amenities, the variety of stop facilities being installed and upgraded for riders, vehicles operating on cleaner fuels and were reminded that continued growth must be supported by the local governments.

VIII. MS State Port Authority Update (Carlos Bell)

“Find Your Future at the Port of Gulfport” video was played for the members. After, Carlos Bell discussed elements of the video and highlighted several of the new port amenities. It was very interesting to see how much the expansion is supporting existing companies at the facility, but also what steps have been taken to attract new businesses to the community. Resident news includes: the arrival of the Point SUR (the only university research vessel, owned by USM, in the Gulf of Mexico), the addition of McDermott International (a large pipe company a job creator), Dole extended their long term Lease, DuPont is more than doubling their capacity and the Port’s newest affiliate, Topship, LLC, will participate in the development of the Port’s inland location (the former Huntington Ingalls facility off of Seaway Road) which further expands the ports ability to continue to attract business to the region. In addition to these announcements, we also discussed the progress to have our Port designated for Military logistic use. It is hoped that, in the near future, the Port will be recognized as a shipping option for both of our local military installations and others needing to ship into the Gulf.

IX. Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) (Kenneth Yarrow)

Kenneth provided a brief update on the long-range planning process. He showed a presentation that highlighted the planning process, talked with members about the project list development process and encouraged each to start considering policy type options that may be available as we draft our plan. There was good discussion and feedback for some ideas like: Adopting a “Fix it first” mentality to limit unnecessary widening projects and considering roundabouts for intersection improvement projects.

X. MDOT Update

Kelly Castleberry provide an overview of the status of many MDOT projects. He highlighted several projects, using a map that was handed out, he discussed several projects that are active on the gulf coast, but also shared a brief update on many projects across the state that support state goals and initiatives as well as the growth and development objectives of the coast.

XI. Old/New Business

- Transition plan overview and reminder – Stephanie discussed a recent court case between the United States and the Nueces County, TX. This county was recently audited by the Department of Justice and many of their programs and services were found non-compliant with ADA requirements. She [provided a handout that included the email address and case name for further review, but highlighted actions imposed on them and several of the systems they are being required to upgrade. They must now hire an ADA Liaison to oversee their compliance progress, upgrades must be made to their voting locations, 911 operations, police operations and training, roadway transition plan must be fully completed, sidewalks must be brought to compliance, buildings must be upgraded, emergency shelters updated, online services and programs upgraded and published notifications and forms must be redone. She reminded members that they are at risk of similar non-compliance and consequences, especially if they have not yet completed their transition plan s, including the self-evaluation and improvement plan. Just saying you have a transition plan will not protect you from liability. GRPC staff can help you with plan templates, information, and other assistance. Call Stephanie at 228-864-1167 x218.
- **63rd Southern District ITE Annual Meeting**, April 19-22 – registration is open, agenda looks fantastic. Go to our website, www.grpc.com, to view the program information and reach the registration pages.
- 1-5pm April 22nd – Mark Lenters returns for **½ day roundabout workshop** and will be scheduling field visits on the 23rd

- Cities getting the one-on-one filed reviews are: D'Iberville, Pascagoula, GRPC/MDOT, Biloxi and Long Beach.
- **MUST SEND INTERSECTIONS IN ASAP** – email me the intersection and any supporting information including the reason you are considering a roundabout there. (crashes, congestion, sight limitations, speed, etc.)

XII. Adjournment – MOTION to Adjourn by Buz Olsen, second by Jaci Turner, no comments, PASSED.

Next TCC meeting is May 28th

Next TPC meeting is June 25th