

**DIXIE TRANSPORTATION EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (DTEC)
MINUTES
November 18, 2014**

PRESENT

James Eardley, County Commission
Alan Gardner, County Commission
Jon Pike, St. George Mayor
Darren LeFevre, Toquerville Mayor
Rick Rosenberg, Santa Clara Mayor
Bruce Densley, Virgin Mayor
Wayne Peterson, Leeds Mayor
Chris Hart, Ivins Mayor
Kyle Gubler, LaVerkin City Administrator
Bette Arial, St. George City Council, Senator Mike Lee's Office
Naghi Zeenati, Utah Transportation Commission, Region 4
Rick Torgerson, UDOT
Cameron Cutler, St. George City
Arthur LeBaron, Hurricane City
Bryan Thiriot, Five County
Myron Lee, Dixie MPO
Dave Demas, Dixie MPO
Ron Whitehead, Washington County
Mike Shaw, Washington City
Dave Glenn, Ivins City
Levi Roberts, Five County Association of Governments
Gary Webster, Cong. Chris Stewart's Office
Abby Albrecht, Utah Transportation Coalition
Aaron Baker, Utah Transportation Coalition
Michael Heaps, Horrocks Engineering
John Reed, SUBHA

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Eardley welcomed all in attendance and introductions were made. There was no quorum at the beginning of the meeting, but one existed later for voting on action items.

MINUTES

A. Approval of Minutes from October 15, 2014

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Zeenati to Approve the Minutes from the October 15, 2014, DTEC meeting. Motion seconded by Mayor Pike and carried by unanimous vote.

ACTION ITEMS

A. Financial Assumptions (2015-2040 Planning)

Myron Lee asked for input from this group for the funding assumptions the MPO has made on a local level for the update of the 2015-2040 Plan. The 2040 Plan Finance Working Group, a subgroup of the Unified Plan, has met regularly throughout the past two years and has representation from the four MPOs in the State, along with UTA, UDOT, and FHWA.

MPO staff is preparing a presentation for January's DTEC meeting that will use the Dixie Travel Demand Model to show what "future funding assumptions" would mean to the long-range plan. The assumptions included in the previous (2011-2040) plan included the following:

- State
 - 100 % of Auto Related Sales Tax - 16.6% total by 2017
 - 75% of Auto Related Sales Tax – 12.5% total by FY 2015
 - \$0.05 Statewide Fuel Tax (or Equivalent) increase every 10 years starting in FY 2014
 - Statewide Vehicle Registration Fee – \$10 increase in FY 2018
- Local
 - .25 percent Local Option Sales Tax by 2014
 - New \$0.05 Local Option Fuel Tax or equivalent every 7 years starting in 2016**
 - New Local Option \$5 Vehicle Registration fee every 10 years starting in 2018 **

Transportation funding already includes 50% of all auto-related sales tax, 24-1/2 cents per gallon fuel tax (state portion), ¼ of 1% sales tax that goes to cities for transportation projects, a \$10 per vehicle local registration fee (goes into the COG monies), and federal revenue from the sales tax on fuel. Currently we're operating under a continuing resolution of the MAP21 Resolution through May 2015.

The old plan assumes these funding sources would continue and grow as outlined – including a .25% local sales tax by 2014. For today's meeting, Staff is asking direction of the executive board members regarding these revenue assumptions -- are they still appropriate as we move into the 2015-2040 Long-Range-Plan.

Chairman Eardley asked the opinion of the group on adopting or amending the assumptions. Mayor Peterson wanted to tap into the tourism revenue a little more in the hopes that they will leave more money behind in the form of sales tax to help address

the transportation needs. Mayor Hart said that all of the assumptions will be difficult to sell to the public, and perhaps it would be better to concentrate on just one sales tax increase, not two.

Chairman Eardley suggested striking the bottom item. Mr. Lee offered to translate his figures into fixed dollars rather than a percentage of the fuel tax. Mayor Hart wondered about the possibility of getting the first two items passed, and Chairman Eardley said the RAP tax passed by about 600 votes, which was a small margin. He suggested the message he is hearing from the members is to refine the numbers and help us to relate to them in dollar amounts. Mr. Lee said he can do that and return in January, showing each category in a dollar figure and also show capacity projects.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Traffic Modeling / Forecasting

Michael Heaps of Horrocks Engineering presented a PowerPoint discussion of transportation forecasting using the Traffic Demand Model. He said that the Dixie MPO is currently updating its Long-Range Plan, using the Traffic Demand Model (TDM) as its primary tool. First, goals and objectives are defined for the purpose of identifying problems, like congestion, and evaluating alternatives. A travel demand model is a computer program that runs mathematical equations to replicate travel choices that individuals make – software that forecasts traffic patterns.

There are many TDMs: national, statewide, regional, etc. The Dixie MPO TDM covers all of Washington County and is based on a powerful software platform called “CUBE.” Mr. Heaps said that data is input into a “black box” and potential scenarios emerge, such as number of trips, location, modes of travel (bicycle, car), routes, etc. Each of these steps goes through a calibration process. The Governor’s Office of Planning & Budget provides population figures, and then local planners are consulted to evaluate growth areas in the County. The census is used for household characteristics.

In 2010 the population was around 130,000; over the next thirty years it is expected to increase to around 230,000. Those GOPB estimates are typically low.

A copy of Mr. Heaps’ PowerPoint is available upon request.

B. Utah Transportation Coalition Presentation

Abby Albrecht of the Utah Transportation Coalition referred to yesterday’s press conference at which several mayors spoke, introducing the Coalition. In collaboration with local businesses, the Utah League of Cities and Towns, and Utah Association of

Counties, the Coalition's mission/vision is to enjoy the quality of life, scenery, and all that the State of Utah has to offer. Of the many objectives, the first to be addressed is the 2040 Unified Plan and securing support for the \$11.3 billion gap identified therein. Another objective is the international airport in Salt Lake City. She said that her coalition also tries to put pressure on the federal government for transportation issues.

Ms. Albrecht showed a breakdown of the 2040 Unified Plan, indicating participation by the UTA, UDOT, and the MPOs throughout the State. A \$70 billion need exists by 2040; the current funding in place is \$43.4 billion, leaving a substantial gap. Infrastructure is crumbling statewide, sidewalks need repair, maintenance on roads, and especially bridges. Most of the bridges in Utah were built in the 50s and 60s and will soon be at the end of their life spans. Additionally, population is expected to double by 2040 (triple in Washington County), and vehicle miles travelled will increase, as well, by nearly 80%. All of this places a tremendous burden on resources.

The purchasing power of the gas tax is down by more than 40% because of more fuel-efficient vehicles and other causes. Leadership in the Legislature realized that the state's citizens need to be informed of upcoming shortfalls and educated as to the importance of transportation issues. Polls reveal that most Utahns understand that transportation is underfunded currently.

Yesterday, the communication/education campaign was launched in Farmington; today in St. George the Coalition will be presenting in The Ledges community; and Friday in Vernal. This will be a broad-based education campaign of the overall need for transit, state and local roads, and trails. Their website is utahtransportation.org with a toolkit providing media information, interactive materials, and maps.

The Coalition has sent information to all 29 counties and 244 cities and has received a positive response. The intent is to stand together during the next legislative session, business and government, to encourage forward-thinking legislation. Television, radio, and billboard advertising in support of the Unified Transportation Plan will be actively pursued, as well. The main purpose of the Coalition is to raise public awareness of the need for funding for transportation issues.

Mayor Hart asked whether the Coalition is supporting any particular funding options, and Ms. Albrecht said no, that nine individual options are being studied, including gas tax, property tax, and the like. She is hoping the Interim Transportation Committee, meeting next month in Vernal, emerges with a Guiding Principles document of some kind to present to the Legislature. However, it is always difficult to predict the actions of the Legislature. Chairman Eardley asked about any organized opposition to this Coalition, and Ms. Albrecht said there is none that she knows of.

Cameron Cutler asked about the current funding gap, and Ms. Albrecht clarified that there is a \$22 billion gap between what is in the system now and what will remain after current projects are laid out. UDOT took the list of projects and prioritized it; that is the source of the \$11.3 billion figure. She reminded the group that sales tax revenue for transportation projects is not constitutionally protected.

Mayor Densley asked what, if any, consideration has been given to getting a fair revenue income from other sources, given the increase of alternative-fuel vehicles. Ms. Albrecht said that a working group is studying one option to recoup a fair contribution from these alternative-fuel vehicles. However, in Utah there are less than 40,000 alternative-fuel vehicles, representing a tiny fraction of total vehicles on the road.

C. Recognitions

Myron Lee said that Jim Eardley has been the Chair of DTEC for nearly five years, and in January, it will be necessary to elect a new Chair. Mayor Hart is currently the Vice Chair, and he will Chair the next meeting, taking nominations for the new Chair. Commissioner Eardley's leadership and service will be missed, and a Certificate was presented to him.

The location of the January meeting will be here in the Administration Building's downstairs conference room.

D. Upcoming Events/Meetings

1. Transportation Expo (Feb 10 2015)
2. JPAC (Jan 8 2015)
3. DTEC (Jan 21 2015)

E. TIP Report

Myron Lee said that the DTAC is reviewing the TIP process and has received requests for TIP funding. This year we'll be programming our 2019 funds, and the applications that have come in will be analyzed over the next month or so and voted on at the DTAC level to recommend to this group. Five applications have been received:

- Mall Drive Underpass; \$34 million
- Connection to 850 N at 350 E (to ease congestion among three big stores: Costco, Walmart, and Home Depot); \$1.7 million

- Pedestrian underpass under I-15 in St. George at 400 S near Dixie State University; \$2 million
- Exit 11 in Washington City; \$25 million
- Extension of Merrell Road to Washington Fields Road; \$700,000

UDOT/FHWA BUSINESS

a. UDOT Update

Rick Torgerson with UDOT said that the bumps have been repaired on the Dixie Drive Interchange. The Red Hills Interchange work is slightly behind schedule but is expected to be complete by the end of December. Last week the speed limit on I-15 was increased along the Wasatch Front to mostly 70 mph. Studies are ongoing concerning speed limits in other parts of the state, as well. Mayor Pike suggested the Southern Parkway be increased.

b. FHWA Update

No representatives from FHWA attended the meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS

Commissioner Eardley stated that the BLM has made the progress toward the Northern Corridor difficult due to the potential impacts on the Environment. The renewal of the HCP contract is also pending and Mr. Eardley said they are going to go through with the renewal and then continue to press the Northern Corridor issue.

NEXT MEETING

Next Scheduled DTEC meeting: January 21, 2015. There will be no meeting in December.

ADJOURN

Having no other business, Chairman Eardley adjourned the meeting at 1:34 p.m.