



Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

April 18, 2016

www.fampo.gwregion.org/committees/policy-committee/

Members Present:

Mr. Tim McLaughlin, Spotsylvania County (Chairman)
Mr. Doug Fawcett, City of Fredericksburg (Alternate)
Mr. Matt Kelly, City of Fredericksburg
Mr. William Withers, City of Fredericksburg
Ms. Ruby Brabo, King George County (Non-Voting Member)
Mr. John Jenkins, King George County (Non-Voting Member)
Mr. Greg Benton, Spotsylvania County
Ms. Meg Bohmke, Stafford County
Mr. Paul Milde, Stafford County
Ms. Laura Sellers, Stafford County
Mr. Chuck Steigerwald, Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC)
Ms. Michelle Shropshire, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Mr. Tim Roseboom, Department of Rail and Potomac Transportation (DRPT)

Others Present:

Mr. Craig Van Dussen, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Ms. Christine Hoeffner, Virginia Railway Express (VRE)
Mr. Scott Shenk, Free Lance Star
Mr. Rupert Farley, Citizen

Staff Members Present:

Mr. Paul Agnello, FAMPO
Mr. Danny Reese, FAMPO
Mr. Lloyd Robinson, FAMPO
Mr. Nick Quint, FAMPO
Ms. Diana Utz, GWRC
Mr. Tim Ware, GWRC
Ms. Leigh Anderson, GWRC
Ms. JoAnna Roberson, GWRC

CALL FAMPO MEETING TO ORDER

Mr. McLaughlin called the meeting to order at 7:12 p.m. and received acknowledgement that a quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF FAMPO AGENDA

Mr. Agnello advised that an additional agenda item is requested to be added to tonight's agenda. This will be under Discussion/Action Items and will be noted as 6h – Resolution No. 16-32 - CMAQ/RSTP Allocations.

Upon motion by Mr. Milde and seconded by Mr. Withers, with all in consensus, the agenda was accepted as submitted with the amendment requested by Mr. Agnello.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

None

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

None

ACTION ITEMS/DISCUSSION ITEMS

a.) Approval of FAMPO Minutes of March 21, 2016– Mr. Paul Agnello

Upon motion by Ms. Sellers, seconded by Ms. Ross, and all concurring, the minutes from the March 21, 2016 meeting were approved as submitted.

b.) Approval of Resolution No. 16-28, Directing that a Public Comment Period and Public Hearing be held prior to the Adoption of the FY2017 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) – Mr. Paul Agnello

Mr. Agnello advised that FAMPO's UPWP is the work document that outlines the duties that FAMPO will be performing and is an annual requirement to update. Mr. Agnello stated that this is a two-step process; the first month FAMPO adopts Resolution stating that a thirty-day public comment period and public hearing will be held prior to the adoption of the UPWP. The second month the UPWP is submitted to FAMPO for endorsement. Mr. Agnello stated that the UPWP updates have remained consistent over the last several years and this year's document contains only a few major projects. Mr. Agnello stated that Resolution No. 16-28 is asking for endorsement of a public comment period and public hearing be scheduled. Mr. Agnello stated that public comment period is scheduled to begin on April 20th and will close on May 19th.

Upon motion by Mr. Milde and seconded by Mr. Withers, with all concurring, Resolution No. 16-28 was adopted by the FAMPO Policy Committee at the April 18th meeting.

c.) Summary of VRE Ridership Survey – Mr. Daniel Reese

Mr. Reese advised that the VRE Fredericksburg line ridership survey was completed on March 8, 2016. Mr. Reese stated that these results were compared to the survey completed on October 7th, 2015. Mr. Reese relayed that the October 7th survey data originated prior to the Spotsylvania Station opening and the March 8th survey included data with the Spotsylvania Station.

Mr. Reese advised that for the October 7th survey, data was compiled for seven VRE trains and two Amtrak trains. In March, there were eight VRE trains and three Amtrak trains. The total ridership on the Fredericksburg lines in October was 3,098. The March data shows that there were 3,344 riders with an increase of over 200 riders equating to a 7.3% increase. Mr. Reese relayed that with the opening of the Spotsylvania Station, the Fredericksburg station has seen a pretty drastic decrease of riders boarding in the City; a slight decrease at the Leeland Road Station and virtually no impact at the Brooke Station.

Mr. Ross asked as VRE compiles data daily why was the survey done on just one day. Mr. Reese stated that this survey is a physical count survey that was done on a Tuesday morning beginning at 4:30 a.m. so getting volunteers available to count more frequently has not occurred. Ms. Hoeffner also stated that while VRE does have daily counts for train ridership; however, VRE does not have daily counts for boardings and alightments across the system. Mr. Ross asked if Amtrak performs daily counts. Ms. Hoeffner stated that Amtrak provides data to VRE for model validations in verifying counts for the travel models but does not provide them with daily ridership counts.

Mr. Milde stated that in the past that survey counts have been taken on either a Tuesday or Wednesday so how was Tuesday chosen as the count day. Ms. Hoeffner stated that over the last several years Tuesday has shown to be the highest ridership day. Ridership continues to drop off during the summer and over the Thanksgiving/Christmas holidays and then picks back up around March so this is why Tuesday was picked for the March survey.

Ms. Sellers asked if ridership data was available that shows whether ridership increased or decreased as a result of the HOV lanes opening. Ms. Hoeffner stated that she would check to see if this data is available and if so would forward it to FAMPO.

d.) Transportation Updates – Mr. Paul Agnello

i. FY2017-2022 Public Meetings and Schedule

Mr. Agnello advised that the April 2016 Transportation updates are as follows:

VDOT Fredericksburg District Spring Meeting – May 10th at Germanna Community College/Spotsylvania Site at 5:30 p.m.

Mr. Agnello advised that the draft SYIP is not expected to be available before the May CTB meeting on May 17th so the spring meeting will focus on receiving comments in regard to the Draft HB2 project funding plan being submitted for SYIP consideration.

Mr. Agnello stated that the draft SYIP is due to be released on May 17th and the public comment period ends on May 27th and that once staff is in receipt of the document it will be sent out to the FAMPO committee members so those interested will have time to review the document and forward comments electronically before the end date on May 27th.

Mr. Agnello also asked for input from the Committee on his proposal to write a letter to the state providing input on the Draft HB2 funding plan for GWRC. He proposed thanking the state for funding 11 of 13 projects submitted and to request consideration for funding the 2 projects not selected in the future. The committee concurred with this approach and requested that a Draft of the letter be presented for their review in advance of the May Policy Committee meeting.

Mr. Agnello relayed that the application window for the next round of HB2 project submissions begins on August 1st and ends on September 30th. Mr. Agnello stated that this year a new Regional Economic plan will be submitted. Mr. Agnello stated that areas within the state that submitted a Regional Economic plan with round one of the HB2 process received higher scores on their projects that were submitted. Mr. Agnello relayed that an amendment to the CLRP is planned for the June/July timeframe that will potentially prepare the region for HB2 and also aid with the upcoming 2045 CLRP efforts.

Mr. Agnello relayed that two new funding opportunities have become available. These are FASTLANE/TIGER grant applications. Mr. Agnello advised that the FASTLANE grant is a new funding opportunity and the TIGER grant has been around for some time. Mr. Agnello advised that these would be discussed in greater detail later in tonight's meeting.

ii. State March 31st Elected Official – Media Briefing

Mr. Agnello advised that information released at the March 31st elected official media briefing relayed that there are two new funding sources available for entities to submit applications for potential additional funding allocations. These funding sources will be discussed in more detail further in tonight's meeting.

e.) Stafford Virginia Railway Express (VRE) Station Projects – Mr. Paul Agnello & Ms. Christine Hoeffner

i. VRE Presentation on TIGER Grant Proposal

Ms. Hoeffner stated that both VRE and DRPT are committed to the corridor improvement projects to the six VRE stations. Three of the station improvements are fully funded which include: the Lorton Station for a second platform; Slaters Lane for a crossover; and the Rippon Station for a second platform. The three station improvement projects that are partially funded include the following: Alexandria Station for a pedestrian tunnel; Brooke Station for a second platform; and Leeland Road Station for a second platform. Ms. Hoeffner advised that VRE and DRPT are aggressively pursuing alternative funding opportunities as the construction and notice to proceed on all six of the projects is by July of 2018. Ms. Hoeffner relayed that the completion of the six projects mentioned above also will enable the opening of the VRE Potomac Shores Station in Prince William County.

Ms. Hoeffner advised that VRE is going to be submitting a TIGER grant application with hopes of securing the funding needed to fully complete the three projects that now have partial funding allocated. Ms. Hoeffner stated that the funding needed to complete the three projects is approximately \$15.3 million. Ms. Hoeffner relayed that as the TIGER grant application process is competitive state-wide, that they plan to use the funding already allocated to the three projects that are fully funded as leverage in order to be more competitive within the process. Ms. Hoeffner stated that once all six projects are completed, that VRE will then have access to all three tracks in the future.

Ms. Hoeffner stated that the TIGER grant selection criteria are those that provide economic competitiveness by giving access to employment centers; the movement of goods and freight; and an increased productivity of land and capital. Quality of life, safety, environmental sustainability and partnerships are also benefits. Ms. Hoeffner stated that the improvements planned for all six of the VRE station projects meet the criteria.

Mr. Milde asked Mr. Agnello if the TIGER grant application includes the existing modifications in the MOU. Ms. Hoeffner stated that the improvements are not in the MOU requirements and VRE will continue to pursue the ramp improvements and platform extensions at both the Brooke and Leeland Road Stations. Mr. Agnello stated that VRE is looking for additional funding with the TIGER grant that could help obtain financial funding within the HB2 process by lowering the HB2 request cost.

Mr. Ross asked why there was such a difference in price if both the Brooke and Leeland Road Stations are adding an additional 650 feet for the second platform. Ms. Hoeffner stated that the uniqueness of the stations is why there is a price difference.

Ms. Hoeffner stated that these improvements support VRE's System 2040 plan that includes service expansion, longer trains, additional trains and future bi-directional train service. The improvements will improve the operational flexibility on the rail corridors, will minimize station dwelling times; and will provide platform access to multiple tracks. Ms. Hoeffner stated that the improvements will enhance pedestrian and ADA safety; will provide for separated grade access between the parking area and the platforms; will eliminate the at-grade pedestrian crossing at the Alexandria Station; and will provide for improvements for both pedestrian and bicycle access at both the Brooke and Leeland Road Stations.

ii. Requested Letter of Support for TIGER Competitive Grant Program for VRE Station Improvements

Mr. Agnello advised that included in tonight's agenda packet is a letter of support for VRE's efforts in applying for the TIGER grant applications. Mr. Agnello relayed that upon endorsement from FAMPO, the letter will be forwarded to the Honorable Anthony Foxx, Secretary of Transportation.

iii. Approval of Resolution No. 16-29, Endorsing the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) TIGER Grant Application

There was unanimous consent in support of both the letter being forwarded and approval of Resolution No. 16-29. Upon motion by Mr. Milde and seconded by Mr. Kelly, with all concurring, Resolution No. 16-29 was adopted at the April 18th FAMPO Policy Committee meeting.

f.) VDOT FASTLANE/TIGER Projects – Mr. Paul Agnello

Mr. Agnello advised that VDOT will be submitting a FASTLANE application for the Atlantic Gateway project. Mr. Agnello stated that there will be \$2 million available in federal funding that will be allocated to the State of Virginia (\$25 million from TIGER grant applications and \$175 million from FASTLANE applications).

i. The Commonwealth of Virginia’s New Atlantic Gateway Program

Mr. Agnello stated that this region was ranked the worst congestion issue in the country by the Texas A&M Transportation Institute. Mr. Agnello stated that the State is pursuing both a FASTLANE and TIGER grant application for funding to four projects. The total cost for the four projects is \$1.4 billion and will provide for corridor-wide enhancements that will improve the I-95/I-395 corridor from the Fredericksburg region to the Pentagon in Arlington. Mr. Agnello stated that in order to qualify for funding under the FASTLANE application process, there needs to be a 40% match requirement. Mr. Agnello stated that the money allocated through HB2 for the southbound Rappahannock River Crossing project and some additional projects will be used as leverage for the State being considered for application approval.

Mr. Agnello highlighted these new projects from the proposed program as follows:

Highway Project – I-95/I-395 enhancements (HOT extension north to the Pentagon and south to Fredericksburg)

Freight/Rail Project – Phase 1 completion of Long Bridge (this has been determined to be the East Coast rail chokepoint)

Transit Project – Enhanced bus service; two additional VRE roundtrips for the I-66 and I-95 corridors; additional Park and Ride lot new construction or improvements to existing lots (Spotsylvania – new lot and Stafford increased parking added to Route 630 lot)

Innovation and technology – corridor-wide upgrades to include TDM, ramp metering, etc.

Mr. Agnello advised that the application deadlines are April 14th for FASTLANE grant applications and April 29th for TIGER grant applications.

ii. Requested Letter of Support for FASTLANE Grant Application for the Atlantic Gateway Project

Mr. Agnello advised that included in tonight's agenda packet is a letter of support that upon FAMPO endorsement will be forwarded to the Honorable Anthony Foxx, Secretary of Transportation. The letter supports the State's efforts in submitting the FASTLANE grant application for the Atlantic Gateway project.

iii. Approval of Resolution No. 16-30, Endorsing the Commonwealth of Virginia's FASTLANE Grant Application

Mr. Agnello advised that Resolution No. 16-30 is endorsing the State's FASTLANE Grant application. Mr. Milde asked Ms. Shropshire if these projects would be tied to the I-395 project and Ms. Shropshire concurred.

Mr. Milde asked if the grant application is approved; however, we receive less than what was wished for, then does the State have to pick and choose the projects that will be funded. Mr. Agnello relayed that given that the TIGER grant application sometimes provides partial awards, this could also occur with the FASTLANE application process. If a partial award were to occur, the state would need to come up with a modified plan for how to best use the available funding.

The question was asked if the State is using HOT lane funding for leveraging. Ms. Shropshire concurred and stated also that \$25 million in private investment funding would be used as well for leveraging factors to ensure that the application will be more competitive state-wide.

Upon motion by Mr. Milde and seconded by Mr. Kelly, with all concurring, Resolution No. 16-30 was adopted at the April 18th FAMPO Policy Committee meeting.

g.) Approval of Resolution No. 16-31, Amending the FY2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to Include Funding to Project UPC #105463 for the Construction Phase on the Rte 606 Reconstruction Project of Mudd Tavern Road – Mr. Paul Agnello

Mr. Agnello advised that Resolution No. 16-31 is requesting amendment of the FY2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to include funding for project UPC #105463 for the construction phase on the Route 606 reconstruction project of Mudd Tavern Road, East of I-95 in the Thornburg area of Spotsylvania County. Mr. Agnello advised that this resolution will add funds into the construction phase of the project and is a project that is included in FAMPO's 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

Upon motion by Mr. Ross and seconded by Mr. Milde, with all concurring, Resolution No. 16-31 was adopted at the April 18th FAMPO Policy Committee meeting.

h.) Approval of Resolution No. 16-32, CMAQ/RSTP Allocations – Mr. Paul Agnello

Mr. Agnello advised that staff received late this afternoon the FY2017-2022 CMAQ/RSTP budgeted allocations. Mr. Agnello advised that the CMAQ funding allocations decreased by \$0.736 million;

however, the RSTP allocations increased by \$1.746 million. Mr. Agnello stated that the overall net increase is approximately \$1.01 million. Mr. Agnello advised that the budget requests need to be submitted by May 6th. Mr. Agnello relayed that staff has developed a solution where the available RSTP funding increase will be substituted for the CMAQ decrease. Mr. Agnello stated that the revisions made by staff keeps the total funding by project the same and maintains approximately \$4 million that will be available with both the CMAQ/RSTP funding allocations that will be received in June after the results of VDOT's Operational Studies are completed. Mr. Agnello stated that a spreadsheet was distributed at tonight's meeting and even though the total funding did not change; however, the amount of funding by years changed for a few projects.

Mr. Milde asked for clarification that no projects will be delayed. Mr. Agnello concurred and reiterated that funding years have been adjusted and that overall the region will still receive an additional \$1 million.

Upon motion by Mr. Milde and seconded by Mr. Kelly, with all concurring, Resolution No. 16-32 was adopted at the April 18th FAMPO Policy Committee meeting.

FAMPO CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence is included in tonight's agenda packet and is self-explanatory.

STAFF REPORT

Mr. Agnello advised that work continues on the I-95 Corridor study and that an update will be provided at the upcoming May 16th FAMPO meeting. Mr. Agnello also relayed that tonight was Mr. Van Dussen's last FAMPO meeting as he will retire from VDOT on April 29th and will be re-locating to North Carolina. Mr. Agnello thanked Mr. Van Dussen for his work with and for FAMPO over the last five plus years.

MEMBER REPORTS

Ms. Brabo advised that for those members who participate in Virginia County Association that the upcoming spring meeting is scheduled for May 6th in Louisa County and that more information will be forwarded once it is received.

Mr. Milde advised that Mr. Kelly was successful in gaining endorsement from PRTC that they would submit a letter supporting FAMPO's request to be included as a member of the I-95/I-395 Advisory Committee. Mr. Kelly stated that in exchange for PRTC's support to FAMPO's request, that FAMPO would also support VRE's request for submittal of the TIGER grant application.

FAMPO COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Both the FAMPO Technical Committee (FTC) and the Transportation Advisory Group (CTAG) meeting minutes are included in tonight's agenda packet.

ADJOURN FAMPO MEETING/NEXT MEETING, MAY 16, 2016

The FAMPO meeting for April 18th was adjourned at 8:05 p.m. The next meeting will occur on May 16, 2016 at 7:15 p.m.