



Metropolitan Planning Organization

FRONTIER METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
MEETING OF THE POLICY BOARD COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Date: May 16, 2024
Location: Lavaca City Hall • Lavaca, AR
Time: Called to order at 12:08 a.m.

Policy Board Members Present:

Mr. Sunny Farnaham <i>*By phone</i>	ArDOT
Mr. Jason Hughey <i>*Proxy Marcus Rainwater</i>	ArDOT
Judge Steve Hotz	Sebastian County
Steve Core, City Administrator	City of Barling
Mayor Doug Kinslow	City of Greenwood
Mayor Hugh Hardgrave	City of Lavaca
Mayor Jimmy Fincher <i>*Proxy Cody Schindler</i>	City of Alma
Mr. Daniel Mann <i>*Proxy Mundi Ross</i>	Fort Chaffee Redevelopment Authority
Mr. Michael Griffin <i>*Proxy Lindsay Conley</i>	Fort Smith Regional Airport Commission
Ms. Ashley Garris <i>*Proxy Sasha Grist</i>	WAIA
Mr. Ken Savage	Fort Smith Transit
Mayor Roy Walker	Town of Pocola
Ms. Dawn Sullivan, P.E. <i>*Proxy Devon Westbrook</i>	ODOT

Members Not Present:

Mayor Joe Hurst	City of Van Buren
Mayor Bill Collins	City of Bonanza
Mayor George McGill	City of Fort Smith
Judge Chris Keith	Crawford County
Mr. Jim Carter	Sebastian County
Mayor Chuck Wallace	Town of Central City
Mayor Andrew Crow	Mayor of Kibler
Mayor Joshua Johnson	Town of Arkoma
Commissioner Vallard Campbell	Leflore County
Commissioner Ray Watts	Sequoyah County

Non-Voting Members Present

Mr. Truett Smith	FHWA – AR
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Non-Voting Members Not Present

Mr. Isaac Akem	FHWA – OK
Ronisha Hodges	FHWA-FTA
Mr. Robert Endicott	Cherokee Nation

Others Present: Reese M. Brewer, Frontier MPO; Tracee McKenna, WAPDD; Shannon Scott, WAPDD, Phillip Patterson, AML.

I. Administrative

A. Approval of the Policy Board Meeting Agenda

With no corrections nor additions, Steve Core motioned to approve the agenda and was seconded by Marcus Rainwater; a unanimous vote was reached.

B. Approval of the February 15, 2024 Technical Committee Meeting Minutes

Mayor Hugh Hardgrave motioned to approve the minutes. Mayor Roy Walker seconded the motion. A unanimous vote was reached.

C. MPO Director's Report

Reese M. Brewer reviewed the MPO activities which occurred since the February 15, 2024 meeting. Activities related to the following topics were covered:

- **WAIA & Five Rivers Distribution MARAD Grant:** Reese provided a presentation at the Van Buren Chamber of Commerce on the status of the project. The environmental RFQ was let and a consultant selected.
- **Save AR Lives, Collaboration with the City of Fort Smith:** As a result of the Smart Growth America's Dangerous By Design coursework, Reese developed a concept for reducing traffic fatalities and begin to educate the public to help meet safety targets. This concept is called Save AR Lives. The City of Fort Smith offered to assist in the implementation and development of this campaign. We look forward to working with the City of Fort Smith on this effort.
- **Frontier MPO Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Federal Funding Opportunities:** Frontier MPO in coordination with the USDOT's ROUTES ([Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success](#)) program, held an online work session on the funding opportunities and toolkit "Charging Forward," available with the ROUTES program for Electric Vehicle Infrastructure and Charging.
- **Grants:** Frontier MPO was selected 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 MPO submitted a RAISE grant application requesting \$400K on behalf of WAIA for a Railroad Laydown Yard design and plan.
- **Freight Roundtable 2025:** Reese is continuing to seek speakers, panels, and firms to present at the WAIA 2025 Freight Roundtable. Speakers and panelists include: Desiree Wood, Real Women in Trucking, Dr. Sarah Hernandez, UA Freight Lab, Kathy Fulton, American Logistics Aid Network (Disaster Response exercise), Erica Brigance, ArcBest, Data Science, ArcBest NVIDIA (Artificial Intelligence), from Advancing Sustainability through Powered Infrastructure for Roadway Electrification (ASPIRE), Dr. Regan A. Zane, Ivonne Santiago, Don Linford, and Michael Masquelier, and Fort Smith Chief of Police Danny Baker.
- **EV Charging Grants:** Assisting Van Buren with a state grant application.
- **GHG Emission Targets:** No Greenhouse Gas Emission Targets are due at this time. Twenty-two States filed two lawsuits challenging FHWA's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions Final Rule. Pursuant to negotiations in these cases, FHWA agreed to temporarily not seek to enforce the February 1, 2024, deadline for States to submit initial

targets and reports through March 29, 2024. On March 27, the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas vacated and remanded the Final Rule to DOT, in effect nullifying the rule Nationwide. Consistent with the Court's decision, States and MPOs are not required to submit initial targets and reports at this time.

- **Upcoming Efforts:** MTP Update, TIP Update.
- **Introducing:** Ashlie Ross, Transportation Planner & Economic Development Specialist.
- **The next meeting will be held on August 22, 2024 - in coordination with the Fort Smith Health Council Subcommittee on Mobility. Special guest virtual speaker, Dr. Marina Serper will discuss Transportation Barriers to Healthcare.**

D. Open Discussion/Public Comment Period

Mayor Kinslow welcomed Ms. Tracee McKenna from WAPDD to provide an update on the Lavaca TAP grant and project. Discussion on the TAP grant process and grant agreement execution timing followed.

II. New Business

A. **Resolution 24-03 UPWP Approval:** Mr. Steve Core moved to approve; Judge Steve Hotz seconded. A unanimous vote was reached.

B. **Arkansas Department of Transportation Update**

Marcus Rainwater of District IV ArDOT gave an update of various ArDOT Projects throughout the FMPO planning area. No action was taken.

C. **Oklahoma Department of Transportation Update**

Devon Westbrook provided a brief update on the statewide long-range transportation plan effort.

III. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:55 p.m. The next Technical Committee Meeting will be held on Thursday, at noon August 22, 2024, at the Arkansas Colleges of Health Education, Small Conference Room.