



Metropolitan Planning Organization

FRONTIER METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
**POLICY BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

**Date:** August 19, 2020  
**Location:** Virtual Meeting  
**Time:** Called to order at 11:15 a.m.

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**Policy Board Voting Members Present:**

Mr. Sunny Farmahan	ArDOT
Mr. Chad Adams	ArDOT
Judge Dennis Gilstrap <i>*represented by proxy Reese Brewer</i>	Crawford County
Mayor Jerry Martin	City of Alma
Mr. Steve Core	Town of Barling
Mayor Doug Kinslow	City of Greenwood
Mayor Hugh Hardgrave	City of Lavaca
Sen. Mat Pitsch <i>*represented by proxy Ashley Garris</i>	Western Arkansas Intermodal Authority
Mr. Ken Savage	Fort Smith Transit Department
Mr. Daniel Mann <i>*represented by proxy Lorie Robertson</i>	Fort Chaffee Redevelopment Authority
Mayor Roy Walker	Town of Pocola
Mayor Joe Hurst	City of Van Buren
Mr. Michael Griffin <i>*represented by proxy Reese Brewer</i>	Fort Smith Regional Airport Commission
Mayor George McGill <i>*represented by proxy Carl Geffken</i>	City of Fort Smith
Mr. Braden Cale	ODOT Planning

**Non-Voting Members Present:**

Robert Endicott	Cherokee Nation
Mr. Isaac Akem	FHWA   Oklahoma
Mrs. Valera McDaniel	FHWA   Arkansas

**Members Not Present:**

Judge David Hudson	Sebastian County
Mayor Chuck Wallace	Town of Central City
Mayor Elmer Nelson	City of Bonanza
Mayor Gary O'Kelley	City of Kibler
Commissioner Ray Watts	Sequoyah County
Mayor Floyd Lawrence	Town of Arkoma
Commissioner Derwin Gist	LeFlore County

**Non-Voting Members Not Present:**

None

**Others Present:** Reese Brewer and Cody Schindler, FMPO; Sasha Grist, WAPDD; Chris Dillaha, ArDOT; Kelsey Kelton, AEDC; Shelly Faught, Alma Area Chamber of Commerce; Janice Scaggs, ACHE; Jordan Hale, Womack's Office; Jessi Solley, Congressman Boozman's Office; Heather Natchmann and Jackson Cothren, UA; Thomas Saccente, Democrat-Gazette.

**I. Administrative**

**A. Approval of the Policy Board Meeting Agenda**

**With no corrections nor additions, Chad Adams motioned to approve the agenda. Jerry Martin seconded the motion. A unanimous vote was reached.**

**B. Approval of the January 13, 2020 Policy Board Meeting Minutes**

**Chad Adams motioned to approve the minutes and was seconded by Jerry Martin. A unanimous vote was reached.**

**C. MPO Director's Report**

Reese Brewer reviewed the MPO activities which occurred since the January 13, 2020 meeting. Activities related to the following topics were covered:

- **Frontier MPO with its partners**, won the Parson's Engineering Smart Intersections Challenge. The City of Fort Smith will receive the Grand Prize to monitor and update intersection timing in real time on Rogers Avenue.
- **National Park Service – Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Technical Assistance**, Frontier MPO won technical assistance from the National Park Service to study access to regional historical, cultural, and natural resources. The effort will focus on public engagement.
- **Boundary Expansion:** Frontier MPO sought review of a boundary expansion request to include Muldrow and Roland, Oklahoma into the MPO area. ArDOT reviewed the document. ODOT reviewed and felt that the Census would better inform this request. However, Census Data is not available for a few years and quite possibly will be delayed with COVID-19. Also, boundary expansions must be conducted during MTP updates. Due to the increased growth in both Muldrow and Roland, this expansion is warranted. Depending on the will of the Technical Committee and the Policy Board, the boundary expansion request can be brought before both the Technical Committee and Policy Board for further discussion.
- **GO FS Bike Share Program:** The City of Fort Smith, GO FS bike share program is seeking to procure new operator. Due to COVID-19, Zagster ceased operations in May 2020. Frontier MPO staff assisted in seeking vendors and preparing a recommendation report.
- **Public Participation Plan Amendment:** In order to hold virtual public meetings during a pandemic, the Public Participation Plan needed updates to reflect this situation. The amendment was initially provided to the Technical Committee and Policy Board on May 12, 2020. All comments were addressed. On June 19, 2020, public comment was sought on the plan for 45 days. No public comments were received.
- **National Recreation and Parks Association Grant:** Frontier MPO sought approval from NRPA to tour the Gathering Place in Tulsa with Crawford County, Crawford County's on-call engineering firm, WAPDD, and the City of Greenwood staff. The tour in February 2020 permitted staff to learn about adaptive park equipment, park access, and park planning. Frontier MPO staff developed a report on these findings for the

NRPA.

- **TAP Grant:** Frontier MPO submitted a TAP grant on behalf of the City of Greenwood. The project extends the current sidewalk project along Hwy.10.
- **Chronic Disease Coordinators, Walkability Institute Grant:** Frontier MPO won the Walkability Institute Grant. Frontier and its many partners, the City of Fort Smith, Crawford County, the Arkansas Colleges of Health & Education, University of Arkansas Medical Sciences, 64.6 Downtown and other key partners will attend the CDC's Virtual Walkability Institute soon.
- **Project Nominations & Surveys:** Frontier MPO sought project nominations for the MTP update and is also conducting several surveys – Traffic Issues Survey – which was shared with the Arkansas Colleges of Health, ITS Architecture Survey, and a National Parks & Recreation Grant Survey on behalf of Crawford County. Please nominate projects and take the surveys.
- **USDA Rural Smart Transit Hub Study:** Review of technical draft chapters for the USDA Rural Smart Transit Hub Study by the Western Institute of Transportation is underway. Please attend teleconferences and look for the upcoming virtual conference, surveys, and other materials soon.
- **Local Roads Safety Plans:** Recent data shows a growing trend of accidents, especially in our more rural sections of the MPO. As a result, Frontier MPO is drafting a local roads safety plan to address these concerns and develop appropriate countermeasures. We will be seeking safety partners and others to provide input on this plan. Recently, Frontier MPO staff created infographics for several jurisdictions to present this data.
- **ARDOT Traffic Management Center Tour:** Frontier MPO staff along with the City of Fort Smith staff and Streets Department toured ArDOT's Traffic Management Center (TMC) in Little Rock. We would like to thank Chris Dillaha for arranging this tour and Joseph Hawkins.
- **ODOT Virtual Traffic Management Center:** Frontier MPO staff learned that ODOT has operated a Virtual TMC since the Oklahoma City Bombings. Frontier MPO staff reached out to ODOT to arrange a meeting to discuss the structure of the TMC and also to develop a MOU to share data relevant to the Fort Smith MSA. Once the COVID 19 pandemic subsides, Frontier staff, the City of Fort Smith, and ArDOT will meet with ODOT staff.
- **Federal Highway Administration Traffic Operations Technical Assistance – ITS Architecture, Concept of Operations, & Business Plan:** Frontier MPO is working to update the ITS Architecture Plan. In order to pursue regional projects such as a Western Arkansas/Eastern Oklahoma Regional Virtual TMC, a Concept of Operations, & Business Plan need prepared. Strategies to improve traffic operations is the fundamental goal of this effort. Look for future workshop invitations.
- **University of Arkansas National Science Foundation Smart Cities Grant**

**Opportunity:** In early March 2020, MPO Director Brewer lectured at the University of Arkansas' Department of Civil Engineering - Dr. Hernandez's graduate class. UA Department of Civil Engineering proposed collaborating on appropriate grant opportunities. As a result, Frontier MPO, the City of Fort Smith, and UA are partnering on this grant application to study potential micromobility options to vulnerable populations. If successful, then Frontier MPO will serve as the Co-Principle Investigator on this project.

- **FHWA Center for Innovative Finance Support:** Due to COVID-19, the scheduled training in April was delayed since federal employees cancelled all travel. FHWA headquarters members will provide virtual training on innovative financing and resources in fall 2020.
- **Rogers Ave. Health & Transportation Planning Framework:** Sections of the draft document are currently under technical review by Mercy Hospital staff and the Arkansas Colleges of Health Education. We appreciate this collaborative approach and review by health experts and professionals.
- **Public Input Platform:** In order to meet federal public engagement requirements and document all comments from texts, smartphones, online, and in virtual meetings, Frontier MPO staff is researched various platforms. The Public Input platform met these needs and also abides by FOIA laws. Currently, Public Input is the only vendor providing this service. Several DOTs, such as the Oklahoma DOT and the North Carolina DOT use this product and have experience high levels of public participation in projects not seen before. Through the NRPA Grant, Crawford County purchased this platform. Frontier MPO staff would like to thank Crawford County for the opportunity to incorporate this platform in the Crawford County NRPA Grant work, the MTP and ITS Architecture updates among several other projects across the region.
- **TransMap:** Frontier MPO reached out to UA – Dr. Heather Natchmann and Dr. Jackson Cothren to learn more about TransMap. The Transportation and Maritime Analytics Partnerships Hub, or “TransMap,” will leverage big data – information gleaned from a massive network of interconnected devices – to provide real-time, interactive maps and other geospatial data that will help government agencies and industry plan, build and maintain transportation infrastructure. Over the next three years, researchers at the University of Arkansas will use a \$1.5 million award from the U.S. Department of Transportation Maritime Administration to develop TransMap. The research will include new systems and technologies, made possible by the so-called “Internet of Things,” that will ensure a reliable and efficient transportation network, including roads and highways, rail lines and waterways.
- **Please Welcome our Guests, Dr. Heather Natchmann, Professor of Industrial Engineering**  
**Director, Maritime Transportation Research and Education Center; Director, Mack-Blackwell Transportation Center; and Dr. Jackson Cothren, Director, Center for Spatial Technologies, Professor, Department of Geosciences, UA.**

- **2020 Board Meeting Dates:** The next meeting is scheduled for November 18, 2020. Due to COVID-19, we anticipate a virtual meeting. Usually, we will meet at various locations in 2020 so that jurisdictions can share their projects.
- D. Guest Speaker Dr. Heather Natchmann & Dr. Jackson Cothren from UA – TransMap**  
Dr. Heather Natchmann and Dr. Jackson Cothren spoke on their TransMap project that they are working on. The project is a data hub to help with freight and intermodal movement.
- E. Guest Speaker, Chad Adams, District IV Engineer, Issue 1 Presentation**  
Chad Adams spoke on Issue 1 and the tax renewal. Mr. Adams provided data, statistics, and alternatives on the issue.
- F. Public Comment Period**  
There were no public comments.

## II. New Business

- A. Resolution to Support Arkansas Transportation Sales Tax Continuation, Issue 1 - Resolution 20-3**  
Reese Brewer clarified that the resolution is to show support for the sales tax continuation. **Jerry Martin made a motion to approve and Ken Savage seconded the motion. A unanimous vote was reached.**
- B. Resolution to Amend the Public Participation Plan – Resolution 20-4**  
Reese Brewer pointed out that this resolution is to update to include virtual meeting options. **Ken Savage motioned to approve, and Sunny Farmahan seconded the motion. A unanimous vote was reached.**
- C. Resolution to Adopt the City of Fort Smith Transit Department Safety Plan – Resolution 20-5**  
Reese Brewer explained that this is to show support for Transit and their safety plan. **Steve Core made a motion to approve and Sunny Farmahan seconded the motion. A unanimous vote was reached.**
- D. Adopt the City of Greenwood Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan – Resolution 20-6**  
Reese Brewer stated that the resolution is to adopt the City of Greenwood’s Bicycle and Pedestrian plan. **Ken Savage motioned to approve, and Jerry Martin seconded the motion. A unanimous vote was reached.**
- E. Arkansas Department of Transportation Updates**  
Chad Adams stated that I-540 and I-40 is finished, as well as highway 59 overlay is completed. Upcoming projects include Towson, Wheeler, and highway 45. **No action was taken.**
- F. Oklahoma Department of Transportation Updates**  
Braden Cale had no updates to provide. **No action was taken.**

## III. Open Discussion

There was no open discussion.

**IV. Next Meetings**

**Technical Committee:**

November 18, 2020, Virtual Meeting

**Policy Board:**

November 18, 2020, Virtual Meeting

**V. Adjournment**

With no further business, meeting was adjourned at 12:20 pm by Steve Core and seconded by Chad Adams. The next Policy Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 18, 2020 virtually.