



FRONTIER METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
**MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Date:** December 14, 2023  
**Location:** Crawford County Public Library, Main Branch • Van Buren, AR  
**Time:** Called to order at 10:36 a.m.

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**Technical Committee Members Present:**

Mr. Anthony Hunter	ArDOT
Mr. Marcus Rainwater <i>*Proxy Jason Hughey</i>	ArDOT
Mayor Greg Murray	Town of Barling
Mayor Bill Collins	City of Bonanza
Mr. Micheal Stephens <i>*Proxy Don Chambers</i>	City of Fort Smith
Mr. Michael Mings	City of Fort Smith
Mr. Sonny Bell	City of Greenwood
Mr. Wally Bailey	City of Van Buren
Mrs. Lorie Carr	Fort Smith Transit
Ms. Lorie Robertson <i>*Proxy Mayor Hugh Hardgrave</i>	City of Lavaca
Ms. Mundi Ross	Fort Chaffee Redevelopment Authority
Mr. Robert Endicott	Cherokee Nation
Ms. Sarah McElroy	ODOT
Mr. Devon Westbrook	ODOT

**Members Not Present:**

Mr. Jim Carter	Sebastian County
Mr. Dustin Willet	Crawford County
Mayor Chuck Wallace	Town of Central City
Mr. Mark Yardley	City of Alma
Mayor Andrew Crow	Mayor of Kibler
Mr. Michael Griffin	Fort Smith Regional Airport Commission
Commissioner Vallard Campbell	Leflore County
Commissioner Ray Watts	Sequoyah County
Mayor Kathy Luper	Town of Moffett
Mayor Joshua Johnson	Town of Arkoma
Mr. John Limbocker	Town of Pocola

**Non-Voting Members Present**

Ms. Tonya Sarlls	FS Chamber of Commerce
Ms. Julie Murray	Van Buren Chamber of Commerce
Mr. Chris Hoover	City of Fort Smith

**Non-Voting Members Not Present:**

Ms. Amy Heflin	FHWA – AR
Mr. Isaac Akem	FHWA – OK
Ms. Ronisha Hodge	USDOT- FTA

**Others Present:** Reese M. Brewer, Frontier MPO, Emily Johson, WAPDD; Cody Schindler, City of Alma; Charla Sloan, Kibois Transit.



I. Administrative

A. **Approval of the Technical Committee Meeting Agenda**

With no corrections nor additions, Wally Bailey motioned to approve the minutes and was seconded by Robert Endicott; a unanimous vote was reached.

B. **Approval of the August 31, 2023 Technical Committee Meeting Minutes**

Lori Carr motioned to approve the agenda. Wally Bailey seconded the motion. A unanimous vote was reached.

C. **MPO Director's Report**

Reese M. Brewer reviewed the MPO activities which occurred since the August, 2023 meeting. Activities related to the following topics were covered:

- **Frontier MPO writes winning WAIA & Five Rivers Distribution MARAD Grant Award:** Reese wrote the winning MARAD PDIP grant on behalf of WAIA and Five Rivers Distribution for \$15.096 million. The total slackwater harbor project will be about \$20 million. The team effort included: WAPDD, Mickle and Griffin provided the cost/benefit analysis, Marty Shell, and WAIA. We are honored to be a part of this team.
- **Utah State University Pilot Program:** Utah State University, Frontier MPO, and Fort Smith Transit signed an agreement to work together to create a transit assessment using Google learning and local residents. The project will inform a transit assessment plan that analyzes proximity of social agencies, food banks, jobs, medical centers, shelters, benches, etc. near transit stops.
- **Rural Safety Equity Grant:** The University of Arkansas, Fayetteville (Dr. Sarah Hernandez), and Dr. Seri Park from the University of Nevada, Reno sought Frontier MPO as a partner for a National Science Foundation grant opportunity to work on Rural Safety and Equity.
- **Safe System Implementation Guidance, NCHRP 17-101:** Reese was selected to serve on the technical group reviewing the draft NCHRP 17-101 document. Safe System approach as differing from conventional safety practice by “being human-centered, i.e., seeking safety through a more aggressive use of vehicle or roadway design and operational changes rather than relying primarily on behavioral changes – and by fully integrating the needs of all users (pedestrians, bicyclists, older, younger, disabled, etc.) of the transportation system” (<https://www.ite.org/technical-resources/topics/safe-systems/>).
- **FHWA's Manual of Safety Studies:** Reese was invited to serve on the stakeholder team for the FHWA development of their Manual of Safety Studies.
- **GRANTS:** Frontier MPO provided a letter of interest for the USDOT Thriving Communities program to study transit incentives and vouchers, along with a rural transit network and system on behalf of the Fort Smith Health Council Transportation Subcommittee. Frontier also assisted the City of Fort Smith with their letter of interest for this program.
- **Freight Roundtable 2025:** Reese is arranging the speakers and panelists for the next Freight Roundtable on behalf of WAIA. Artificial intelligence, innovative technologies along with infrastructure resiliency is the focus of the event. The University of Arkansas Freight Data Lab along with ArcBest Data Science and Ms. Desiree Wood of Real Women in Trucking has already committed to presenting.
- **Frontier MPO will hold an Electric Vehicle Preparedness Workshop in late January 2024:** Electric vehicles (EVs) are here. You see them in almost every community. Their use has grown rapidly over the past decade, and it's only speeding up.

That's why Frontier wants to help prepare our region for the electrification innovation. This workshop will seek to gather a diverse selection of local community leaders in the interests of developing a plan to anticipate EV demands and needs.

- **Van Buren TAP Tour:** Reese reminded members to join the tour following the Technical committee meeting.
- **The next meeting will be held on February 15, 2023.**

**D. Open Discussion/Public Comment Period**

Reese M. Brewer welcomed all to provide details on any concerns, upcoming community events and notices. Michael Mings invited everyone to attend the Fort Smith Active Mobility, Bicyclist, and Pedestrian planning event and take their online survey.

**II. New Business**

**A. Arkansas Department of Transportation Update**

Jason Hughey of ArDOT gave an update of various ArDOT Projects throughout the FMPO planning area. No action was taken.

**B. Oklahoma Department of Transportation Update**

Sarah McElroy provided a brief update on projects within the FMPO planning area. Ms. McElroy introduced Devon Westbrook. Devon will serve as the new FMPO ODOT Transportation Planner.

**III. Adjournment**

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m. The next Technical Committee Meeting will be held on Thursday, at 10:00 a.m. February 15, 2023, at the Fort Smith Main Library.