

Seacoast TAC Meeting

Approved Minutes

March 2, 2006
Newmarket Town Hall

Members Present: Bruce Woodruff, Dover, Chair; Warren Bambury and Jamie Steffen, Hampton; Bob Landman, North Hampton; Chuck Grassie, Stratham; Rad Nichols, COAST; Sylvia vonAulock, Exeter; Dick Dodge, Seabrook; Al Huntoon, Wakefield; Clay Mitchell, Newmarket; Melodie Esterberg, Rochester; Steve Pesci, UNH; Becky Ohler, DES; and Steven Ireland, NH DOT.

Others Present: Jim Jalbert, C & J Trailways.

Proxy Votes: Jim Campbell, Durham.

Staff Present: Dave Walker, and Roxanne Rines, RPC; and Tim Roache, SRPC.

9:00 a.m. TAC Meeting Opened

1. Introductions

Attendees introduced themselves and stated what municipality they were from or the agency they represented.

2. Communications

Roache stated the next meeting for the Long Range Plan is April 4th in Newington, the hearing is at 7pm. The TE hearings will be held Monday, March 6th and the CMAQ hearing is scheduled for Friday, March 17th. The 10-year plan has been released and it is available on DOT's website.

3. Minutes from January 5, 2006

Motion: **Landman** made a motion to accept the minutes of January 5, 2006, as written. **Ohler** seconded the motion. **Motion carried with Dodge abstaining.**

4. Prospectus Update

Landman gave background as to why he wanted the prospectus updated and distributed a letter explaining problems when the Portsmouth Park & Ride was expanded.

Walker stated the update is a work in progress and gave an overview of what staff would like to accomplish with this update.

He distributed a memo that deals with section 5.4, TIP Amendments. Staff would like DOT to plan ahead when making amendments; staff needs lead time before meetings. With full amendments, a full 30 days is needed before a TAC meeting.

Walker stated the entity requesting the amendment shall be responsible for providing the documentation required in the decision making process.

He explained there will be changes to all three types of amendments: Full Amendment, Administrative Adjustment (formerly Expedited), and Informational only.

Full Amendment changes: adding or deleting any project from the TIP; substantial changes in project scope (substantial needs to be better defined); changes that might trigger an air quality determination; availability of earmark funds; and changes to a project of regional significance.

He added a dollar value that would trigger a full amendment: if a projects programmed amount increases by greater than 20% or more than \$1 million, whichever is less. This would apply to projects in the TIP. There should be a very good idea of the scope, the costs, and the timeline of these projects.

Walker gave suggestions for defining "substantial".

Administrative Adjustment changes: if projects are being moved and it does not trigger air quality conformity; splitting or combining projects; addition of a right-of-way phase; change in funding source; changes to the project description; and emergency actions.

Information Only changes: fixing data entry errors; adjustments to transit projects that do not have a final budget; and an individual project from a lump sum category consistent with the definition.

Walker stated the procedure for regular amendments would include the amendment be proposed by a member of the MPO; staff would review and do an analysis of proposed changes, complete a written response, notify DOT and DES and a public notification if necessary; present amendment to the TAC committee for approval and recommendation to the Policy committee; follow public involvement procedures; approval from Policy committee; and written notification to DOT of the outcome of the amendment.

Procedures for Administrative Amendments are written notification of proposed changes to MPO; review by staff and approval by Executive Director; and notification change to TAC and Policy members.

Walker continued another item is air quality conformity, staff has to make sure that any amendment doesn't trigger a need for any air quality conformity work.

Pesci stated the first two bullets on page 2 need clarification. **Landman** stated there is nothing in the bylaws about TACs involvement in the amendment process. He suggested wording be included that identifies TACs role.

Woodruff stated DOT makes the decision about the true cost of a project and funding changes in a project should not trigger a full amendment. All project costs change from the time the application is completed until it is started.

Jalbert stated he doesn't believe a dollar amount can be used. **Roache** stated staff needs answers as to why increases have happened, there needs to be a little more communication with DOT. **Pesci** stated he agrees with Jalbert, why not remove the cost formula and instead focus on the scope.

Walker stated the intent of this is not to deal with projects going into the 10-year plan or the TIP. The spirit is that the MPO need a fiscally constraint TIP, the process as a whole doesn't really support this.

Pesci asked if each MPO has their own prospectus? **Walker** stated yes, there are specific items that need to be included. **Landman** stated he wants to see the other MPO prospectus'.

Woodruff stated staff and the subcommittee will take all of the comments and work on further revisions.

Roache reviewed the memo concerning what constitutes a quorum. A quorum should be a logical number of members that can be reasonably be depended upon to attend meetings. He reviewed the existing requirements for a quorum under the current prospectus and the changes that staff is suggesting. The new quorum requirement would be: not less than one-third of the voting membership.

Roache commented that proxy votes have been used in the past. Discussion amongst members ensued about proxy votes. **Walker** stated the quorum requirements can be set lower than the one-third. It was decided that a quorum should consist of voting members not a majority of urban communities as is the current policy.

Landman asked if the MPO's chair and vice-chairs terms can be consistent with the planning commissions, which runs from July to June. **Walker** stated TAC chair is voted upon by members and the Policy chair is the same as the Executive Committee chair. He stated it could in the prospectus that the chair be voted in June.

Walker reviewed the memo concerning planning commission membership and MPO implications. All municipalities within an MPO boundary are legally entitled to be represented on the MPO. Membership in the planning commissions are voluntary. This creates conflicts because community dues paid to the commission are used to match transportation money to pay for the transportation planning in the region. As municipal budgets get tighter towns are withdrawing from regional planning commissions to save money. When a community does not fund their share it burdens the other municipalities to do so.

The changes staff are requesting is that a community that is not a member of the planning commission would have one representative on the MPO Policy committee; access to technical assistance from staff would be given as staff has any time available to assist those communities; and during the TIP project selection those communities projects would be placed on the lower end of the tier.

Woodruff stated he didn't hear any negative comments from the subcommittee about these suggestions. **Pesci** stated he does not agree with all the assumptions by staff. Service should not be sacrificed because communities do not pay dues. Communities are entitled to technical assistance from the MPO regardless of membership.

Pesci continued that the above not applying to non-communities needs to be written into the document. **Jalbert** stated he agrees with the connection to membership. Discussion ensued amongst members about how MPO representation should be calculated. **Woodruff** stated the subcommittee will take all of today suggestions and discuss them.

5. Report back on status of CMAQ funds

Roache explained the memo that he distributed, there is over programming of CMAQ funds for this round. He explained what projects were added to the funding round. There were \$24 million received in applications with only about \$11 million available for distribution.

6. Hampton/Seabrook Route 1A Bridge Project Status

Walker reviewed the history with the project. Earlier in the process it was determined that a replacement of the bridge was needed; however, it is listed as a rehab. He wants to make sure that the TAC committee's earlier recommendation of the bridge being replaced is still accurate. Another update as information is forthcoming.

Steffen reviewed a meeting that DOT held in Hampton where they presented their options of rehabbing the bridge. Comments from others at the meeting was unanimous that the bridge should be replaced. It is a drawbridge and it causes lots of backups.

He continued that the bridge is on the red list and it needs some interim repairs within the next couple of years. Members discussed issues that affect the communities around Hampton. **Bambury** stated what DOT has proposed will change nothing; it will still be a two-lane draw bridge. This will not alleviate any of the backup problems that exist.

Motion: **Bambury** made a motion that the TAC committee reinforce the original letter sent by Mike Burlage earlier in the process and add that there is a need for an immediate solution. **Jalbert** seconded the motion. **Motion carried with von Aulock abstaining.**

7. Presentation: Alternative Fuels

Ohler gave a presentation about alternative fuels. Members asked questions and discussed Ohlers presentation.

8. Project Updates

Roache distributed a memo. The Newington/Dover bridge EIS is due out later this month or April, a public hearing will be held later. Staff would like to have a joint Policy/TAC meeting, inviting DOT and VHB for a presentation on the project. The meeting would be held during the regular Policy meeting on April 27th.

Jalbert distributed a study conducted by the American Bus Association which studied the impact the motor coach industry has on society and the economy.

Nichols stated that COAST's January ridership was the highest in their history.

Pesci stated UNH transit is having a great year and asked if staff could pull together a report. On transit use

Walker stated the next scheduled meeting is May 4, 2006.

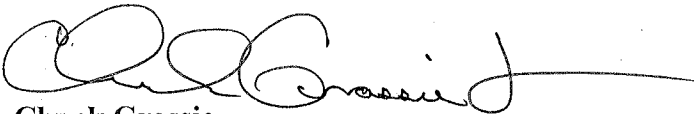
9. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roxanne M. Rines
Recording Secretary

Amended and approved May 4th 2006.



Chuck Grassie
Technical Advisory Committee Chair