
Meeting Minutes

RPA-1 Transportation Policy Board

Wednesday, May 25th, 2022 at 11:00 a.m. – Electronic Meeting

This meeting took place via electronic means pursuant to the provisions of the Iowa Open Meetings Law, Section 21.8, Code of Iowa.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was impractical for the Transportation Policy Board Committee to meet in person. This meeting was open to the public and those in attendance were able to hear the proceedings and provide comments and questions as appropriate. Public notice of the meeting was issued in accordance with Iowa Code Section 21.4.

Members in attendance: Janell Bradley, Fayette County; Lorraine Borowski, City of Decorah; Mark Vick (Chair), Winneshiek County; Ray Peterson, Clayton County; Larry Schellhammer, Allamakee County; Dylan Mulfinger, City of Oelwein.

Members Absent: Dean Eastman, Howard County.

Others in attendance: Aaron Detter, UERPC Transportation Planning Administrator; Lori Egan, NEICAC EARL Transit Director; Krista Billhorn, Iowa DOT District 2 Planner; Jenna Pollock, Clayton County Conservation Board; Sheryl Struthers, Fayette County resident; Rod Marlatt, Fayette County Conservation Board; Mallory Hanson, Northeast Iowa RC&D; Darla Kelchen, Clayton County Development Group; Roger Thomas, Clayton County resident; Joel Fantz, Fayette County Engineer; Lee Bjerke, Winneshiek County Engineer.

1. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 11:01 a.m. by Vick.

2. Approval of the agenda

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Borowski, seconded by Schellhammer, and passed unanimously.

3. Approval of the March 16th, 2022 meeting minutes

A motion to approve the March 16th, 2022 meeting minutes was made by Bradley, seconded by Borowski, and passed unanimously.

4. Public Hearing: Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) amendments

Vick opened the public hearing.

Detter and Fantz gave the details of two Fayette County projects that needed to be added to the current-year TIP, programmed in FFY 2023, as “illustrative” projects in order to meet the requirement of the Community Project Funding congressional earmark opportunity, that the project must appear in the TIP/STIP.

RPA-1 Policy Board

Detter noted that Clayton County also would have a project that will similarly need to be added to the TIP by amendment. He said he would coordinate with Koopman as well as the Technical Committee and Policy Board members to hold a special meeting in June to accommodate the amendment's public review timeline.

Detter noted that the Technical Committee had unanimously voted to recommend approval of the two Fayette County amendments.

Vick closed the public hearing.

A motion to approve the two amendments was made by Bradley, seconded by Mulfinger, and passed unanimously.

5. Public Hearing: RPA-1 Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP)

Vick opened the public hearing.

Detter provided background on the TPWP and its function identifying the budget and specific transportation planning tasks and activities that he and other RPA-1/UERPC would work on in the upcoming state fiscal year. He noted that the document had been reviewed by Iowa DOT and had been out for public comment for the required 15-day review period. Pending approval of the Policy Board, he said he would be submitting the final TPWP to Iowa DOT ahead of the June 1 deadline.

Vick closed the public hearing.

A motion to approve the RPA-1 TPWP was made by Borowski, seconded by Schellhammer, and passed unanimously.

6. TAP Applications

Detter described the Enhancement Committee's discussion of the TAP application scoring and review process. He noted that the Enhancement Committee's recommendation was to award the City of Guttenberg's application for FFY 2023 in the requested amount of \$440,000. He added that Enhancement Committee members Pollock and Schroeder voted nay, Govern abstained, and all other members voted aye, passing the motion.

A motion to approve the Enhancement Committee's recommendation and award funding to the City of Guttenberg in the requested amount for FFY 2023 was made by Peterson and seconded by Mulfinger. Bradley voted nay and all other members voted aye, passing the motion.

Detter and Marlatt provided an update to Policy Board members on the Fayette County Conservation Board project in FFY 2023 being cancelled, and the Enhancement Committee's subsequent recommendation to award the newly available TAP funds to a Clayton County Conservation Board project that is also on the Backbone Trail in FFY 2024. The funding amount would be the same as the amount from the cancelled Fayette County project, \$171,000.

A motion to approve the Enhancement Committee's recommendation and award funding to Clayton County Conservation Board for their Backbone Trail project between Gilbert Park and Elkader for \$171,000 in FFY 2024 was made by Peterson, seconded by Schellhammer, and passed unanimously.

RPA-1 Policy Board

7. RPA-1 Staff Updates

Detter provided RPA-1 staff updates including:

- The timeline for TPWP adoption and submission to Iowa DOT
- He would be creating and sending out TAP and STBG award letters to grantees in the coming weeks
- He's developing the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for FFY 2023-2026 and is in contact with current project sponsors for updates. The draft is due to Iowa DOT by June 15th.
- Updates to the Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP) and Long-range Transportation Plan (LRTP) will likely begin later this year or early 2023

Detter also noted the Enhancement Committee's plan to have a worksession to discuss the TAP scoring process sometime after Labor Day, and that Policy Board members would be engaged in that process as well.

8. NEICAC/EARL Transit Updates

Egan provided NEICAC/EARL Transit updates including:

- EARL Transit had their triennial Iowa DOT audit on April 21st. She noted that they haven't received the official follow-up letter yet, but that she anticipated that there will be some findings and ways that EARL can improve its process and policies.
- Currently there are nine projects for capital projects for vehicle replacements that they have asked for an extension due to the inability to get vehicles, which is a national supply issue.
- EARL will be right-sizing its fleet through advanced disposition to reduce the number of vehicles sitting unused on a given day.
- EARL's consolidated funding application for FY 2023 was submitted, including two capital projects.
- EARL is working with several communities to provide shuttle services for community events this spring and summer within the region.
- Still looking to hire new drivers, with the ongoing driver shortage that started during the pandemic.

Detter noted to the Policy Board members that UERPC is in coordination with EARL to look at doing an electric transit vehicle study or pilot project in partnership with Alliant Energy.

9. Iowa DOT Updates

Billhorn provided Iowa DOT updates including:

- Draft Five Year Program is out for public review; commission adoption at June meeting, second Tuesday;
- Wisconsin and Iowa DOT have applied for Rural Federal funding under IIJA to assist in funding the Black Hawk Bridge project in Lansing.
- Black Hawk Bridge still in the program as scheduled; funding increased according to new estimate, but schedule same. The DOT will be having a meeting with the Lansing City Council to discuss utilities and aesthetic lighting.

RPA-1 Policy Board

- Lots of bridge deck overlays in the district, not only this year but the next five years
- Two ADA sidewalk projects in Ossian and Castalia are currently in progress.
- US-18 bridge in Marquette and IA-9 bridge in Lansing (Black Hawk Bridge) will have their bridge washing going on. Wisconsin responsible for US-18 bridge, Iowa responsible for IA-9 bridge.
- Swap guidance at the RPA level coming out soon; January of next year will change over all the appropriate projects to federal-aid (FA).
- New project manager for the Lansing Black Hawk Bridge project, Clayton Burke, who will be located in Lansing or Decorah during the project.

Vick asked Billhorn if there was any new information regarding electric vehicles (EVs) and the state road use tax. Billhorn said she did not have any updates on possible legislation regarding EVs and road use tax.

Schellhammer asked Billhorn if Lansing would be eligible for ADA sidewalk updates when DOT redoes IA-9 through Lansing in the future. Billhorn explained that when Iowa DOT does a project on Main Street, they will coordinate with the City to hammer out the details. She also noted Lansing's Main Street Vision Plan that was awarded STBG funding for FFY 2023 and the potential plan's role in helping to guide a future DOT project. She added that, as far as the Lansing Black Hawk Bridge project in 2026, if existing sidewalk is removed as part of the project, it will be replaced.

10. Floor Items

No floor items.

11. Set next meeting date

Detter explained the mid-June timeframe for the special TIP amendment meeting for the Clayton County illustrative project.

Ne noted the timeline for the next meetings after that to be mid-July to accommodate the TIP submittal schedule, and that for both meetings he will coordinate as usual with the Board and committees.

12. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Borowski, seconded by Bradley, and passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 11:39 a.m.