

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

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT

Chairman Chris Hart, Ivins Mayor
Alan Gardner, County Commission
Wayne Peterson, Leeds Mayor
Naghi Zeenati, Utah Transportation Commission, Region 4
Ken Sizemore, Santa Clara City Council
Jeff Turek, Washington City Council
Darren Cottam, Toquerville City Council

OTHERS PRESENT

Stan Smith, Springdale Mayor
Bruce Densley, Virgin Mayor
Cameron Cutler, St. George City
Kyle Gubler, LaVerkin City Administrator
Dana Meier, UDOT
Myron Lee, Dixie MPO
Dave Demas, Dixie MPO
Curt Hutchings, Five County AOG
Chuck Gillett, Ivins City
Steve Call, Federal Highway Administration
Ron Whitehead, Washington County
Susan Crook, Citizens of Dixie's Future

EXCUSED

Zachary Renstrom, County Commission
Bette Arial, St. George City Council, Senator Mile Lee's Office
Darrin LeFevre, Toquerville Mayor

CALL TO ORDER

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

BUSINESS

A. Approval of Minutes from August 19, 2015 Meeting

MOTION: Motion by Naghi Zeenati to Approve the Minutes from the August 19, 2015, DTEC meeting. Motion seconded by Ken Sizemore and carried by unanimous vote.

REPORTS / DISCUSSIONS

A. JPAC Report (September, October Meetings)

Ken Sizemore stated that the September JPAC meeting in Salt Lake City revolved around the preparations for getting Proposition 1 on the ballot. Seventeen (17) out of twenty-nine (29) counties resolved to include it on this year's ballot for the people to vote on.

Commissioner Alan Gardner commented on Proposition 1 and the reasoning behind Washington County electing not to put it on this year's ballot. He stated that Washington County communicated with individuals in northern Utah who performed surveys on the Wasatch Front and Washington County, relating to the increase. Feedback from the surveys showed Washington County failed with a fifty-three percent (53%) to forty-three percent (43%) vote and the remaining four percent (4%) undecided. With the high probability of failure to pass, Washington County was advised not to put Proposition 1 on the ballot this year.

Mr. Sizemore continued his report mentioning information was given at the JPAC meeting in regards to the increase in gas tax that will become effective January 1, 2016. This tax increase will be allocated to help with maintenance on Level 3 roads. The other area that will benefit from the additional tax revenue is the B&C Road Fund account, which is expected to increase by 30%.

Mr. Sizemore went on to say that the October meeting was held in Washington County and Mayor Hart was also in attendance. A tour of the transportation facilities in the region was conducted and positive feedback was given. There was also a discussion concerning the fact that a transportation bill has not been passed by Congress as of yet. As far as funding for transportation is concerned, continuing resolutions are taking place in lieu of a transportation bill. There was also a discussion on the "Drive Act" which is intended to be a six (6) year comprehensive bill to work back towards longer-term thinking. It is unclear at this point if it will make it through the congressional process since it has only made its way through the Senate but not the House.

B. At-risk Projects Presentation / Discussion

Curt Hutchings gave a presentation on at-risk projects which showed the bottleneck sections and the percentage that traffic will increase if those projects are not built. The at-risk projects, defined as those that have potential environmental issues, cost issues or grading issues are: Washington Parkway, 1450 S. Extension, Western Corridor, Man-O-War I-15 crossing and the 400 East I-15 crossing. Projections were based off of the way it currently stands to the year 2040.

Dana Meier stated that when determining projects, similar to a report card, the project is screened and must meet a level of service “d” or better by the year 2040 for the project to be built. In establishing the level of service it is important to determine, if the at-risk projects are built, what other areas will be affected positively or negatively and what happens to surrounding area traffic flow. The at-risk projects exercise was worked on specifically to determine the level of service and what alternatives there might be as well as understanding the capacity that those areas currently have.

Myron Lee stated that through a study that took place on the Northern Corridor, it was determined that 32,000 trips per day were projected for the Northern Corridor by the year 2040. Mr. Lee questioned where that traffic would go if the Northern Corridor is not built.

C. BLM Resource Management Plan Comments

Myron Lee stated that the Bureau of Land (BLM) approved a thirty (30) day extension for public comments on the Resource Management Plan (RMP) and the new deadline is November 15, 2015. In refining their comments, the MPO is working with the County to ensure that the comments are also in cohesion with the County. The BLM, in putting out the RMP, has not followed their own procedures, regulations and processes in several places. The goal is to have the BLM work more closely with the County on various issues. The MPO’s particular concern is the Northern Corridor that is needed as previously discussed. The MPO has emailed the draft comments to the governing body of DTEC, requesting the comments be reviewed. The MPO would like to receive any responses and recommendations so that they can make any adjustments necessary before submitting the final comments to the BLM.

Naghi Zeenati commented that at the BLM open house, it was disappointing to see that 80% of the individuals in attendance were BLM personnel and park service. Mr. Zeenati is concerned that the public is not getting the information and education to realize the impact that the Plan will have. Mayor Hart explained that it is an overwhelming 1100 page document that can be difficult for anyone to sift through although the cities and the County are doing their best to let the citizens know the consequences if the document is implemented. Commissioner Gardner stated that the County has worked diligently to circulate a large amount of information and from that, over 3200 comments have been received from the Washington County website. Commissioner Gardner stated that he has been on the radio discussing the RMP and there has also been good coverage from *The Spectrum*.

D. Local Option Sales Tax

Ron Whitehead led into this topic stating that along the same lines of educating the public on the BLM RMP, it is also important to do the same for the Local Option Sales Tax in order for the citizens to understand the benefit of Proposition 1. Mr. Whitehead mentioned that the commercials that are running on the Salt Lake channels explain Proposition 1 on a personal level, explaining how it will fix sidewalks, build new transportation trails, fix pot holes, etc.

Cameron Cutler spoke about the advantages of online information when explaining projects that the Local Option Sales Tax will affect rather than simply promoting in favor of the increase. He continued by saying that data information pertaining to the various budgets for cities could also be included, informing the public what the current funds will do in regards to transportation issues versus what could be accomplished with transportation if the new tax was approved and how vital it is in maintaining roads. It was also mentioned that it could be beneficial to show the history, in the form of maps, of where transportation stood years ago with less population, how transportation has progressed as population has grown and where we need to go in the future. Mayor Hart asked Myron Lee if the MPO could put together information that could be put online with factual data. Mr. Lee accepted the challenge and will work with Curt Hutchings on this project.

E. TIP Process

Myron Lee presented two handouts, the first being the TIP process and deadlines and the second being the 2016-21 Dixie MPO Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) spreadsheet.

Mr. Lee has asked that the Public Works Directors submit projects for potential funding programming by October 21, 2015. He then mentioned additional deadlines stating that on November 4, 2015 a packet will be distributed containing the applications. A tour of those projects will take place on November 18, 2015, and ratings and rankings of those projects will be due November 30, 2015. The Dixie Transportation Advisory Committee (DTAC) will then look at those applications on December 2, 2015 and from that will make recommendations to DTEC for TIP projects moving forward.

Mr. Lee continued by stating that the spreadsheet indicates \$2.4 million dollars available to be programmed towards projects in the year 2020 and clarified that the Federal portion of funding, that requires a seven percent (7%) match, is listed as a separate line item.

UDOT / FHWA BUSINESS UPDATES

A. UDOT Updates

Dana Meier stated that the Southern Parkway is progressing nicely. The project is scheduled to be completed and open to the public on January 4, 2016.

UDOT has been re-programming projects in order to get the cash flow right and hopes to be under construction next summer with the auxiliary lanes and the mall drive underpass, the summer of 2017 UDOT is planning on construction at mile post 4 and 5, widening the Virgin River bridges and extending the southbound on-ramp from Dixie Drive. The summer of 2018 will be the construction of the Bluff Street project. UDOT is hoping to go to the Commission in November to combine the Bluff Street project into one big project that would include the widening between the Boulevard and Sunset roads.

Naghi Zeenati reminded the group that the UDOT Commission will be meeting November 13, 2015 in Hurricane, Utah.

B. Federal Updates

Steve Call spoke concerning the "Drive Act" that Ken Sizemore previously mentioned and a few provisions that he felt was of interest. Due to Utah and UDOT showing good performance management and asset management, the Act names Utah, along with North Carolina and Tennessee, as a "Pilot State" to receive a Block Grant from the Department of Transportation wherein there would be no more "colors of money"; meaning a separation of money, such as the Surface Transportation Program (STP) and Highway Safety (HS), rather, one block of money given to Utah to decide how best to spend it. This will more than likely be a pilot program for the length of the highway bill to see how it works.

Mr. Call also discussed that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) passed new ozone standards and Washington County is right on the cusp of exceeding the new standards. The EPA determines where each County is at by a three (3) year rolling average and the EPA has specified the year 2017 to demonstrate conformity and attain by 2024.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ken Sizemore mentioned that Levi Roberts, who worked for Dixie MPO, took a job with UTA. The MPO is working on filling the vacant position.

NEXT MEETING

Next Scheduled DTEC meeting: November 18, 2015

ADJOURN

Having no other business, Chairman Hart adjourned the meeting at 1:26 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Nicholle Felshaw