

**DIXIE TRANSPORTATION EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (DTEC)
MINUTES
January 21, 2015**

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT

Zachary Renstrom, County Commission
Jon Pike, St. George Mayor
Darren LeFevre, Toquerville Mayor
Wayne Peterson, Leeds Mayor
Chris Hart, Ivins Mayor
John Bramall, Hurricane Mayor
Bette Arial, St. George City Council, Senator Mike Lee's Office
Jeff Turek, Washington City Council
Naghi Zeenati, Utah Transportation Commission, Region 4
Ken Sizemore, Santa Clara City Council
Jimmie Hughes, St. George City

OTHERS PRESENT

Don Ipson, Representative
Bruce Densley, Virgin Mayor
Kyle Gubler, LaVerkin City Administrator
Gary Webster, Cong. Chris Stewart's Office
Bill Swadley, Senator Orrin Hatch's Office
Dana Meier, UDOT
Branden Anderson, UDOT
Cameron Cutler, St. George City
Arthur LeBaron, Hurricane City
Bryan Thiriot, Five County
Gary Zabriskie, Five County
Myron Lee, Dixie MPO
Dave Demas, Dixie MPO
Curt Hutchings, Five County
Ron Whitehead, Washington County
Dave Glenn, Ivins City
Michael Heaps, Horrocks Engineering
Craig Shanklin, Southern Utah Bicycle Alliance

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Chris Hart welcomed all in attendance and introductions were made. It was established that a quorum exists for voting on action items.

MINUTES

A. Approval of Minutes from November 18, 2014

MOTION: Motion by Mayor Pike to Approve the Minutes from the November 18, 2014, DTEC meeting. Motion seconded by Mayor Bramall and carried by unanimous vote.

B. Election of Chairman to fill unexpired 2-year term

MOTION: Motion by Mayor Pike to nominate Mayor Chris Hart to serve as Chairman and fill the unexpired 2-year term. Motion seconded by Jeff Turek and carried by unanimous vote.

C. Election of Vice Chair

MOTION: Motion by Mayor LeFevre to nominate Mayor Jon Pike to serve as Vice Chair. Motion seconded by Jeff Turek and carried by unanimous vote.

LONG RANGE PLANNING

A. Traffic Modeling / Needs Forecasting

Michael Heaps of Horrocks Engineering presented a PowerPoint discussion of transportation forecasting using the Traffic Demand Model. He reviewed information that was presented at the previous meeting including traffic and population forecast. In 2010 the population was around 130,000 and over the next thirty years population is expected to double to around 230,000. Those GOPB estimates are typically low.

Population and employment forecasts are figured into our existing transportation networks. Currently our area experiences about 2,200 hours of delay each day. Delay time is calculated by driving areas during the middle of the night, and then driving those same areas during high volume traffic times. Without any improvements to our transportation systems, between now and 2025, delays will increase approximately 4 times; between now and 2035 it will increase by more than 10 times; between now and 2040 it will increase as much as 20 times. Without a plan, every major Corridor in the County will experience unacceptable levels of congestion.

Mr. Heaps stated 123 projects were identified as regionally significant to assist in alleviating projected congestion. When developer costs of said projects are removed, the cities and state are left with a bill of approximately \$1.7 billion dollars. Several funding scenarios have been examined as to which would alleviate a majority of the cost.

B. Planning Level Financial Assumptions (2015-2040 Planning)

Myron Lee continued the presentation and reiterated a few of the funding assumptions the MPO has made on a local level for the update of the 2015-2040 Plan.

The assumptions 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.

The 2040 Local Option finance package includes, 0.25 percent Local Option Sales Tax (or equivalent) by 2016; new \$.05 per gallon 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; new Local 0.25 percent Sales Tax for Transit in 2020.

Mayor Pike asked whether the assumptions included the potential to cut the current gas tax in half and replace it with a new sales tax.

Mr. Lee stated that the State Legislature has been discussing bringing more funding to transportation. The long range plan assumes that what the state legislature does in 2016 would reduce the need for alternative assumptions.

Mayor Wayne Peterson was concerned that 30% of spending is from people outside of the area. As the population triples he doesn't think that it is reasonable to assume we have the capacity for that much tourism to keep pace so we should consider a smaller percentage.

Mr. Lee stated that to answer those questions they have relied upon the best consultants they could find to make those forecasts and is a function of population growth, sales growth, and tourism growth and each factor has been considered. Over a 6 month period of time, MPOs and UDOT have been working closely with consultants to determine the most accurate forecasts.

Mayor Hart stated that the County and the municipalities will have to accept and agree upon these assumptions in order for there to be adequate funding. Mr. Lee responded by saying that the basis for the long range plan is the fiscal constraint. If they can plan on acquiring future funding then they can plan on avoiding congestion on the long list of roads.

A copy of Mr. Heaps and Mr. Lee's PowerPoint is attached.

MOTION: Motion by Ken Sizemore to accept the recommendations as outlined. Motion seconded by Mayor Peterson and carried by a unanimous vote.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. 2015 Legislature Update

Representative Don Ipson stated that the Senate is divided from the House and wants to increase the cents per gallon because it is more predictable which might not have a growth element in it but the fact remains that tax components haven't raised since 1997.

The State is facing an 11.5 billion dollar short fall by 2040 which includes roads and transit.

Representative Ipson also stated that he thought a possible option would be to raise gas tax \$0.10 for regular and \$0.05 for diesel. Gas is about 70% of product sold and diesel is about 30%. Mayor Bramall made a comment in favor of the gas tax stating it made sense for the future in order to keep well maintained roads.

Representative Ipson stated that we have done a good job in maintaining roads but that is going to change with the way UDOT is set up with Class I and Class II roads. The Class I roads are maintained by doing preventative work but the Class II tiered roads

are simply being patched and preventative maintenance is not being done and asphalt cannot be neglected.

Mayor Hart expressed that the alternative to funding now is that everything doubles in cost because you go from maintenance to replacement and that is the worst option long term.

Another big issue Representative Ipson pointed out is that alternative fuel and electric vehicles are either not paying gas tax or paying at a reduced rate. One of the options would be to raise the vehicle registration because there should be a component where those vehicles pay their fair share since the gas tax doesn't affect them. Another alternative would be a state-wide general sales tax increase so anything that an individual purchases at the store, transportation would receive a component to that, and thus everyone pays.

Mayor Bramall expressed the worry that diesel tax is higher than the gasoline tax and also sulphur is being filtered so thin that bacteria gets in the diesel. Representative Ipson said that very thing is the reason why he proposed that diesel cannot raise at the same rate as gas. Diesel has to be protected because commercial vehicles that are on International Fuel Tax Association (IFTA) do not have to buy gas here and vendors that support the trucking business will lose business if trucks aren't utilizing our State, which will decrease our overall revenue.

Mayor Hart stated long-term expectation would be that vehicles will become increasingly fuel efficient and there will be an increasing percentage of alternative vehicles.

Mayor Densley suggested that a highway maintenance fee, based on an average amount of miles that a driver drives, be assessed in lieu of a gas tax on any alternative fuel vehicle.

Mayor Hart expressed that raising gas tax is a hard sell and there is very little understanding in the public about the need. The public is told to buy more efficient vehicles and it's difficult for people to understand how costs have gone up and revenue has gone down.

Mr. Lee asked if there was a commitment as a community to put general fund monies and additional monies on transportation to fill the gap.

Mayor Hart stated that ultimately it is going to add up to more taxes coming from somewhere. If it's coming out of general funds then property tax increases or other things will be affected but this will be painful no matter where it comes from.

Mayor Bramall said the good news is that discussions and planning are taking place and a vision for the future is being considered. When scenarios are looked at in advance one can plan better, tax better, and interface better between mayors, communities, the County and the State.

Mayor Hart said the presentation that was given today is the best thinking of those that have been strategizing for a very long time and whether it changes or comes to fruition it is at least something that can be pointed to in the future to see what has to be done in order for residents to continue to drive on adequate roads and not experience unnecessary congestion.

Mayor Peterson expressed that the group needs to get the citizens to address the fact that roads need to be taken care of and suggested moving forward with these assumptions, start taking the heat and doing the work to sell it properly so that people realize it's necessary. Bette Arial mentioned that we shouldn't sell the public short because when difficult circumstances are explained citizens' support and vote for appropriate increases.

Scheduling

i. DTEC (February 18, 2015)

The next DTEC meeting is scheduled for February 18, 2015 and will continue to be held at the Washington County Administration Building.

ii. Transportation Expo (February 10, 2015)

Myron Lee explained that the Transportation Expo is coming up on February 10th and will be held at the Dixie Center from 10:00 AM until 5:00 PM. It is expected that 500 people will be in attendance. Mr. Lee invited all of the DTEC members to participate and bring a friend to the event. It will be a "show and tell" of all the current and upcoming road projects throughout the County. Public input is being sought at the Expo.

Ron Whitehead suggested that an education component be put together to display at the Expo to enlighten the public as to why funding is needed for transportation projects.

Mr. Sizemore suggested that the hours of the Expo be extended to include the working public being able to participate. There was discussion regarding whether or not that would be effective and whether or not people would be there during the extended hours. It was determined that regardless of a decrease in traffic flow after 5:00 PM it was still important to provide that opportunity for those that work.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PLAN

A. TIP Programming 2019

Myron Lee distributed a handout that outlined the following DTAC recommendation to program MPO funds:

- Project 8575: Old Hwy 91 Swiss Village Santa Clara to 200 East in Ivins; increase from \$2 million to \$2.4 million
- Exit 11 in Washington City; \$1.1 million
- Mall Drive Underpass; \$1.1 million

With the approval, these projects will be taken to the Transportation Commission for inclusion in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan.

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Naghi Zeenati to accept the proposed TIP Programming, Motion second by Mayor Bramall and carried by a unanimous vote

UDOT/FHWA BUSINESS

A. UDOT Update

i. (SR-9 from 300 West to 700 West, Hurricane) Dana Meier

Dana Meier with UDOT stated that a road maintenance project on SR-9 from 300 West to 700 West has been funded. Southern Parkway is still under construction and is projected to be complete by the end of 2015. A speed study was completed and it was determined that the speed limit is to be increased on parts of Southern Parkway from 45 MPH to 55 MPH. The divided highway portion will be raised from 60 to 70 MPH and the remaining undivided highway will be raised to 65 MPH.

It was recommended that deer crossing signs be placed along the highway as there have been several vehicle and deer collisions.

B. Federal Updates

None were presented

OTHER BUSINESS

It was mentioned that SunTran officially starts service to Ivins tomorrow.

NEXT MEETING

Next Scheduled DTEC meeting: February 18, 2015.

ADJOURN

Having no other business, Chairman Hart adjourned the meeting at 1:35 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Nicholle Felshaw