

Erie MPO Coordinating Committee

February 11, 2009 Minutes

A meeting of the Erie MPO Coordinating Committee was held on Wednesday, February 11, 2009 at 10:00 AM at the Erie Intermodal Transportation Center, 2nd Floor Conference Room, 208 East Bayfront Parkway, Erie, PA.

Those in attendance were:

Organization	Representative	Alternate
PennDOT Central		Michael Schultz (phone)
PennDOT D 1-0		Don Hall
Erie County		Jake Welsh
City of Erie		Kim Green
City of Erie	Brenda Sandberg	
City of Erie	Jon Tushak	Ed Kissell
City of Erie	Dick Gebhardt	
City of Erie	John Elliot	
City of Erie		
City of Corry	Gerry Dahl	
Fairview Township		Sharon Knoll
Harborcreek Township		Joseph Peck
Lawrence Park Township		
Millcreek Township	Thomas Hoffman	Brian McGrath
Millcreek Township	Rick Morris	
Summit Township	Marlin Coon	
Wesleyville Borough	Peter Nye	
ECABO	Richard McGuire	Cheryl Capela
ECATO	Mark Corey	
ECATO	Sparky Warner	
EWPPA	Ray Shreckengost	Julia Eagles
EMTA		Lorene McGuire
ERAA	Chris Rodgers	Richard Robie

Coordinating Committee Voting Members represented – 21 of 23; quorum present

Guests	Organization
Deborah Gabriel	PennDOT
Chris Boyer-Krantz	PennDOT D-1
Erin Wiley-Moyers	PennDOT D-1
Mariah Hanson	PennDOT D-1
Scott Young	PennDOT D-1
Adam Grimes	PennDOT Program Center (Phone)
Deborah Casadei	PennDOT
Regina Smith	Sen. Earl's Office
Rhonda Smith	PA State Rep. Hornaman

Rob Stubenbort	Girard Boro
Lynn Becker	Lake City Boro
Leanne Parmenter	City of Erie
Ed Lesser	Erie Area COG
Earl Brown	ECCD
Tyrone Clark	ERAA
Rick Hoffman	VFI
Dan Walston	FHWA (Phone)
Mike Pistone	Erie Chamber
Steven Halmi	Deiss & Halmi Engineering
Charity Stover	Urban Engineers
Tim Hahn	Erie Times News
John Morgan	ECDP

1. Call to Order / Introductions

Chairman Tom Hoffman called the meeting to order at 10:15am.

Due to time constraints and the numerous guests in attendance, the Chairman elected to forego introductions.

2. Hearing of the Public

None

3. Approval of November 12, 2008 Minutes

The Chairman asked for the membership to review the minutes.

Marlin Coon moved to approve the minutes. Ray Schreckengost seconded the motion. The motion passed.

4. Nomination/Election of 2009 Officers

The Chair opened the floor to nominations for Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

Jake Welsh nominated Tom Hoffman for Chairman and Dave Bossart for Vice-Chairman. Chris Rodgers seconded both nominations.

Hearing no further nominations, nominations were closed and a vote was taken.

Tom Hoffman was elected Chairman.
Dave Bossart was elected Vice-Chairman

5. 2009 TIP Modifications

Adam Grimes, via conference call, provided an overview of the Fiscal Constraint Chart presented to the Committee that outlined changes to the 2009 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). There were ten (10) administrative actions. No approval from the Committee was necessary.

6. Presentation: MPO Strategic Long Range Planning Subcommittee

Jake Welsh informed the Committee that MPO staff and the Chairman have been in discussions with the Erie Growth Partnership about enhancing communication and collaboration between the MPO and the business community. Those discussions resulted in a proposed MPO Strategic Long Range Planning Subcommittee, which John Elliot was recruited to serve as Chair.

John Elliot gave a presentation on the Subcommittee. The Subcommittee would be tasked with developing recommendations for the 2011 Long Range Transportation Plan Update. Previously, the Plan updates involved minor maintenance changes to language, projects lists, and demographic information. This committee, comprised of MPO members, business leaders, and other prominent citizens, will develop a new vision for Erie County, which would incorporate transportation, land use, and community & economic development in the 2011 Long Range Transportation Plan.

Mr. Elliot offered an invitation for any MPO members to volunteer to serve on the Subcommittee.

The Chair stated that the MPO wants to take a more proactive planning approach, and this initiative would be the Committee's opportunity to take the lead in the region's future development.

7. Review/Adoption of 2009-10 UPWP

John Morgan presented a summary of the 2009-10 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The UPWP serves as the annual agreement between the MPO/County and PennDOT, which designates funding for transportation related activities to be performed by the MPO/County.

The UPWP also allows for annual Supplemental Planning Funds, which are additional funds provided for specific planning studies. This year the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) recommended the Committee endorse the Erie Metropolitan Transit Authority's (EMTA) Disaster Recovery Plan for Supplemental Planning Funds.

Dick Gebhardt moved to approve the 2009-10 UPWP including EMTA's Disaster Recovery Plan. Gerry Dahl seconded the motion. The motion passed.

8. Adoption of Economic Stimulus Projects for Erie MPO

Don Hall explained to the Committee that the Erie MPO would be receiving an estimated \$18.2M for highway/bridge/TE projects from the anticipated Economic Stimulus Package. The estimates are based on the House of Representatives version of the Bill. PennDOT has not received guidance on the Senate version of the Bill, and final funding levels will still vary based on the compromised Bill that will come out of the Conference Committee.

Mr. Hall further explained that the House Bill contains certain caveats for the funds.

1. Funds are reserved for “shovel ready” projects
2. 50% of TE/STP funds must be obligated within 75 days of the funds being authorized by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
3. 50% of the regular highway funds must be obligated within 90 days of FHWA authorization
4. The remaining funds must be obligated by August 1, 2010.
5. If a State fails to obligate the first 50% of the funds by the respective deadlines, the second 50% is then rescinded and reallocated to other States.

PennDOT’s position is to obligate the entirety of the funds by the end of summer 2009. Mr. Hall then presented a list of candidate projects that PennDOT D 1-0 is confident will be “shovel ready” before the anticipated deadline, and asked for the Committee to approve it to be added to the 2009 TIP.

Erie MPO Staff recommended the addition of six local projects to the list. The projects included 4 previously authorized Transportation Enhancement (TE) projects, a second phase to a previous TE project, and the addition of one new project.

John Morgan explained that these projects were selected after months of discussions and reviews with PennDOT District 1-0’s TE Coordinator and the TE project sponsor’s to determine which projects could reasonably be “shovel ready” by the anticipated deadline.

Mr. Morgan further explained to the Committee that the Erie MPO’s TE program is under-funded. Currently, there are 9 projects in the TE program, however the TE funding line item is insufficient to cover half of them. Supporting the Erie MPO Staff recommendation would move four projects forward, reserving the TE line item to fully fund the remaining projects, and also allow for two additional community enhancing projects to receive funding.

John Elliot added that due to the varied nature of the 6 projects, the spirit of the Economic Stimulus Package would be better realized by the MPO Staff recommendation; as the funds would be distributed across a number of different businesses in various industries.

Mr. Hall expressed concern that the TE projects may not meet the deadline and the funding would be lost. Also, 4 of the projects had been previously authorized and are under reimbursement agreements with PennDOT, hence they are guaranteed funding

regardless of the TE line item. If the sponsors bring the projects in, PennDOT will find the money to fund them.

Sharon Knoll asked what the process of obligating funds entailed.

Mr. Hall explained that after numerous clearances are submitted and the Plans, Schedule, and Estimates (PS&E) package is approved by PennDOT, a Federal Authorization Form 4232 is prepared and submitted by PennDOT staff to obligate the funds to project.

Rick Morris asked why Erie County, though the 4th largest urban area in Pennsylvania, is 12th in terms of the Economic Stimulus Allocation in PA.

Mr. Hall responded that the distribution is determined by formula at the Federal level.

Following further discussion, Mr. Elliot moved that:

The MPO shall endorse PennDOT's recommended projects for the Erie MPO's Economic Stimulus Allocation (submitted and attached as "Economic Stimulus List: District 1-0 Erie MPO")

And

Any locally sponsored project that meets program criteria and completes the tasks required for a Federal Authorization Form 4243 within Seventy-Five (75) days of enactment of the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act.

Mark Corey seconded the motion.
The motion passed unanimously.

9. Status Reports

PA Community Transportation Initiative (PCTI) Program

John Morgan and Adam Grimes reported to the Committee that PCTI applications are still being reviewed. Awarded projects may be announced next month.

Federal Safe Routes to School (FSRTS) Program

Mr. Morgan and Mr. Grimes reported to the Committee that FSRTS applications are still being reviewed. Awarded projects may be announced next month.

Northwest Pennsylvania Greenways Plan

Mr. Morgan reported to the Committee that the consultant has not yet submitted a final draft of the Greenways Plan. The final draft is anticipated next month.

10. Other Business

Mr. Morgan invited all of the project sponsors in attendance to stay after to discuss their project's status with PennDOT Staff.

11. Next Meeting / Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00pm.

The next TAC meeting is scheduled for April 15, 2009

The next Coordinating Committee meeting is scheduled for May 13, 2009.