



## Approved Meeting Minutes

April 25, 2013

Cottage Grove City Hall

4:00 p.m.

Commission Members	Agency	Present
Autumn Lehrke, Chair	Washington County RRA	X
Mike Slavik	Dakota County RRA	X
Janice Rettman	Ramsey County RRA	X
Linda Higgins	Hennepin County RRA	X
Barb Hollenbeck	City of Hastings	
Jen Peterson, Vice-Chair	City of Cottage Grove	X
Keith Franke	City of St. Paul Park	
Steve Gallagher	City of Newport	
Jim Keller	Denmark Township	X
Cam Gordon	City of Minneapolis	
Amy Brendmoen	City of St. Paul	X

Ex-Officio Members	Agency	
Bob Kastner	City of Red Wing	
Marc Mogan	Prairie Island Indian Community	X
Ken Bjornstad	Goodhue County	X

Staff	Agency	Present
Andy Gitzlaff	Washington County RRA	X
Lyssa Leitner	Washington County RRA	X
Josh Olson	Ramsey County RRA	X
Joe Morneau	Dakota County RRA	
Adele Hall	Hennepin County RRA	

Others Present	Agency
Jay Demma	Stantec Consulting
Jay Owens	City of Red Wing
Emily Buss	South Washington County Bulletin
Katie White	Met Council
John M Burbank	City of Cottage Grove

The meeting was video recorded and can be viewed online at:  
[http://swctc.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view\\_id=2&clip\\_id=4301](http://swctc.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=2&clip_id=4301)

Chair Lehrke called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.

**Agenda Item #1: Introductions**

Introductions were made by those present.

**Agenda Item #2: Consent Items**

- a. Checks and Claims
- b. Minutes of the February 28, 2013 Meeting

Motion made by Higgins to approve the February 28, 2013 meeting minutes and checks and claims. Seconded by Slavik. **All in favor.** Motion carried.

**Agenda Item #3: Support TH61/CR19 Improvements**

Gitzlaff distributed a map showing the rebuilt interchange at TH 61/CSAH 19. Gitzlaff explained the background of the project as outlined in the packet. This project has been on the City of Cottage Grove's priority list for a long time. Gitzlaff stated that support is being requested and not a financial commitment from the Commission. This funding would provide for the first part of the interchange and intersection to be built. Support of this improvement will help to further the growth of the corridor and strengthen the possibility for development and redevelopment along the corridor.

Peterson stated this major piece of infrastructure has needed improvements for quite some time especially with the recent development of the east ravine area of Cottage Grove beginning in the area of the former drive-in site. The improvement would greatly benefit the community of Cottage Grove.

Rettman expressed her concern that adding items or information to the agenda without time for review causes a lack of accountability with the Commissioners votes. Rettman cited that the letter says the Red Rock Corridor had taken a stance supporting the improvement and would like to know when this was. Gitzlaff stated 2008. Rettman suggested the letter should be clear showing the Red Rock Corridor has supported the improvement since 2008.

Lehrke stated it is a great idea that we show past history of the support for the improvement by the Red Rock Corridor in the letter.

Rettman asked if there are any trails involved in this project and if the road to 3M is not going to be affected by this improvement. Peterson stated she believes there is a bike trail in the area along 100<sup>th</sup> street which is part of the Mississippi River Trail and is not sure if the trail is included in the interchange. The access to 3M is their main access point and 3M was involved with the discussion about the improvement.

Rettman asked for clarification on how much money is being asked for in phase one. Gitzlaff stated that 7 million is being asked for. Rettman asked what the maximum amount the Red Rock Corridor would support for this improvement. Gitzlaff stated Cottage Grove has taken the leadership role in this project and Washington County has only taken a supporting role so he is not sure what that amount is, but can get this

information for the Commission if needed. Rettman asked Peterson if there are other supporting dollars to go with this or if this is just the beginning. Peterson stated it is just getting started.

Higgins asked if the Transportation Economic Development Program is from the Met Council. Gitzlaff stated it is the Department of Transportation. Higgins asked if the letter of support should be addressed to the Department of Transportation. Lehrke stated the request came from the City of Cottage Grove asking for the letter of support to be addressed to the City Administrator Ryan Schroeder.

Motion made by Peterson to approve the letter of support for the Cottage Grove grant application for TH 61/CSAH 19 interchange improvements and adding a reference to the past letter of support. Seconded by Keller. **All in favor.** Motion carried.

#### **Agenda Item #4: AAU Update**

##### **a) Outreach Summary**

Leitner discussed the Alternatives Analysis Update including the report as presented in the packet. Leitner introduced Jay Demma from Stantec Consulting as the new Project Manager.

Rettman asked how many participants were there in-person and online and if any people were asked at the Park N' Rides as they are the captive audience. Leitner stated flyers were up at all the Park N' Rides with information about the public meetings, Facebook, website and the public survey. Each person was not given a flyer, but this has been done in the past. Leitner stated that they may be able to give flyers out to individuals in the future with permission from Metro Transit. Leitner stated that multiple places were asked to get the information to the public as it is a continual effort to get more people engaged including the right audience. Of the 90 people that clicked on the survey, only 30 finished it. Leitner stated the open house did not have a good showing and maybe in the future there could be more time spent on figuring out different ways to get the word out to the public for these open houses. The Red Wing listening session had eight individuals and the Hastings Chamber had 10 individuals attend. Leitner stated the information gathered is not a straight data point that went into the Problem Statement, but it did show that people said they want to look at available service throughout the day. In 2007, the Problem Statement listed was to find a solution for peak hours only. Leitner stated in the future they will be able to go out to the public with actual concrete data analysis.

Rettman stated she wanted to make sure the ridership at the Park N' Rides and businesses that want to go back and forth between the cities should be pursued regardless of the Alternatives Analysis. Rettman wants to make sure the mode of transportation is consistently available and not just based on 70 people, but more inclusive. Leitner stated the information provided today is to get feedback from the Commission and then in a future meeting get final approval from the Commission.

Rettman asked if Transit Oriented Development is included. Leitner stated that the Economic Development Goal can be changed to include that verbage.

### **b) Goals and Objectives**

Demma gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Problem Statement, Goals and Objectives.

Peterson asked what the length of time was for the online survey. Leitner stated it was about one month. Gitzlaff stated the survey was reopened for the Newport Planning Commission as well as the Hastings Chamber. Peterson asked if it was only open to those groups or the public in those communities as well. Gitzlaff stated it was previously open for the community and then at a separate time for the Newport Planning Commission and Hastings Chamber. Peterson stated she was not thrilled with the amount of people that took the online survey and why some of the answers are being looked at for people that took the survey who do not live in the area affected by the Corridor. Peterson stated she does not want the information from those surveys to skew the results from the people that live and/or work in the Corridor that took the survey.

Peterson stated she feels the survey should have been promoted and implemented through the Facebook page once the page had more strength behind it. Peterson would also encourage the communities to link information to the Red Rock website. Peterson stated she is unhappy with the lack of amount of material received so far.

Lehrke asked what kind of response rates came from the 2007 study efforts. Gitzlaff stated the response rates are typically around 20% unless you are going to physically go out and ask people questions or offer them a gift or prize for their responses. Gitzlaff stated flyers were previously handed out for an open house and focus group session which could be done again to get more answers from the public.

Olson stated it is a challenge to get the outreach numbers they anticipate. The process starts out slow until people understand the project is going forth. The Robert Street Corridor numbers were low for the first meeting, but have since quadrupled. Once the word gets out and the communication methods are refined, the outreach numbers should get better. Olson stated he agrees with Peterson about not skewing the results with people from outside the Corridor taking the survey, but transit is not restricted to a particular corridor and people have a vested interest that also live outside of the Corridor.

Rettman stated this is also an opportunity to increase the ridership with the support of the people that are going to use it, but also build it up at the same time. As an example with Amtrak in terms of ridership from where it was to where it is now, something major happened with the affordability issue and on-time ability. Rettman stated that you should be able to go on the buses with a bus card to hand out surveys. Leitner stated that Metro Transit wants to know what information is being handed out ahead of time. Rettman asked if there is opportunity to reopen the survey now that Facebook is up and running for longer. Leitner stated the survey can be reopened at any time. Leitner asked

the Commissioners to have any other organizations link the Facebook page to their pages, as it would be easier to get the information out to the public.

Rettman asked for clarification of the funding of capital costs not dependent on other transportation projects. Demma stated at one time the high speed rail project through the Corridor might be able to provide some of the capital costs to do another more regional commuter based transit line in the Corridor. The idea is “can something be cost effective on its own and not be dependent on another transit project.” Rettman stated not acknowledging High Speed Rail in the river corridor is going to impact the corridor as it is the federally designated route. Leitner stated the PMT’s concern was to find a solution that was not dependent on something the Commission had no control over. Slavik stated he does understand the concern, but would continue to support the current goal as it is to be most cost effective. Leitner stated they can also have the stand alone cost and what the cost could be if High Speed Rail does come in.

Higgins asked in goal #2 what “create a transit service with capital costs that are commensurate with the level of service provided” means. Higgins asked if it should be reworded to seem more logical. Leitner stated it may need to be reworded and it means how much it costs per service hour and long term what the capital costs are.

Rettman asked if it would be good to add the Transit Oriented Development statement in order to leverage some money in terms of transit oriented types of things to goal #3 of Increasing Opportunities for Community and Economic Development Throughout the Corridor as it needs to be clearly articulated if other dollars are available.

Demma stated goal #3 is where the Transit Oriented Development could be added under the idea of supporting local land use initiatives where communities may want to do more dense development around station areas. Lehrke stated the Economic Development is a huge selling point for transit investments.

Demma stated they are open to additional feedback over the next few weeks and will come back to the next meeting with a revision for review and maybe approval from the Commission.

### **c) Review of Previous Work**

Demma stated they will be taking revisions and feedback on the Technical Memorandum as presented in the packet as they move throughout the process at any time. Leitner stated this is a working document throughout the entire project and were not expecting feedback at this meeting, but the technical team will work off of this as their starting point going forward. All of the PMT and staff have provided their feedback and it is based off of staff representatives from the communities. Higgins asked if this document should be brought back monthly. Leitner stated this is a good document to look at and is interesting to see some of the data points that do exist. The expectation is not for the Commissioners to look through it line by line unless they would like to.

Peterson asked what the midday bus service was like in Cottage Grove when they had it. Leitner check with Metro Transit.

Peterson asked if there is an idea of where the 15 people on the Citizens Advisory Committee are from. Leitner stated that only one community was not present as that person could not make it. There is at least one representative from each community along the Corridor on the CAC.

#### **Agenda Item #5: Legislative Update**

##### **a) State**

Olson stated there is a significant debate on the transportation side of the bill; differences on both sides. He stated they will just have to see what happens with the transit sales tax that was proposed. Within the Senate bill, a provision was included to allow the seven metro county regional railroad authorities to do BRT. Dakota County currently has this exemption for Cedar Avenue. This would allow the other counties to work on BRT projects.

##### **b) Federal**

Olson stated that on the Federal side, the conversation related to transportation is in the background. The President unveiled his budget which included 77 billion dollars in transportation funding which is an increase from previous years. This did include a significant amount towards rail funding including High Speed Rail across the country as well as rail that exists today. There is a comprehensive document included in the packet.

#### **Agenda Item #6: Communication Update**

Gitzlaff discussed the Facebook and website communication update as presented in the packet. Peterson stated the website includes a year old agenda as the most recent information and would like the most recent packets to be included instead of just the agenda. Peterson feels that in order to get more traffic to the Facebook page and website, the Commissioners should include the information in their own personal or professional network and also include it in their e-mail signatures. The cities and counties should also have the information available. Gitzlaff stated they will get the current agenda packets and minutes available on the site in a timelier manner. Higgins stated there seems to be two Red Rock Corridor Facebook pages. Lehrke would like staff to look into this. Lehrke stated it would be hard for her to include the information on her e-mail signature as she serves on over 25 committees, but does feel it is a great suggestion.

#### **Agenda Item #7: Other**

##### **a) Next scheduled meeting is Thursday, May 30<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m.**

#### **Agenda Item #8: Adjourn**

Motion made by Keller to adjourn. Seconded by Rettman. **All in favor.** Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.