

CA-MPO Joint Policy Board with SAWMPO

Minutes, September 27, 2023

DRAFT

An audio recording of the meeting can be found here:

<https://soundcloud.com/tjpd/mpo-policy-board-2023-09-27>

SAW-MPO	CA-MPO	Guests/Speakers
Phil Thompson	Brian Pinkston	Jessican Hersh-Ballering
Adam Campbell	Christine Jacobs	Alberic Karina-Plun
Don Komara	Sandy Shackelford	Allie Hill
Leslie Beauregard	Darrell Byers	Ben Chambers
Todd Stevens	Ann Mallek	Peter Krebs
Todd Ward	Lloyd Snook	Leslie Tate
Tim Fitzgerald	Ned Gallaway	Scott Keesecker
Amanda Kaufman	Sean Nelson	Todd Wood
Jim Wood	Ted Reick	Jason Espie
Brad Arrowwood	Tiffany Dubinsky	Darrell Byers
Ann Cundy	Stacy Londry	Shane McCabe
Bonnie Riedesel	Julia Monteith	Adam Campbell
Carolyn Bragg	Gretchen Thomas	David Wagner
Allyson Finchum	Lucinda Shannon	Zach Trogdon
Steve Wilson	Ryan Mickles	Devon Thompson
Zach Beard	Curtis Scarpignato	Dwayne Jones
Paula Melester	Michael Barnes	Amanda Kaufman
		Leslie Beauregard
		Alisane Tombarge
		Michael Stumbaugh
		Don Komara
		Cady Huffman
		Scott Silsdorf
		Matt Dana

1. Call to Order

Carolyn Bragg called the SAWMPO meeting to order at 10:00.

Brian Pinkston called the CA-MPO meeting to order at 10:01.

The Fishburne Color Guard presented colors and the group recited the pledge of allegiance.

2. Welcome to Fishburne

Col. Randall Brown introduced himself and presented information and background about Fishburne Military School and the students who are enrolled.

3. Opening Remarks and Introductions

Brian Pinkston asked attendees to introduce themselves.

Carolyn Bragg introduced Zach Trogdon and Darrell Byers and Mr. Byers spoke briefly about SMART SCALE.

4. Reaffirmation of MPO Joint Planning Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Bonnie Riedesel introduced herself and thanked everyone for coming. She noted that SAWMPO and CA-MPO are the only two MPOs in the state that meet on a regular basis. She named several of the projects the two MPOs have worked on together in the past and those that are ongoing. She recognized and thanked her staff.

Christine Jacobs thanked Ms. Riedesel for hosting and planning the meeting. She recognized and thanked her staff. She explained the current MOU.

Motion/Action: SAWMPO's Tim Fitzgerald made a motion to reaffirm the MPO joint planning MOU. Brad Arrowwood seconded the motion. CA-MPO's Ann Mallek made a motion to reaffirm the MPO joint planning MOU. Ned Gallaway seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously by both MPOs.

The MOU was then signed by both Executive Directors and both Chairs of the MPOs.

5. Presentations

Afton Express Launch and Expansion (Click [here](#) for full presentation)

Paula Melester, Regional Planner CSPDC presented the committee with information on Afton Express's background, fares, and types of passengers who use the service. She explained how the DRPT grant helped to start the service and improve its viability. She noted that there has been an expansion because of the success of the service so far. She said their new bus allows for two new routes. She noted there has been strong and persistent growth of the service. She explained what Afton Express is working on and what is next for them. She noted that the Wilson Workforce has been using Brite Bus for a long while, and now they will be able to use Afton Express to get to and from Charlottesville. There will be APCs (automatic passenger counters) installed on the buses, which is an upgrade from the paper and pencil now used. There will be a new parking lot in 2025 at Staunton Crossing and not Staunton Mall. There are plans to stop at the planned Crozet Park & Ride near exit 107 as well.

Kendall Howell, Assistant Director of Transportation at UVA, provided comments on how the service has been received by employees at UVA. He noted that currently, there are 6-7 riders daily using the Afton Express to get to UVA's central Grounds, and another 16 to get to UVA Health (the hospital). He said he thinks they can double the ridership. He also said UVA will help to do everything they can to support the Afton Express because they are actively running out of parking.

Crozet Blue Ridge Tunnel (Click [here](#) for full presentation)

Dwayne Jones, Director of Parks & Recreation for the City of Waynesboro and President of the Blue Ridge Runnel Foundation, presented the committee with an update on the Blue Ridge Tunnel and how they are forging the Crozet Tunnel Greenway.

He gave a history of the tunnel and its current state. He noted that there have been 257,000 visitors to the tunnel since opening in November 2020 and that there were over 60K visitors in the month of

November 2020 alone.

He noted there is a non-profit associated with the tunnel: www.BlueRidgeTunnel.org

He said the cracks in the portal stone prompted them to be removed and plans were made to install them at VMI. Those stones have not yet been installed, so now the plan is to place those stones back at the tunnel at the West Entrance on display. There will be a fundraiser to get this project underway and completed.

Mr. Jones noted that the trail is an economic boom for the area. There is a plan for the Rockfish Gateway Trail to extend the tunnel trail. He noted the City of Waynesboro is building Sunset Park at the top of the trail. They are also creating mountain biking trails to connect to Sunset Park.

He continued by describing the Jones Hollow State Park FY24 Forest Legacy Project to keep out development. He said there is interest in bringing a state park to the edge of Jones Hollow State Park. The final price has not been settled upon as of this date. They are still interested in pursuing it and he believes it will eventually happen.

There was a question-and-answer period at the end of the presentation.

Three Notched Trail (Click [here](#) for full presentation)

Jessica Hersh-Ballering, Principal Transportation Planner for Albemarle County, and Allie Hill, Chair of the Three Notched Trail Planning Group, presented the committee with the background and current state of the Albemarle County RAISE grant that has funded the Three Notched Shared Use Path Master Plan.

Ms. Hersh-Ballering shared the master plan scope of work, project background and benefits, the timeline for the project and next steps.

She noted they have built in several ways to get community buy-in to get a preferred alignment of the trail. Once the County has that information, County staff will develop an implementation plan for the trail.

She handed off the presentation to Allie Hill. Ms. Hill gave a project background and timeline for the work that has been completed and planned to get this project off the ground.

Ms. Hersh-Ballering noted that there has been long-held local and regional interest in the project. She noted that it meets both transportation and recreational needs. This trail will build connections to other successful projects throughout Virginia.

Ms. Hersh-Ballering continued by presenting the project benefits, including reducing greenhouse gas emissions, significant economic impacts, and equity issues.

She noted that the County is looking to get a signed grant agreement from FHWA in October 2023. Once the agreement has been signed, the County can begin spending the money that was awarded.

She continued by laying out the timeline for the project.

Allie Hill presented the potential connectivity of the trail to other trails throughout the state. The dream is to connect this trail to the Virginia Capital Trail.

There was a question-and-answer period at the end of the presentation.

6. State Agency Remarks (Click [here](#) for full presentation)

VDOT – Culpeper District

Sean Nelson, District Engineer for VDOT Culpeper, presented the committee with an overview of the projects the SAWMPO and CA-MPO worked on together, including an update on the Strategic Highway Research Program (SHRP) Study.

He also gave an update on the I-64/US 250 diverging diamond interchange at Exit 124 off I-64. He noted it has been significantly upgraded and is a success.

Mr. Nelson gave an update on I-64 Exit 107 Park & Ride lot in Crozet. They are hoping to get it under construction in October 2024 for completion in October 2025.

He gave an update on the US 250/Route 151 roundabout in Afton. He noted that multiple trucks that lost their brakes coming down the hill during construction were a hazard to the construction crews at the roundabout. He addressed the ways they dealt with that hazard. He also said that there are updates coming that include a runaway truck ramp and a “runaway vehicle only” sign.

Mr. Nelson noted that the Route 240/250/680 roundabout in Crozet is one element of the Albemarle intersection design-build bundle of five project. He is hoping to have the project completed by the beginning of 2028.

Mr. Nelson continued by noting the I-64 Exit 99 Interchange lighting has the hurdle of light pollution. They are trying to overcome those hurdles and are working complete it.

Mr. Nelson reported that I-64’s Afton Mountain congestion warning system will be completed in January 2025.

He continued by saying there will be a CCTV camera at I-64’s mile marker 102 to help with VDOT visibility. This will use existing infrastructure at the LED sign at the mile marker.

He said there will be a changeable message board at exits 124 and 118 to alert the public of accidents, weather conditions, etc.

Lastly, he reported the Ivy Corridor Pipeline study will identify project recommendations for the corridor and will focus on corridor safety.

Todd Stevens, District Engineer for VDOT Staunton, gave an update on projects in the VDOT Staunton District. He said the Town Center Park & Ride in Waynesboro was completed in April 2022. It includes 175 parking spaces, a bus loading zone with shelter, bike racks and lighting. He said they may create an MOU about who is responsible for the lot’s maintenance and upkeep.

He continued by reporting that the Southern Corridor, Shenandoah Village Dr. Extended in Waynesboro, will connect Rosser to Delphine Avenues. It supports local east-west travel as a parallel

facility to I-64 between Exits 94 and 96. It provides access to the Nature's Crossing Technology Park.

He reported on the Crozet Tunnel connector plan in Waynesboro and Augusta Co, which creates a non-motorized connection from downtown Waynesboro to the western portal of the Crozet Tunnel.

He reported on the US 250 Improvement Projects in Waynesboro, which are operations and safety projects along two segments of US2 50. They are access management with raised medians, sidewalk, and signal operation improvements.

Mr. Stevens reported that the US 250/US 340 roundabout in Waynesboro will address safety and operational needs at one of the city's primary intersections. It includes access management improvements on intersection approaches and completing gaps in non-motorized network.

He said the US 340/I-64, Exit 94 improvements in Waynesboro are operations and safety projects along US 240 (Rosser Ave) to Tiffany Drive (Waynesboro).

He reported that the US 250/Woodrow Wilson Complex Entrance Improvements in Augusta include capacity improvement to address peak period congestion at the Woodrow Wilson Complex. It addresses extensive queuing on US 250.

Mr. Stevens said the BRITE Transit Improvements in both Waynesboro and Augusta County improve three existing BRITE stops to formalize waiting areas with shelters and sidewalk connections.

He reported that Staunton Crossing in Staunton is an extension of Crossing Way to Valley Center Drive providing US250 access to Staunton Crossing's economic development site. It will include a shared use path that will connect 250 with a new Park & Ride lot.

Lastly, he reported on I-81 Improvements, Exits 220-225, in Augusta County and Staunton. He said those improvements will add a third lane from exits 221 – 225. There is also a south-bound auxiliary lane that will be added between Exit 221 and 220.

There was no question-and-answer session after the presentations.

Department of Rail and Public Transportation

Tiffany Dubinsky, gave an update on DRPT projects. She gave brief highlights on the projects that they have been involved with the two MPOs, including the Afton Express. There have been numerous studies completed for the MPO areas as well. They will be working with VRT for an EV assessment. They are also working with Albemarle County on their micro-transit program.

Ms. Dubinsky said DRPT will be conducting a study on connecting Staunton to the Hampton Roads area. They have a grant cycle coming up on December 1. She gave an update on new grant opportunities on regional connectivity (including micro-transit and bus shelters) and encouraged the localities/MPOs to apply.

Ms. Bragg requested that those with presentations please forward them to Bonnie Riedesel so they can be available to whomever requests them.

7. Next Meeting – Fall of 2024

Carolyn thanked the members for coming and Fishburne Military School for their facility.

8. Adjourn for lunch

Adam Wormwood made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Tim Fitzgerald seconded the motion. Ned Gallaway made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ann Mallek seconded the motion. Both motions passed unanimously.