

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

MONROE COUNTY FEDERAL AID COMMITTEE

DATE & TIME: December 20, 2023, 10:00 a.m.

PLACE: Monroe County Road Commission
840 S. Telegraph Rd.
Monroe, MI 48161

MEMBERS PRESENT: Matthew Snell, Monroe County Road Commission, Chairman; Patrick Lewis, City of Monroe, Vice-Chairman; Florence Buchanan, Monroe County Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Panel; Mark Jagodzinski, Lake Erie Transit; Jeff McBee, Monroe County Community Planning & Engagement; Paul Pirrone, Bedford Township; Al VanWashenova, Frenchtown Charter Township; Michelle Zawerucha, MDOT

MEMBERS ABSENT: Townships Association Representative

OTHERS PRESENT: Greg Baker, Ash Township; Steve Brudzinski, SEMCOG; Florence Buchanan, Monroe County Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Panel; Lance Dasher, TMACOG; James Gardner, City of Luna Pier; Mike Grodi, Erie Township; J.T. Hensley, Lake Erie Transit; Krista Jandasek, Bedford Township; Jacob Labo, City of Monroe; Dave Leach, Monroe County Road Commission; Ryan Lewis, citizen; Ally Racisz, SEMCOG; Dave Reaume, Berlin Charter Township; Chris Schaffer, City of Monroe; Ryan Simmons, Monroe County Community Planning & Engagement; Michael Smith, MCRC; Jack Thayer, MCRC

1. The meeting for the Monroe County Federal Aid Committee was called to order by Chairman Snell at 1:01 p.m.

Chairman Snell asked the people present at today's meeting to introduce themselves.

Chairman Snell listed the voting members of the Committee. Vice-Chairman Lewis asked if the representative to this Committee from the Townships Association has been voted on. Mr. Pirrone and Mr. VanWashenova stated that they did not recall a member being voted on by the Townships Association.

2. Approve Minutes of January 13, 2023 Meeting – Chairman Snell asked for a motion to approve the Minutes.

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Motion by Mr. Pirrone, supported by Mr. Van Washenova, to approve the minutes of the January 13, 2023 Monroe County Federal Aid Committee meeting.

MOTION CARRIED

3. Public Comment – No members of the public wished to make a comment.
4. Old Business – There was no old business conducted.
5. New Business:
 - A. Review of 2024-2026 Funding Targets – Chairman Snell stated that these targets were sent to him by Mr. Brudzinski of SEMCOG last week. Ms. Buchanan asked Chairman Snell to go over what each category of funds is used for. Chairman Snell proceeded to do this for each category of funds.

Chairman Snell also presented the adjusted census urban boundary map for Monroe County. He stated that the next version of the map will include Dundee as a small urban area in the County, as well. Vice-Chairman Lewis asked for clarification on whether funds could be transferred from one urban area to another if necessary. Chairman Snell stated that it is permitted to do this. Vice-Chairman Lewis asked if all that was needed was for urban money to be spent in the urban areas and rural money to be spent in the rural areas. Chairman Snell stated that this is correct. Mr. Brudzinski further clarified the rules regarding how this money is distributed and how it can be used.

- B. Review of projects competed in 2023 – Chairman Snell went through the list of projects that were completed by the Road Commission in 2023. Vice-Chairman Lewis said that the City of Monroe's project for 2023 is not completed yet, but the money was successfully obligated.
 - C. Review of projects planned for 2024 – Chairman Snell went through the list of projects that are planned by the Road Commission for 2024. Vice-Chairman Lewis mentioned the City of Monroe's two microsurfacing projects planned for 2024.

Vice-Chairman Lewis asked if Chairman Snell's carryover projects were using 2023 money or 2024 money. Chairman Snell stated that they used 2023 money.

- D. Development of the 2023-2026 TIP including 2024 and 2025 projects – Chairman Snell went through the list 2024 and 2025 projects proposed by the Road Commission for the 2023-2026 TIP.

Vice-Chairman Lewis asked if the projects using 2024 and 2025 money were advanced construct projects that would be completed in 2024. Chairman Snell stated that the projects will start in 2024, but that he anticipated that most of the work will be completed in 2025.

Mr. Reaume asked if the Lewis Avenue project is using Detroit Urban Area funds. Chairman Snell stated that it is and explained that the urban money could be shifted to other urban areas if necessary. Vice-Chairman Lewis mentioned that the Brandon Road project was using some Monroe Urban Area money.

Ms. Buchanan asked what is the process for local municipalities to have money spent in their communities, since not all of the County's communities are currently on the list of projects. Chairman Snell explained that the road projects are derived from the Commission's 5-Year Road

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Plan and that they select which project and area to spend the appropriate money on based upon this Plan. He stated that they try to generate projects which will benefit each township every year. He said that every year there may not be an equal number of projects for each community, but that over a five-year period that the number of projects for each community will balance out.

Vice-Chairman Lewis explained that the City of Monroe is using advanced construct, so they will be doing a major resurfacing project in 2025 and also using some 2026 money. He also said that they will be using some flex funding that is coming from the Road Commission for this project. He said that there will probably be a bicycle lane when this project is completed and restriped, and that it will probably be a two-way lane, as there is not the space for lanes on both sides. He said that there will also be bicycle lanes on each sides for a portion of the Macomb Street project.

Ms. Buchanan asked if 2024 or 2025 projects could potentially be amended. Chairman Snell stated that 2024 projects are now too far into the system, but that amending 2025 projects could be considered, but that it depends upon the project and the timing of it.

Mr. Gardner discussed the issue of Summit Street near the border with Toledo and how it is marked for bicycles on the Ohio side but not on the Michigan side. Chairman Snell stated that the Road Commission has done work on Summit Street but that the funding for bicycle striping was not available at the time, but that if a funding source presented itself then it is something that the Road Commission could look at. Mr. Gardner asked if any of the funding is shared with Erie Township. Chairman Snell stated that Summit Street is a primary road so the Road Commission would be in charge of funding road and bridge projects for it, but anything additional, such as bike lane pavement markings, would need to be funded separately.

Ms. Buchanan asked what might be potential funding sources for this project. Chairman Snell stated that either Erie Township might volunteer to help with the project, or some grants might be used to fund the project, such as using a TAP grant. Ms. Buchanan stated that she believes it is important to continue to have these conversations at the Committee level about how to improve non-motorized transportation in the County, and that we should begin to adopt more of a complete street philosophy due to how many people are now riding their bicycles in the County. She said that there were many compliments at the bicycle ride this fall regarding the high quality of the County's road system. Mr. Pirrone stated that he believes that discussion about complete streets should be addressed with our state representatives. Mr. Leach thanked Ms. Buchanan for her compliments regarding the condition of the road system and mentioned that there are limited funds available to keep the system in a good condition, and that many projects funded by the Road Commission provide improvements for non-motorized users.

Vice-Chairman Lewis stated that, from the City's perspective, there are some places where a non-motorized facility is appropriate and some where it is not feasible, as every project is different. He stated that it's easier to do small projects like microsurfacing projects with federal road money due to the federal regulations regarding these funds, while for non-motorized facilities, dedicated grants like TAP grants or funding through the local government might be better options. He mentioned that this process of whether non-motorized facilities are appropriate was considered for the planning of the LaPlaisance Road project. Mr. Pirrone mentioned the idea of doing this for the Sterns Road project, but that it has been difficult and potentially costly. Ms. Buchanan stated that the most important thing is that we at least have these conversations about the feasibility of non-motorized facilities for these projects. Vice-Chairman Lewis stated that looking at projects two to three years down the road is the best way to do this, but that the challenge is providing for non-

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motorized transportation while keeping the roads in good shape with the limited amount of money that is available. Mr. VanWashenova stated that there are a lot of roads that we are now having to play catch up on, and that we cannot fix everything immediately. Mr. Gardner stated that there are some roads that are more conducive to non-motorized transportation than others, and that we should be looking at those and the idea of providing bicycle routes in the County.

Chairman Snell asked for a motion to approve the 2024 and 2025 project lists as presented by the Monroe County Road Commission and the City of Monroe to include in the 2023-2026 TIP.

Motion by Mr. Jagodzinski, supported by Mr. Pirrone to approve the 2024 and 2025 project lists and to include them in the 2023-2026 TIP

Chairman Snell asked for a roll call vote. (Yes Votes: Buchanan, Jagodzinski, Lewis, McBee, Pirrone, Snell, VanWashenova, Zawerucha; No Votes: None)

MOTION CARRIED

6. Committee Member Items:

- A. Updates from SEMCOG – Mr. Brudzinski explained to the Committee why the new transportation funding targets changed. He stated that he is going through now which things need to be increased and which need to be decreased as a result of these changes, and that he is hoping to have this done by shortly after Christmas.

Mr. Brudzinski explained the function of the Regional Transportation Plan and stated that there will be a draft ready for public comment in March or April of 2024 for the 2050 Plan, and that this will need to be approved by June of the same year.

Mr. Brudzinski explained that preparing a new Transportation Improvement Plan will need to be started in fall of 2024 and approved by July of 2025.

- B. Updates from MDOT – Ms. Zawerucha went over the MDOT staff that have relocated. She also detailed MDOT's current funding for transportation projects in its transportation programs.
- C. Updates from other Committee Members – Vice-Chairman Lewis mentioned the updating of its street lights to LED lights as part of the federal carbon reduction program. He said that this project is already on the TIP and that it does not need to be approved by the Committee.

Ms. Buchanan brought up the Luna Pier bridge and that, when it is completed, the bridge will have a 12-foot wide shared use path, which will be the first one in Monroe County.

Vice-Chairman Lewis mentioned the federal infrastructure grant that will be used to construct the West Elm Street underpass. He stated that it will likely be built in 2027 and will include substantial non-motorized connections. He stated that he does not believe that it needs to be added to the TIP, as this grant is part of a special program and that the City of Monroe is the only municipality in the state to receive this particular grant. Mr. Brudzinski stated that if there is federal money involved, then it will need to be in the TIP eventually, but that he does not think that it will be a big deal to add it. Vice-Chairman Lewis stated that he will be in contact with Mr. Brudzinski to discuss the details of the grant. He stated that the City will need to come up with approximately \$6 million in local match for this grant.

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7. Next Meeting Date: Chairman Snell stated that the Committee will meet again sometime in 2024.
8. Adjournment: Chairman Snell called for the meeting to be adjourned at 1:55 p.m.

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