

Minutes of the REGULAR MEETING OF THE TAC FUNDING & PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE

Thursday, October 21, 2021

Committee Members Present: Paul Oehme (Acting Chair, Lakeville), Jerry Auge (Anoka County), Angie Stenson (Carver County), Jenna Fabish (Dakota County), Jason Pieper (Hennepin County), John Mazzitello (Ramsey County), Joe Ayers-Johnson (Washington County), Heidi Schallberg (Metropolitan Council), Anna Flintoft (Metro Transit), Molly McCartney (MnDOT Metro District), Colleen Brown (MnDOT Metro District State Aid), Innocent Eyoh (MPCA), Mackenzie Turner Bargaen (MnDOT Bike & Ped), Nancy Spooner-Mueller (DNR), Aaron Bartling (MVTA), Karl Keel (Bloomington), Jim Kosluchar (Fridley), Nathan Koster (Minneapolis)

Committee Members Absent: Michael Thompson (Plymouth), Craig Jenson (Scott County), Elaine Koutsoukos (TAB), Robert Ellis (Eden Prairie), Ken Ashfeld (Maple Grove), Ann Weber (St. Paul)

I. CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Acting Chair Oehme called the regular meeting of the Funding & Programming Committee to order at 1:34 p.m. on Thursday, October 21, 2021. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting was held via teleconference.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved without a vote. A vote is only needed if changes are made to the agenda.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: It was moved by Spooner-Mueller and seconded by Brown to approve the minutes of the September 16, 2021, regular meeting of the Funding & Programming Committee. The motion was approved unanimously via roll call.

IV. TAB REPORT

Joe Barbeau, MTS, reported on the October 20, 2021, TAB meeting. This included discussion of MPCA's Diesel Emissions Reduction grant, about which Eyoh reported that the grant is for diesel equipment. Eyoh added that the state Climate Subcabinet is still looking for input.

V. BUSINESS

1. 2021-48: Federal Funds Redistribution Amount for Metro Transit's I-94/Manning Park-and-Ride Lot

Barbeau said at the previous day's TAB meeting, TAB agreed with the committee's recommendation to allow Metro Transit to retain funding spent on the buses for its 2009-funded park-and-ride project at Manning Avenue. This results in \$5,044,400 available for redistribution. He added that via conversation with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) the \$540,041 that was spent on park-and-ride lot development may not be available, as it has been in a federal grant. In the worst case, this would leave \$4,504,359. Barbeau said that the Federal Funds Reallocation (FFR) Policy distinguishes between current- and future-year funds and that while these are past-year funds, staff suggests treating them like future-year funds because their use is flexible enough to preclude the more rigid current-year funds direction.

Barbeau provided funding options, which included moving funds to the next Regional Solicitation, funding projects up to federal capacity, or funding projects from the 2020

Regional Solicitation. Funding from the 2020 Regional Solicitation could continue to skip bus rapid transit (BRT) projects that were not funded due to the limitation of BRT projects or could treat the funding as separate from 2020 and ignore the limitation.

Keel said that the first priority of the FFR Policy is to move funding to a future solicitation. Barbeau replied that this is open to interpretation because FTA prefers that funding be programmed by 2024 or 2025, which is earlier than the 2022 Regional Solicitation programming will address. Pieper asked whether the funds could be made available in an earlier year for the 2022 Regional Solicitation, to which Barbeau replied in the affirmative.

Ayers-Johnson said that the FFR Policy is written to provide TAB flexibility. Barbeau replied that this is difficult to say, given the preference toward using a future Regional Solicitation “if at all possible.” Ayers-Johnson suggested that because this is past-year funding, it is reasonable to suggest that it does not have to go to a future Regional Solicitation.

Brown said that unlike most highway funds, these funds come from a project that has been authorized. Barbeau said that only \$540,041 has been in an FTA contract.

Flintoft expressed a preference for funding a project sooner, rather than later. She added that she prefers option 3i, funding the Washington County I-494 park-and-ride lot in Woodbury, because it was high scoring.

Koster asked whether project sponsors can provide current project status. Ayers-Johnson said that Washington County is ready to pay for the match. Joe Morneau, Dakota County, said that the county is ready and able to pay for its match on its 140th Street overpass.

Keel expressed a preference to push the money to the 2022 Regional Solicitation and allow for an earlier program year, adding that if projects from the 2020 Regional Solicitation are funded, programming should follow the rules that limited bus rapid transit projects or projects on the same corridor. Bartling said that he would prefer the funding be used sooner, rather than later, but that the corridor rules should be followed. Ayers-Johnson said that the corridor and BRT rule is aimed at the 2020 funding pot, rendering the limitation moot with the funding in question.

MOTION: It was moved by Flintoft and seconded by Mazzitello to recommend spending the funds on the Washington County I-494 park-and-ride project in Woodbury.

Keel said he does not support the motion because the policy is to use a future Regional Solicitation. Bartling expressed agreement. Pieper asked whether the committee should ask TAB to make an exception to the FFR Policy. Ayers-Johnson said that the motion is not really an exception to the policy.

Eyoh asked why, after a park-and-ride project was not built, a park-and-ride project in a similar area will be successful. Flintoft said that the proposed project is on the Gold Line, located near another successful park-and-ride lot, and located near a residential area.

Koster said that maintaining the BRT limitation does not preclude the Washington County project from being funded in the next Regional Solicitation.

The motion was approved with Bartling, Keel, and Koster voting against.

2. Allocation of 20M of CRRSAA Federal Funds

Barbeau reminded members that at the last meeting, members favored spending Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriation Act (CRRSAA) funds on local state aid revenue losses resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic. This was preferred over funding 2020 Regional Solicitation projects or funding programmed projects with federal capacity. TAC supported this option, as well. TAB was not as unified, as there was some sentiment to direct the funding towards transit.

McCartney said that the CRRSAA funding is from the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program, so uses within that program are eligible.

MOTION: It was moved by Keel and seconded by Mazzitello to recommend using the CRRSAA funding on funding state-aid revenue losses resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic. The motion was approved unanimously.

VI. INFORMATION

1. TIP Amendment to Incorporate Regional Transit Safety Performance Targets

Barbeau said that the Planning Committee recommended adoption of Regional Transit Safety Performance Targets and placement of those targets in the TIP.

Pieper asked whether transit-related crashes will be included in the Minnesota Crash Mapping Analysis Tool (MnCMAT), to which Schallberg said that bus crashes on roadways would be included but that rail-related crashes will not.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Acting Chair Oehme adjourned the meeting.

Joe Barbeau
Recording Secretary