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## **BATS MEETING MINUTES**

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### **Brunswick Area Transportation Study Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting**

Monday March 9, 2020 – 4:00 p.m.  
Via Zoom Teleconference

#### **AGENDA**

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks (Ben Slade)
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes- Action Item
  - a. Minutes from CAC meeting held on January 13, 2020
3. Draft FY 2021 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) – Action Item
4. 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Update
5. Lanier-Gloucester Improvements Study Update – Information
6. BATS Administrative Updates
  - a) Public Participation Plan (PPP)
  - b) Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
7. Agency Updates
  - a. Glynn County Airport Commission
  - b. Glynn County School Board
  - c. Glynn County
  - d. City of Brunswick
  - e. GDOT District 5
  - f. Jekyll Island Authority
  - g. Transit Agencies
  - h. Other Items
8. Public Comment
9. Adjourn
- 10.

**Brunswick Area Transportation Study**  
**Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**

Monday, March 9, 2020 – 4:00 p.m.  
Via Zoom Teleconference

**ATTENDEES**

Committee Members

Ed Ellis  
James Gilligan  
Ben Slade  
Ed Farley  
Steve Holt  
Wally Orrel  
Melinda Ennis-Roughton

Others

Rachel Hatcher, Senior Planner, RS&H  
Vishanya Forbes, Transportation Planner, RS&H  
Julie Martin  
Cap Fending

## **1. Welcome and Introductions**

The meeting was called to order at approximately 4:00 pm by CAC Chairman Ben Slade. Mr. Slade gave the welcome. Mrs. Hatcher thanked the committee for being open to having the Citizens Advisory Committee meeting via Zoom due to COVID-19 travel restrictions. Mr. Slade then continued to the next agenda item to approve the meeting minutes from the last CAC meeting held in January.

## **2. Approval of Meeting Minutes – Action Item**

Mr. Slade addressed this agenda item. He asked if committee members had any questions or comments on the minutes from the meeting held on January 13, 2020. There were no comments or questions, he then called for a motion to approve the CAC meeting minutes. Mr. Ellis made a motion to approve the meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Farley seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

## **3. Draft FY 2021 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) – Action Item**

Mrs. Hatcher spoke on this agenda item providing the committee with a refresher on the BATS Draft FY 2021 UPWP. She reminded the committee that following the previously held CAC meetings, the draft UPWP was released for a 30-day public comment period. She stated that comment period closed on January 8, 2020. She stated that there were no public comments, but there were comments from oversight agencies. She added that the comments received from GDOT and FHWA were placed in the comment log in the appendix of the draft UPWP.

Mrs. Hatcher further explained the comments received from FHWA and GDOT and highlighted their location the updated draft FY 2021 UPWP. Mrs. Hatcher highlighted the next steps in the draft FY 2021 UPWP process. Mr. Slade asked if there was any questions or comments on the agenda item., There were no comments/feedback. He called for a motion for the CAC to recommend to the Policy Committee approval of the BATS FY 2021 Unified Planning Work Program. Mr. Ellis made a motion. The motion was seconded by Mr. Farley. The motion was passed unanimously.

## **4. 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Update**

### **a. 2045 Goals and Objectives – Action Item**

Mrs. Hatcher spoke on this agenda item. She explained that CDM Smith is the consultant team assisting BATS staff with updating the MTP. She stated that CDM Smith will be presenting two items:

- 2045 Goals and Objectives (Action Item)
- Existing Conditions and Public Survey Results Summary (Information)

Mrs. Hatcher then handed the presentation over to Mr. Plagens. Mr. Plagens greeted the committee and provided a brief update on the BATS 2045 MTP planning process. He reminded the committee that there were two rounds of public meetings held, one on St. Simons Island, and the other in

Brunswick. He added that the meetings were well attended, with over 150 people viewing the St. Simons Island meeting on Facebook Live due to COVID-19.

Mr. Plagens handed shared information from the two public meetings and stated that the materials were available on the BATS website as well. He explained the process for updating the MTP goals and objectives. These included:

- Review of the 2040 Goals
- Incorporate Federal Guidance
- Conduct outreach to the public for additional input
- Present modified Goals and Objectives back to the Policy Committee for approval

Mr. Plagens further elaborated on the MTP updating process and explained each step to the committee. He stated that input from the St. Simons Island meeting included updating a goal from 'Establish[ing]' to 'Provid[ing]' "a connected multimodal transportation network that is cost effective, efficient, easily accessible, and safe to all users." He added that another request was to have the objective changed from "'coordinate with appropriate agencies when designing and implementing multimodal facilities' to 'collaborate with appropriate agencies in the design and implementation of multimodal facilities.'

Mr. Plagens explained that there was another goal added to the 2045 MTP Update. The goal was recommended by the St. Simons Island community "enhance the built environment to foster resilience and support climate management strategies". He added that an objective was also added, "' assess and improve transportation facilities to account for sea-level rise". He explained that the St. Simons Island community wanted this added because of potential flooding to the F.J. Torras Causeway headed into St. Simons Island. Mr. Plagens asked if there were any questions or comments from this committee, and there were none.

Mrs. Hatcher stated that earlier comments received during the TCC meeting were about wanting confirmation on where the concerns about "' enhancing the built environment to foster resilience'" came from. She stated that those concerns came from the St. Simons Island community.

Mr. Slade then called for a motion to recommend to the Policy Committee adoption of the 2045 MTP Goals and Objectives. Mr. Harris made a motion. Mr. Holt seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

#### **b. Existing Conditions Summary – Information**

Mr. Plagens spoke on this agenda item. He briefly explained the winter survey that was administered from December 8, 2019 to February 10, 2020. He stated that there were 18 multiple choice and ranking questions, 378 participants who filled out the survey. He spoke on each question from the winter survey. Ms. Ennis-Roughton asked who had the largest participation in the survey. Mr. Plagens answered that it

was St. Simons Island. Ms. Ennis-Roughton explained that she sent the survey to Family Connection members as well, to get feedback from City of Brunswick residents.

Mr. Plagens stated that from the survey results, most people in Glynn County were pleased with the state of the interstate, highways, and bridges in the region. He added that 'on-road bicycle facilities' received the worst rating out of all the modes of transportation in Glynn County from survey participants. He stated that over 50% of survey participants said they would bike more frequently if there were more or improved facilities available. Mr. Plagens stated that over 50% of survey participants did not evacuate from Glynn County during Hurricane Dorian.

Mr. Plagens briefly explained the Environmental Justice Report. He shared data statistics about the BATS region, including:

- Region population is 83, 467

- Population is most dense in downtown Brunswick

- Minority population is most concentrated in the City of Brunswick

- 17% of individuals in the region are in poverty

- 8% of households in the region do not own a vehicle, concentrated in downtown Brunswick (28%)

Ms. Ennis-Roughton asked for clarification regarding the segmentation of census data used for the Environmental Justice Report. She stated that the needs are different between the islands, the City of Brunswick, and rural areas in Glynn County. Mr. Plagens responded that yes, the census data used is by census tracts, with the highest poverty rate in Census Tract Eight. Ms. Ennis-Roughton stated that this statistic is the same as data she is gathered, with over 78% of children in poverty in Census Tract Eight. She further elaborated, saying that this data would be useful for tracking public transportation needs, since that area would be in greatest need. Mr. Plagens stated that the existing conditions study by CDM Smith list potential three routes for public transportation, and that two routes specifically address poverty issues in the BATS region.

Mr. Plagens explained further the statistics from the Environmental Justice Report, including key findings to inform the planning process.

Ms. Ennis-Roughton asked if Mr. Plagens attended the Neighborhood Planning Assembly (NPA) meetings. Mr. Plagens stated that he did not attend those meetings but prepared a presentation for BATS staff/Glynn County staff to present at the NPA meetings. Ms. Ennis-Roughton asked if there was input from Goodyear, Urbana/Perry Park, and the other NPAs in the region. Mr. Plagens stated that Mr. Kitts attended the first BATS meeting and provided information about the NPA and their needs. He added that there was confusion from some meeting attendees who believed that the MTP was focusing on public transportation, instead of all modes of transportation.

Ms. Ennis-Roughton asked "which church will a future meeting in downtown Brunswick being held at". Mr. Plagens stated that he did not know which church but knew that it was a church in the downtown area. He then added that the next meeting would probably be held at the library in Brunswick.

Ms. Ennis-Roughton asked how many respondents were surveyed, and Mr. Plagens responded with 378 respondents. She then asked if the data researched was gathered the way that a researcher would, since 378 participants cannot adequately represent an area of over 83,000 persons. Mrs. Hatcher responded that the survey administered is an industry standard, and that it is cost-prohibitive to conduct a more

intensive survey. She stated that the survey is done in addition to in-person outreach, and that the data gathered from the survey helps get a cross-section from a larger number of people.

Ms. Ennis-Roughton stated that “the people who need transportation support the most are the least likely to answer an online survey. They don’t have access to the internet, they have intermittent access to the internet, or they’re elderly shut-ins.” Mrs. Hatcher stated that the MTP Updating process depends highly on the technical analysis, as well as the CAC to highlight potential conflicts. Mr. Plagens added that people who attended the first public workshop were able to fill out the survey on a tablet or on paper at the workshop.

Mr. Plagens stated that more people filled out the survey via the website than on the comment cards handed out at the public workshop. There were no further questions or comments on this agenda item.

## **5. Lanier Gloucester Study Update – Information**

Mrs. Hatcher provided the committee with a quick refresher on this item. She stated that the Pond & Company consultant team was present at the Policy Committee meeting held on February 10, 2020 to present findings from the study. She highlighted recommendations on SR 25/Glynn Ave. including restriping work and shrinking the median island to allow new lane configuration. She also shared information on additional recommendations made regarding improvements on Lanier Blvd, Frontage Rd, and a pedestrian crossing on Gloucester.

Mrs. Hatcher asked if there were any additional questions or comments. Mr. Gilligan asked what the funding source for the construction of the improvements would be. Mrs. Hatcher responded that the current program projects funding is maintenance funds through FHWA and GDOT. She stated that if the local constituency is successful, as most of these improvements will be funded through these maintenance funds. She added that local funding is yet to be determined and is dependent on consideration of final treatments and how much those will cost. She stated that the amount will be a part of the final deliverable from Pond & Company.

Mr. Gilligan asked who the negotiations on local funding was between. Mrs. Hatcher clarified that Pond & Company is continuing their analysis to determine what the final cost will be minus the improvements that GDOT & maintenance projects would not be able to incorporate into their projects.

There were no additional questions or comments on this agenda item.

## **6. BATS Administrative Updates**

### **a. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

Mrs. Hatcher spoke on this agenda item. She stated that the GDOT Office of Planning on March 3, 2020 requested two amendments to the current TIP. She explained that the total funding cost for PI 0013745 (SR 25 Spur East at Mackay River) was moved to 2021 from 2020, and the total cost dropped to \$382,867.20 from \$1,000,000. She stated that this was because the scope of work for the right-of-

way acquisition was completed and costs were less than expected. The second change was the funding year for the right-of-way acquisition for PI 0013993 (SR 32 at Little Buffalo Creek) was moved from 2019 to 2020. She then added that the administrative modification was available for viewing on the BATS website.

**b. Public Participation Plan (PPP)**

Mrs. Hatcher presented on this agenda item. She stated that the Policy Committee took action on February 10, 2020 to release the BATS Public Participation Plan for a 45-day comment period. She added that staff published a public review notice advertisement in the Brunswick News on February 19, 2020. She stated that staff placed hard copies of the document at the Community Development Office, the Pate Building, St. Simons Island Casino, and the Old Courthouse on G. St.

Mrs. Hatcher explained the outreach process and elaborated that the MPO website was updated with the flyer and a newsflash, and that the comment period will end on March 26, 2020. She stated that BATS staff is asking committee members to spread the word and encourage citizens to review the draft PPP and provide feedback. Ms. Ennis-Roughton asked if the flyer was sent to the committee electronically. Mrs. Hatcher responded that it was, and that BATS staff can resend the flyer.

**c. Other Items**

There were no other items discussed.

**7. Agency Updates**

**a. Glynn County Airport Commission**

Mrs. Hatcher shared with the committee that there were no updates provided by the Glynn County Airport Commission at the TCC meeting.

**b. Glynn County School Board**

Mrs. Hatcher shared with the committee that there were no new updates provided by the Glynn County School Board at the TCC meeting.

**c. Glynn County**

Mrs. Hatcher stated that there is a standard report sheet from the County that can be emailed to committee members. She stated that there were no specific updates, but questions or comments can be sent to the Glynn County representatives.

**d. City of Brunswick**

Mrs. Hatcher shared updates provided by the City of Brunswick. Projects mentioned during the previous CAC meeting are moving forward according to schedule.

**e. GDOT District 5**

Mrs. Hatcher stated that there was a GDOT Project sheet available for committee members to review.

**f. Jekyll Island Authority**

Mrs. Hatcher stated that there were no Jekyll Island Authority representatives present at the TCC meeting.

**g. Transit Agencies**

Mrs. Hatcher added that there were no transit agency updates provided at the TCC meeting.

**8. Public Comment**

Mr. Slade stated that the County sent over a request to GDOT to modify the plan to widening Highway 17 to put a bike lane on one side instead of both sides. He asked if the project was several years off. Mrs. Hatcher replied that it is, and that there is no current construction funds in the TIP. There were no additional comments or questions.

**9. Adjourn**

Mr. Slade reminded everyone of the upcoming meeting scheduled on May 11, 2020 for the Citizen Advisory Committee and thanked everyone for their participation. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:00 pm.



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BATS CAC Chairman

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Date