

EASTERN WASHINGTON COUNTY  
RURAL PLANNING ORGANIZATION

RTEC CHAIR—MAYOR TOM HIRSCHI · RTAC CHAIR—ARTHUR LEBARON · PLANNING MANAGER—CURT HUTCHINGS

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MINUTES  
TRANSPORTATION EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (RTEC)  
LaVerkin City Hall  
435 N Main St, LaVerkin, Utah

Thursday, April 29, 2010 at 1:30 pm

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr. Arthur LeBaron  
for Mayor Tom Hirschi  
Mayor Karl Wilson  
Mayor Hyrum Lefler  
Commissioner James Eardley

REPRESENTING:

Hurricane City  
LaVerkin City  
Leeds Town  
Washington County

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Mr. Darrin LeFevre

REPRESENTING:

Toquerville City

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr. Dana Meier  
Ms. Doni Pack  
Mr. Curt Hutchings

Utah Dept of Transportation  
Five County Assoc. of Governments  
Five County Assoc. of Governments

I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Mayor Karl Wilson welcomed all in attendance. There was a quorum present.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor Wilson presented Minutes of the February 25, 2010 meeting to the Council for consideration and approval:

**A motion was made by Commissioner James Eardley, seconded by  
Mr. Arthur LeBaron, to approve the Minutes of the February 25, 2010  
Rural Transportation Executive Council meeting.  
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

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III. RPO BIKE ROUTE

Mr. Curt Hutchings provided maps of an undesignated, but commonly used bicycle route that loops through the RPO municipalities. The RPO Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) has discussed the idea of formalizing the route. Mr. Hutchings contacted Ms. Evelyn Tuddenham at the UDOT State office to invite her to attend the next RTAC meeting and inform the Advisory Committee of the processes involved in creating a formally designated bike route.

Mr. Arthur LeBaron asked Mr. Hutchings what improvements would be necessary to achieve this. Mr. Hutchings replied that he doesn't know and anticipates that Ms. Tuddenham will be able to give them answers.

Mayor Lefler hoped improvements would not consist of more than road striping and some signage. He has no intention of pushing a project that would cost a lot of money. Mayor Lefler informed the Council that he has contacted Ryan Gurr at Red Rock Bicycles who is involved in organizing the Tour de St George bicycle race. Mr. Gurr offered to integrate some fundraising into the Tour to assist in the development of an RPO bike route. Mayor Lefler was told by some bicyclists that the RPO route and a route that goes through Gunlock are the two most popular street bicycle routes in the area. Ms. Doni Pack mentioned a "100 mile club" she is aware of where members go from the RPO route out to Zion National Park and back to complete 100 miles. Some do this on a weekly basis.

Mr. LeBaron related concerns shared by Hurricane City officials and safety personnel concerning bicycle riding in Hurricane City. They are very concerned about bicyclists creating safety problems by riding too close to traffic, even with a striped bike lane. The riders are trying to avoid refuse near the sidewalks. The bike lanes would need constant sweeping.

Mr. LeBaron feels that bicyclists need a change of attitude toward motor traffic, even if the bicyclists are technically following State bicycle laws. This would require a PR campaign of some kind. This could be done working through and with bicycle shops.

Mr. Dana Meier pointed out some of the liability issues. A designated route must be upgraded to meet certain standards. This couldn't prevent lawsuits, but at least you have a defensible position. A great deal of maintenance will be required.

Mayor Karl Wilson suggested that the RTEC Council recommend the subject of a formal designated bike route back to the RTAC Committee for more information and study.

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Ms. Pack noted that while visiting with residents of SR-9 communities, the increase in bicyclists was mentioned. Mr. Meier suggested that Washington County is second only to Moab, Utah in popularity for on and off road bicycling.

**A motion was made by Mayor Hyrum Lefler, seconded by  
Commissioner James Eardley, to refer the designation of an Eastern Washington  
County Rural Planning Organization bicycle route back to the Transportation  
Advisory Committee for research and to address particular concerns.  
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Commissioner Eardley pointed out that the current federal administration is planning to increase spending on bicycle and pedestrian transportation facilities. All transportation projects from now on may need to deal with the inclusion of pedestrian and bicycle usage.

IV. STIP PROJECT PRIORITIZATION

A. Process

Mr. Meier began by equating the STIP process to a ‘jugurnaut’. He emphasized that the process seems to change continuously. He will share his best understanding, but with the caveat that it may have changed.

B. Facilitation Ideas

Mr. Meier suggested that the RPO needs to know more than just how the STIP process works; but rather, all means available to bring dollars into the RPO communities in order to best improve their cities and towns. Mr. Meier provided handouts that indicate a number of UDOT funding programs available to municipalities. Some of these are B & C funds which come through the Joint Highway Committee. These are used for “off-system” roads.

Other sources include contingency funds- applied for through the district engineer, safely engineer, or local UDOT representative (Mr. Meier). These funds are for minor problems or safety issues on a State route and proposed projects are reviewed monthly. Other funding programs include, but are not limited: the National Recreational Trails, Scenic Byways, Pavement Preservation, Pavement Rehabilitation, Maintenance Spot Improvement, Bridge Preservation, Transportation Enhancement, Railroad/Highway Improvement, Sign Modification & Replacement, Corridor Planning, ADA Ramps, Rural Highway Safety Improvement, and Safe Routes to School programs.

UDOT receives Enhancement Funds yearly, generally around six million dollars.. Trails and bike paths are included in the types of projects funded. Mr. Meier provided a list of

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projects for FY 2012/2013. These are federal funds and do require matching funds. The six million dollars are usually divided equally between projects sponsored by: 1) local agencies, 2) UDOT, and 3) State rest areas. Mr. Meier provided a guide for submission of enhancement projects indicating the process for submitting a proposal. Proposals need to include project priorities, concepts, applicable TE Eligible Category for each project, and preliminary cost estimates. Region proposals are due February 1<sup>st</sup> of each year, so proposals need to be submitted to the region before then.

Another funding source is the Preservation & Rehabilitative Program. It is less costly to maintain and preserve roads than to rehabilitate them after significant damage – “good roads cost less”. Every year UDOT drives all the State roads in each region and collect data. Based on these assessments, UDOT chooses projects for these funds.

On the UDOT website there is a document called “Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Development Process, dated September 2001. According to it, there are a few ways that local interests can submit their priorities. One is Activity #2, UDOT Public Meetings Rural Areas. This is an annual regional public meeting where local groups and agencies can express their priorities for projects in their specific area. Another opportunity is the Local Government Annual Visits.

Another way to submit feedback is to communicate with the local transportation Commissioner, which is Jerry Lewis in our area. He serves on the State Transportation Commission and is well respected.

Mr. Meier summarized that, in general, the more that a project is supported by coordinated and multiple interests, and communicated through multiple means, the better the chance that it will be given attention and prioritization by those in UDOT who create the STIP. In addition, there are other ways to get projects funded outside of STIP funds. Take advantage of the Local Government Annual Visits to give feedback.

Mr. Arthur LeBaron suggested that there be some type of feedback form provided at the Local Government Visits, but Mr. Meier clarified that the feedback and information needs to be submitted to him and then he has the opportunity to meet with other Team Leaders and debrief that feedback.

Ms. Pack shared a recent experience of connecting Mayor Allen of Rockville with a member of the Joint Highway Committee and the Mayor is currently writing a concept report to submit to them.

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Mr. Meier suggested that Mr. Rick Torgerson is the most knowledgeable on the STIP process and Mr. Torgerson will be doing a presentation at the next RTAC meeting.

Mayor Lefler raised a question regarding a Toquerville bypass and a connection to Leeds. The bypass is on the RPO prioritization list. The Mayor suggested that it wouldn't take much to connect the proposed Toquerville bypass to Leeds Town. It could be in conjunction with a new northern interchange for Leeds. Mr. Meier suggested that citizens of Leeds should form a committee and formalize a request. Grassroots efforts influenced UDOT to support the building of the Washington City milepost 13 interchange. The need for work on the northern interchange is listed as a priority in a UDOT I-15 Study. It is also listed on the RPO prioritization list and on the Council of Governments (COG).

V. COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS MEETING REPORT

Commissioner Eardley reported on the last Council of Governments meeting where project prioritization criteria were established and a finalized project prioritization list was created. The Commissioner provided Minutes of that meeting held April 6, 2010. The second to last page lists Suggested Prioritization Criteria. These were formally adopted by unanimous vote as the Summary for Use in Prioritizing Projects by the COG. The last page, 'Rankings Based on Suggested Prioritization Criteria' was also accepted by unanimous vote.

Commissioner Eardley shared that there will not be any more regularly scheduled COG meetings until there is a need to vote on funding for a project. The priority list can be reworked on an annual basis. Just being on the list is important and if circumstances warrant it, a project lower on the list could be funded before another.

Due to growth having slowed in the area to around 3%, competition between projects is not currently a problem. Commissioner Eardley mentioned that according to many, 3% is considered an optimal growth rate.

Any needs or updates can be shared at the monthly Mayor's meeting.

VI. OTHER/FUTURE TOPICS

A. The next regular meeting is scheduled for June 24, 2010 at 1:30 pm to be held at the Toquerville City Hall.

VII. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 2:40 pm.