

**MINUTES OF THE NORTHWEST ARKANSAS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION/POLICY COMMITTEE
JANUARY 25, 2017 APPROVED APRIL 26, 2017**

ENTITY	MEMBER	ATTENDING	PROXY
AVOCA	JORDAN SULLIVAN		
BELLA VISTA	PETER CHRISTIE	X	
BENTON COUNTY	BARRY MOEHRING JOHN SUDDUTH JAY FRASIER	X X	
BENTONVILLE	BOB McCASLIN SHELLI KERR	X X	
BETHEL HEIGHTS	CYNTHIA BLACK	X	
CAVE SPRINGS	TRAVIS LEE		
CENTERTON	BILL EDWARDS (TREAS.) RICK HUDSON	X	
DECATUR	BOB THARP JAMES BOSTON		
ELKINS	BRUCE LEDFORD		
ELM SPRINGS	HAROLD DOUTHIT	X	MIRANDA TAYLOR
FARMINGTON	MELISSA McCARVILLE	X	
FAYETTEVILLE	JEREMY PATE	X	
GARFIELD	GARY L BLACKBURN		
GATEWAY	FRANK HACKLER JR.		
GENTRY	KEVIN JOHNSTON (VICE CH)		
GOSHEN	MAX POYE		
GRAVETTE	KURT MADDOX PATRICK HALL	X X	
GREENLAND	BILL GROOM (CHAIR)	X	
HIGHFILL	CASSIE ELLIOT		
HINDSVILLE	MAYOR X DOTSON		
HUNTSVILLE	MAYOR DARRELL TRAHAN		
JOHNSON	CHRIS KEENEY		
LINCOLN	ROB HULSE		
LITTLE FLOCK	BUDDY BLUE		
LOWELL	ELDON LONG	X	
PEA RIDGE	JACKIE CRABTREE	X	
PRAIRIE GROVE	SONNY HUDSON (SEC)	X	
ROGERS	NATHAN BECKNELL BOB CRAFTON JOHN McCURDY	X X X	
SILOAM SPRINGS	PHILLIP PATTERSON	X	
SPRINGDALE	DOUG SPROUSE PATSY CHRISTIE JIM ULMER	X	X JEFF HAWKINS
SPRINGTOWN	PRESTON BARRETT		
SUPHUR SPRINGS	GREG BARBER		
TONTITOWN	PAUL COLVIN, JR		
WASHINGTON CO.			
WEST FORK	HEITH CAUDLE		
BEAVER H2O DISTRICT	ALAN FORTENBERRY	X	RAY AVERY
RAZORBACK TRANSIT	GARY K. SMITH	X	
U OF A	MIKE JOHNSON	X	
MoDOT	DARIN HAMELINK		
McDONALD COUNTY	KEITH LINDQUIST		
PINEVILLE	MAYOR GREG SWEETEN		
AHTD PLANNING	JESSIE JONES	X	CHAD ADAMS
AHTD DISTRICT 4	CHAD ADAMS	X	
FHWA	AMY HEFLIN		
AR HWY COMMISSIONER	DICK TRAMMEL	X	

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NWARPC STAFF: Jeff Hawkins, Celia Scott-Silkwood, AICP, Tim Conklin, AICP, Cristina Scarlat, Elizabeth Bowen

OTHERS: Ron Wood, NWADG; Morgan Farmer, Senator Cotton's office; Hugh Earnest; Kathryn Gough, Senator Boozman's office; Lorene Burns, Centerton

1. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Bill Groom called the meeting to order. Chair Groom reminded the group that the 2017 officers include Chair – Bill Groom; Vice Chair – Kevin Johnston; Treasurer – Bill Edwards; Secretary – Sonny Hudson. Introductions were made. Chair Groom acknowledged newly-elected Benton County Judge Barry Meohring.

**2. APPROVE NWARPC/POLICY COMMITTEE DECEMBER 7, 2016 MEETING MINUTES
MOTION**

Chair Groom asked for a motion to approve the December 7, 2016 Minutes as distributed. Mike Johnson made the motion. Phillip Patterson provided the second. Motion passes unanimously.

3. CLEARINGHOUSE REVIEWS/ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Jeff Hawkins gave the following report:

- Clearinghouse Reviews – The five Federal-Aid applications received in December have been reviewed.
- Mathias Properties has asked NWARPC to sign a new three-year lease for the NWARPC office building at \$4200.00 per month beginning October 1, 2016. In recent talks with them, they stated that the parking lot would be for the exclusive use of NWARPC. Mathias will revise the lease to reflect this.
- Annual Annexation Report – If your jurisdiction has annexed in the past year a report will need to be submitted to the Census Bureau by March 1, 2017. Staff can assist in the preparation of this Report.
- The FFY 2016 Audit is nearly completed.

JEFF HAWKINS EXPLAINED THAT THE FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA), AS A RESULT OF THE UPCOMING TRIENNIAL REVIEW, HAS REQUIRED SEVERAL UPDATES TO THE NWARPC EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK. HE SAID THAT AS A PRECONDITION OF RECEIVING GRANTS FROM FTA THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS ARE PRESENTED TO THE RPC/POLICY COMMITTEE FOR APPROVAL AND INCLUSION IN THE EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK:

4. RESOLUTION #2017-1 – AMEND EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK TO INCLUDE THE NWARPC DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY

MOTION

Chair Groom asked for a motion to amend the NWARPC Employee Handbook to include the NWARPC Drug-Free Workplace Awareness Policy and Program. Bob McCaslin made the motion. Phillip Patterson provided the second. Motion passes unanimously.

5. RESOLUTION #2017-2 – AMEND EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK TO INCLUDE THE NWARPC STANDARDS OF CONDUCT GOVERNING THE PERFORMANCE OF EMPLOYEES ENGAGED IN THE AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION OF CONTRACTS SUPPORTED BY FEDERAL FUNDS

This resolution applies to employees and/or any RPC/Policy Committee members serving on a selection committee to rank and recommend prospective consultants for a contract.

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MOTION

Chair Groom asked for a motion to amend the NWARPC Employee Handbook to include the NWARPC standards of conduct governing the performance of employees engaged in the award and administration of contracts supported by federal funds. Bob McCaslin made the motion. Peter Christie provided the second. Motion passes unanimously.

6. RESOLUTION #2017-3 – FORMAL ADOPTION OF THE AHTD CONSULTANT SELECTION PROCEDURES AND STATE AND FTA PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES

NWARPC will follow all state and federal procurement policies when using state and federal funds. Use of private grant monies does not require NWARPC to follow the state and federal policies.

MOTION

Chair Groom asked for a motion to adopt the AHTD Consultant Selection Procedures as the procedures used by NWARPC when state and federal funds are involved. Doug Sprouse made the motion. Bill Edwards provided the second. Motion passes unanimously.

7. FFY 2016-2020 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) PROPOSED AMENDMENT #3 – TO ADD VARIOUS FEDERAL LANDS ACCESS PROGRAM (FLAY)-TYPE PROJECTS IN ARKANSAS AND REMOVE SYSTEM PRESERVATION FUNDING FROM ONE AHTD JOB AND PROGRAM A NEW AHTD JOB IN BENTON COUNTY

Note: A Public Notice and Notice of Two-Week Public Comment Period concerning the Proposed Amendment #3 was posted on the NWARPC web site and appeared in a legal notice in the NWA Democrat Gazette and an ad in the La Prensa Libre newspaper on January 5, 2017. The public comment period concluded on January 18, 2017. Individual letters of Public Notice were sent via USPS to private transit providers. No public comment was received.

Tim Conklin explained that this proposed amendment would:

- Remove System Preservation funding from Hwy 102 for pavement maintenance, to Hwy 412 for maintenance. Through AHTD district analysis of pavement conditions it was determined that Hwy 412 had a greater need than Hwy 102 at this time, and for this reason the funding needs to be transferred. Additionally, since the TAC meeting last week, AHTD has changed the terminus of the project to Washington Street (Siloam Springs).
- FLAP-type projects – amends FFY 2017 through FFY 2020. The last project done in NWA with FLAP funds was the Hwy 220 improvement project, paving the road.

Tim said that AHTD is in a transition period resulting in a different method of system management that involves moving money out of construction and into preservation. He said that evaluation of projects is a data driven process having to do with the condition of the road.

MOTION

Chair Groom asked for a motion to amend the FFY 2016-2020 TIP to include Amendment #3 – to add various Federal Lands Access Program Projects in Arkansas and remove System Preservation funding from one AHTD job and program a new AHTD job in Benton County. Peter Christie made the motion. Phillip Patterson provided the second. Motion passes unanimously.

8. PROPOSED FFY 2017 PROGRAM OF PROJECTS (POP)

Note: A Public Notice and Notice of Two-Week Public Comment Period concerning the Proposed POP was posted on the NWARPC web site and appeared in a legal notice in the NWA Democrat Gazette and an ad in the La Prensa Libre newspaper on January 5, 2017. The public comment period concluded on January 18, 2017. No public comment was received.

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Jeff Hawkins explained:

- Every year the NWARPC submits a Program of Projects (POP) to FTA.
- This proposed POP is based on 2016 funding levels as a best estimate until Congress approves a full year appropriation.
- Partial funding amounts were published in the Federal Register this morning.
- The transit agencies can not apply for FFY 2017 funding until the POP is approved and submitted to FTA.
- Currently the funding split is 55% ORT and 45% Razorback Transit. This split has been in effect for a number of years and was arrived at through dialog with the transit agencies and NWARPC members. FTA is now expecting that this split be arrived at due to need, and the transit agencies and the RPC/Policy Committee will need to take this issue up in the near future.

MOTION

Chair Groom asked for a motion to approve the FFY 2017 Program of Projects (POP). Eldon Long made the motion. Mike Johnson provided the second. Motion passes unanimously.

9. 2017 NWARPC UPCOMING PROJECTS

Tim Conklin discussed the following projects:

- FFY 2017 STBGP-A and TAP PROJECTS UPDATE
 - The FFY 2017 projects were selected in September 2015.
 - All the projects are moving along through the process, and expect to be obligated by September 31, 2017. Remember that TAP projects receive funding for construction only.
 - Important to note that NWARPC does not actually receive this funding, it goes to AHTD and the jurisdictions with projects work with AHTD toward completion. All jurisdictions using these funds for projects must follow all federal regulations in all steps of a project, including engineering, environmental, ROW, and construction.
- FFY 2018 STBGP-A AND TAP PROJECTS
 - These projects will need to be selected by September 2017.
 - The application process has not changed for several years; volunteers serving on a committee will revisit the process in spring 2017 in order to have it ready for a call for projects in June 2017 (see Selection Committee below).
 - Staff is operating on the assumption that FFY 2018 funding will be at a level at least as much as FFY 2017, about \$7.5M for STBGP-A and about \$490,435 for TAP. This actual amount will not actually be known until September 2017.
 - Remember that these are reimbursable programs and participants must follow AHTD procurement procedures and all Federal laws.
 - Elizabeth Bowen will be overseeing the TAP FFY 2018 program, while Tim Conklin will continue to manage the STBGP-A program.
- STBGP-A and TAP Application update and timeline:
 - TAC volunteers to update the application and serve on the Selection Committee:

Chris Brown	Paul Libertini
Melissa McCarville	Chris Suneson
Ben Rhoads	Nathan Becknell
Bill Groom	Jerry Morrow
 - Issue a Call for Projects – estimate May 16 – June 16, 2017.
 - Project Application Deadline – July 17, 2017.
 - Project Sponsor Presentation to TAC – August 17, 2017.
 - Projects approved by the RPC/Policy Committee at their September 27, 2017 meeting.

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- AHTD TAP/RTP 2018 – Elizabeth Bowen reported:
 - Applications – February through May, 2017
 - Info sessions in Little Rock on March 31 and April 14, 2017. Have requested a session be held in NWA.
- FFY 2017-2021 TIP
 - AHTD will begin the STIP update date process in February 2017.
 - NARTS FFY 2016-2020 TIP will be updated this spring to FFY 2017-2021.
- FTA TRIENNIAL REVIEW
 - The FTA will conduct a Triennial Review site visit to NWARPC on March 14 – 15, 2017. Staff, particularly Cristina Scarlat and Celia Scott-Silkwood, have put in an enormous amount of time and effort getting ready for this visit. Additionally, staff attended a two-day workshop sponsored by FTA on December 1 and 2, 2016 in order to learn how to better complete the questionnaire required by FTA.
- MoDOT Southwest District Planning Partner Workshop/Project Prioritization – January 20, 2017
 - Staff met with McDonald County Commissioners and the Mayor of Pineville to determine what projects they wanted to submit to the MoDOT SW District prioritizing process.
 - The number one priority of the Commissioners and the Mayor was the completion of I-49.
 - They submitted several other projects, including intersection improvements on Hwy 71 and replacement of a functionally obsolete bridge on Hwy 90:
 - Intersection Improvement Wolf Den Road.
 - Intersection Improvement Rain Road.
 - Intersection Improvement Meadow Lark Lane.
 - One-lane Bridge Improvement Slinkard Road Hwy 90.
 - I-49 – Pineville, Missouri to the Stateline:
 - Congressional High Priority Corridor.
 - Connects to east/west interstates 40, 44, 70.
 - Connects to one of the fastest growing regions in the nation.
 - Reduces congestion, improves safety, shovel-ready, partially funded in Missouri, two lanes opening in Arkansas in April 2017 and the project is fully funded in Arkansas in 2020.
 - ROW has been acquired.
 - Environmental (National Environmental Policy Act or NEPA) documents are completed, but have expired. It will take one year to update the environmental documents and renew environmental approvals.
 - Design is complete, but the roadway plans need to be imported to new software. This will take one year to complete.
 - Total project cost is \$50,807,000; Programmed in the MO STIP is \$18,443,000; Remaining Funds Needed is \$32,364,000.
 - Commissioner Dick Trammel noted that when Arkansas passed the ½ cent sales tax, AHTD assumed that Missouri would be able to construct their section of I-49. However, they ran into budget problems and weren't able to start on their end. Consequently, Arkansas will hold onto the money it has available to four-lane the entire Arkansas section until such time that Missouri is ready to get started. Hopefully, he said, that will be sooner than later, now that the SW District has identified this as a number 1 priority.

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10. CURRENT PROJECTS UPDATE

Elizabeth Bowen reported:

- ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
 - Met December 12, 2016 and discussed Driveway/Commercial Crossing standards and the Protected Bike Lane Pilot Demo Project results.
 - Trail Markings/Signage for users and emergency services – the group continues to discuss markings/signage.
- NWA REGIONAL BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN MASTER PLAN
 - Avoca has adopted a new Walk/Bike Action Plan.
 - Avoca is the 26th jurisdiction to adopt a plan.
 - Trail Count/Intercept Surveys
 - Fayetteville, Johnson, and Rogers are complete.
 - Springdale and Bentonville working on theirs.
- RAZORBACK REGIONAL GREENWAY
 - The Federal government closed out the project in September 2016; a Final Report was completed in October 2016; working on 1 year warrant item in Springdale.
 - Wayfinding Sign Project #2
 - January 28 through February 6, 2017 – install 55 signs along the 37mile trail. This includes 21 single panel directions, 14 double panel directional, 3 pedestrian flag, 6 area map, 8 trailheads, 1 medium kiosk and 2 large kiosk panel signs. There are also plans to install 5 additional large kiosk signs in March.
- 1 FOOT CONTOUR DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
 - Data received December 12, 2016; QAQC work by staff completed; requested a smaller footprint; any jurisdiction that has paid may pick up the data at the NWARPC office.
- 2017 PLANIMETRIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
 - Local jurisdictions that have expressed interest will meet at NWARPC office on Thursday, January 26, 2017 at 9:00 am.
- OPEN SPACE PLAN
 - One goal for 2017 was to produce a video for open space outreach and education. NWARPC has signed an agreement with the U of A Agriculture Communications Experiential Learning Lab Professor Jeff Miller to produce 4-5 minute video.
- BIG JUMP – PEOPLE FOR BIKES PROJECT
 - The application that was submitted for NWA made it into the final 20, but ultimately was not selected.
- PROTECTED BIKE LANE PILOT DEMO PROJECTS
 - BikeNWA is looking for three projects to complete in 2017 – if your jurisdiction is interested, Paxton Roberts has all the information.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

- Commissioner Dick Trammel said that Governor Hutchinson has appointed local relator Phillip Taldo, to serve on the Arkansas Highway Commission. He also pointed out that NWA has more partnering projects than anywhere else in the State, with two new projects involving AHTD and Rogers and Fayetteville. The Commissioner also said that the State Legislature is in session and looking for ways to commit funding for maintaining existing roads. He said that the Commission will always include the split for cities and counties in any type of funding program.

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- TAC MEETING – SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2017 AT 10:30 AM
- RPC/POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING – SCHEDULED FOR WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2017 AT 1:30 PM
- Celia Scott-Silkwood said that the AHTD TRANSPORTATION PLANNING CONFERENCE will be held April 18 & 19, 2017 at the Chancellor Hotel in Fayetteville. She reminded the RPC/Policy Committee that in the past, NWARPC has used PL funds to reimburse the conference registration fee for one RPC/Policy Committee member, or designated representative, per jurisdiction. Several members of Committee recommended that NWARPC continue that procedure and they looked forward to additional information. Celia Scott-Silkwood said that the Committee and TAC would receive emails outlining who was eligible for reimbursement and how to receive the reimbursement once AHTD made more conference information available.

12. ADJOURN

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion passes.