

DIXIE TRANSPORTATION EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (DTEC)
MINUTES
June 20, 2018

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT

Zachary Renstrom, Washington County
Chris Hart, Ivins City Mayor
Jon Pike, St. George City Mayor
Wayne Peterson, Leeds Mayor
Rick Rosenberg, Santa Clara Mayor
Jimmy Hughes, St. George City
Jeff Turek, Washington City Council
John Bramall, Mayor Hurricane City
Richard Hirschi, LaVerkin Mayor
Naghi Zeenati, UDOT, Transportation Commission

OTHERS PRESENT

Rick Wixom, Springdale Town Manager
Terry Bell, Rockville Council
Arthur LeBaron, Hurricane City
Chuck Gillette, Ivins City
Troy Belliston, Washington City
Kelly Wilson, Washington City
Mike Shaw, Washington City
Rick Torgerson, UDOT, Region 4 Director
Myron Lee, Dixie MPO
Dave Demas, Dixie MPO
Curt Hutchings, Dixie MPO
Bryan Thiriot, Five County AOG
Victor Iverson, Washington County
Eric Clarke, Washington County
Ron Whitehead, Washington County
Fred Davies, Sun Tran
Adam Snow, Congressman Stewart's Office
Courtney Brinkerhoff, Senator Hatch's Office
Kyler Brower, Senator Mike Lee's Office
Zach Wade, St. George Shuttle
CJ Wade, St George Shuttle
Susan Crook, Conserve Southwest Utah
Kathy Pope, St. George Express

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chairman Chris Hart welcomed all in attendance and called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. It was determined that a quorum existed for voting on action items. He

offered congratulations to Naghi Zeenati on his election as Chairman of the Transportation Commission.

BUSINESS

a. Consideration of Minutes – May 16, 2018 Meeting

MOTION: Motion by Mayor Wayne Peterson to Approve the Minutes of May 16, 2018 DTEC Meeting. Motion Seconded by Mayor Richard Hirschi and Carried by a Unanimous Vote.

REPORTS / DISCUSSIONS

a. MPO Bylaws, Founding Agreement, and Governance

Chairman Chris Hart mentioned that copies of the MPO Bylaws and Founding Agreements were provided to council members via email for review prior to today's meeting. He explained that the Washington County Commission asked for this agenda item to address the feasibility of moving the Dixie Metropolitan Planning Organization (DMPO) out of the Five County Association of Governments to Washington County. He noted that there has been a long-standing relationship with The Five County AOG. Commissioner Victor Iverson and Commissioner Zachary Renstrom are in attendance to discuss and clarify their rationale.

Commissioner Victor Iverson briefly touched on the MPO Bylaws, Memorandum of Agreement when it was first established in 2002 and Amendment #1 to the Memorandum of Agreement that brought in the Eastern Washington County Rural Planning Organization as part of the Dixie MPO. He explained that all planning activities associated with the DMPO are within the boundaries of Washington County. The county is proposing that the administration of the DMPO be shifted to Washington County and that staff be housed at a county facility as well. The Washington County commissioners feel that this will provide better collaboration, communication, accountability and it would simplify government. This proposal will entail working with the Five County Association of Governments to address staff positions at the MPO that are intertwined with the AOG in areas such as mobility management, a portion of the executive director's salary, and other cost sharing of employees. Washington County proposed a study of moving the Dixie MPO and the Iron County RPO from the AOG to the respective counties where planning services are provided. It is anticipated that the study would take approximately one year for a complete analysis. At that point, the study results will be presented to the Five County AOG Finance Committee as well as the Five County AOG Steering Committee. Eric Clarke and the Washington County Auditor will work with Bryan Thiriout and staff at the AOG to look at details and ramifications of this type of action. Conclusions from the study will be brought back to DTEC for any formal action. Commissioner Iverson indicated that nothing will happen without deliberation and debate.

Mayor Rick Rosenberg asked what would happen to employees like Curt Hutchings and Dave Demas who also work with the Iron County RPO. Commissioner Iverson indicated that the study will also look at moving the ICRPO to Iron County for administration and housing. Mr. Jeff Turek asked what problems have brought about the need for change because he does not see communication as a problem or anything that needs to be fixed. Commissioner Iverson responded that he believes the move would improve the system, communication with staff, and there is more friction than what is seen. Mayor John Bramall echoed the comments of Mr. Turek and noted that things are working very well as the DMPO is currently structured and administered. His perception is that any problems or issues could be bigger should the DMPO be moved. Commissioner Iverson mentioned that transportation planning is centric to Washington County and the Five County Association of Governments administers a variety of programs other than transportation. He stated that the home of the DMPO does not belong with this organization, but it should be closer to the decision makers where better collaboration can occur. Mr. Myron Lee mentioned that the DTEC governs the Dixie MPO and the money that comes from federal, state and local funding sources. DTEC approves the annual budget and work plan for the Dixie MPO. The Five County AOG is the administrative host of the MPO for moving money and paying staff. Chairman Chris Hart questioned if there would be an economic benefit to Washington County or any type of savings to the DMPO. Commissioner Iverson stated that the request is based on the idea that this is worthy of evaluation of best practices with a study to determine if things could be more efficient and/or create a better communication system. There is no pre-decision involved, but the county commissioners would like to vet and evaluate any potential cost savings as well as efficiency. Mr. Bryan Thiriote indicated that this is something to study over the next year and information will be brought back to both the Five County AOG and DTEC. Financial implications to the AOG could be significant. One impact to Five County would be the loss of approximately \$35,000 in indirect costs paid by the DMPO for administration. There would also be decreased funds to the AOG from the loss of the Iron County RPO. Other impacts to staffing and sharing of employees would also have to be evaluated.

Mr. Jeff Turek asked how much the study would cost the DMPO to learn if there is a need to shift things because that would be money that could be allocated to transportation projects. He also noted that there is a lot of expertise from MPO staff that is beneficial moving forward. Commissioner Iverson indicated that the study will be done in-house by county staff in conjunction with the AOG at no cost to the MPO. Commissioner Zachary Renstrom mentioned that Washington County is also involved in the provision of services with Southwest Behavioral Health and Southwest Public Health, and they are also asking the same type of questions of these organizations to determine the best direction moving forward. Mayor Jon Pike explained that St. George City continually evaluates departments in terms of efficiency and potential modifications. There is no upfront cost and it is always good to examine operations. He noted that the resolution would need to be presented to the Five County AOG Steering Committee during their August 8, 2018 meeting for consideration.

b. Public / Private Transit Options

Mr. Zachary Wade and CJ Wade, St. George Shuttle, provided a presentation to the group for operation of a shuttle system from St. George to Zion National Park. It was noted that Hot Spot Funding must meet three criteria: 1) tourism, 2) economic development and 3) improve congestion. Daily runs to Zion NP were outlined for various intervals of daily service from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. The presentation included the number of buses required, number of miles per vehicle, number of daily runs and cost to be collected per person. Capital costs vary depending on the number of daily runs. Supply and demand will be a determining factor as to the number of buses to be operated. It was noted that the cost needs to be affordable when transporting people to and from work in Springdale. It is intended that vehicles are comfortable, have free WiFi, and have TVs. Information outlined how it would improve congestion, tourism and economic development. State appropriations would be needed to cover capital costs and operating costs initially and through year two of operation. This would be a for profit venture for St. George Shuttle.

Mr. Rick Torgerson suggested that a working group be established to look at all issues including what would be public, private or other options, and to assist UDOT in drafting an RFP. The RFP should consider public/private options to look at what is possible, study where stops need to be placed, etc. UDOT will be responsible to identify a certain level of performance that also includes maintenance of vehicles. UDOT will also develop rules for a public/private partnership as well as policies and procedures. In the meantime, a subgroup could look at the scope and develop a draft RFP to bring back to DTEC for discussion. It was noted that SunTran could also respond to an RFP to consider expansion of their service. Mr. Torgerson reported that a hybrid option may include a piece for SunTran to expand into Washington, Hurricane, and LaVerkin cities. Hot Spot funds provide \$15 million from UDOT for ten years.

It was the consensus of the Council to establish a small subcommittee to work with UDOT in this endeavor. Members agreed that Fred Davies and Eric Clarke should participate. Washington County, St. George City, Washington City, and Hurricane City need to provide names of their representative to Chairman Hart or Myron Lee. Kayde Roberts, UDOT project manager, will reach out to representatives selected by respective cities to establish a meeting location and schedule.

c. Discussion of Transportation Sales Tax Options

Mr. Lee provided a spreadsheet outlining combined sales and use tax rates for the Washington County and cities within the county. He explained percentages that could be collected by the county and/or cities under the various options provided in legislation passed through the Utah State Legislature. A review of assumptions is part of the long range planning process that includes understanding sales tax options for roads over the next 20-30 years. The spreadsheet is color coded outlining city and county options and city options if the county declines. He

explained what portions of these options are available for mass transit and deadlines for adopting sales tax options. If Washington County does not adopt a sales tax option by 2019, then the opportunity for cities to adopt sales tax options is in place until 2022. There is discussion among lawmakers whether these options can be brought forth as voter referendums after 2022. All types of taxes are listed at the top of the sheet. Mayor Jon Pike noted that it will be interesting to see what Washington County does with adopting sales tax options because it does have ramifications on transit. This is one of the things that St. George City is grappling with currently. Other council members indicated that county action and/or inaction is important for their cities as well. Mr. Rick Torgerson suggested that the four quarter sales tax options be included in the blank area at the top right-hand side of the spreadsheet. It was noted that Santa Clara City collects a \$2.00 per household per month fee to fund transportation. The spreadsheet does not include the vehicle registration fee charge in Washington County that goes into the corridor preservation fund. Mr. Lee mentioned that the Long-Range Transportation is fiscally constrained in dollars forecasted to be collected into the future.

UDOT/FHWA UPDATES

a. UDOT Updates – Rick Torgerson

Chairman Chris Hart asked about sound walls on I-15 between the Bluff Street and St. George Boulevard exits. Citizens had contacted Washington County regarding this matter. Mr. Rick Torgerson indicated that this would be addressed when I-15 is widened between exit 6 and exit 8. UDOT is required to conduct a noise study to determine if walls are appropriate and citizens will be involved in this process. Mr. Torgerson announced the Naghi Zeenati was appointed by Governor Herbert to serve as the Chair of the State Transportation Commission.

Mr. Torgerson provided an update on the following UDOT projects: **1) Bluff Street--** Project is 50% complete. Traffic should be shifted to the west side lanes in the next few weeks to allow work on the east side lanes; **2) I-15 Passing Lanes from Leeds to Toquerville Exit—**Lanes are about 50% complete; **3) SR-9 Hurricane--** A micro seal will be applied in August; **4) Passing lanes between Virgin and Rockville—**Construction is scheduled to begin in August; **5) Northern Corridor--** A consultant has been hired that will be meeting with the Bureau of Land Management in July; and **6) Exit 11 EIS Process--** Citizen meeting to present six alternatives was held. The draft EIS is anticipated to be released in September.

b. Federal Updates

Ms. Courtney Brinkerhoff, Senator Hatch's Office, reported that Senator Hatch was very happy to see a conclusion to Josh Holt being held in jail in Venezuela. She directed those in attendance to the Senator's website for additional information.

Adam Snow, Representative Stewart's Office, mentioned that he would provide a brief update to members via email.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

DTEC meeting: August 15, 2018 at 12:00 p.m.

ADJOURN

Having no other business, Chairman Hart adjourned the meeting at 1:40 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Diane Lamoreaux