

**ETDD South Rural Planning Organization
Joint Executive Board & Technical Committee Meeting Minutes
TDOT Region 1 Headquarters Auditorium
May 30, 2024, 10:00 a.m.
Knoxville, TN
MINUTES**

Voting Members Present

Executive Board: Mayor Mark Potts, Representative Lowell Russell, Senator Randy McNally (by proxy David Bradshaw), Mayor Don Prater, Mayor George Gantte, Donald Whaley, Mayor Larry Waters (by proxy Stacey Whaley), County Executive Wade Creswell (by proxy Glen Cofer), Mayor Timothy Neal (by proxy Tim Clark) and Mayor Ed Mitchell (by proxy Don Walker), Mayor Doyle Lowe (by proxy Jon Campbell)

Technical Committee: Becky Ruppe, Mike Patterson, Stacey Whaley, Rick Yakubic, Rene'e Crowe, Dustin Smith, Jon Campbell, Becky Headrick, Mike Conger, Jonas Smelcer, Glen Cofer, James Finchum (by proxy Caroline Brawley), Dennis Ferguson (by proxy Brian Matthews), Donald Whaley,

TDOT and Support Agencies Present

Dexter Justis (TDOT), Sharees Fife (TDOT), Lisa Dunn (TDOT), Stacy Weaver (TDOT), Bryan Bartnik (TDOT), Michelle Christian (TDOT), Stacy Morrison (TDOT), Laura Smith (ETDD), Ekem Amonoo-Lartson (ETDD), and Brook Dickerson (ETDD).

Others Present

Donnie Adams (Sevier County Hwy)

Welcome / Call to Order

The meeting began at approximately 10:00 a.m. Executive Board Chairman Mark Potts called the joint meeting of the Executive Board and Technical Committee to order.

Determination of Quorum / Roll Call

Quorums were present for both the Technical Committee and Executive Board. The roll call was waived, and introductions made.

Executive Board Elections

Executive Board Chairman Mark Potts announced that it was time for the Executive Board elections. Glen Cofer made the motion to reelect Mayor Potts as Executive Board Chairman and Trey Dykes as Vice Chair. The motion was seconded by Rick Yakubic and approved unanimously.

Technical Committee Elections

Technical Committee Chairman, Rick Yakubic announced that it was time for Technical Board elections. Glen Cofer made the motion to re-elect Rick Yakubic as Chairman and Becky Ruppe as Vice Chairperson. It was seconded and approved unanimously.

Approval of November 16, 2023, Technical Committee Meeting Minutes

Technical Committee Chairman Rick Yakubic asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the November 16, 2023, Technical Committee Meeting. Rene'e Crow made a motion to approve the minutes, it was seconded by Glen Cofer and members of the Technical Committee approved the minutes.

Approval of November 16, 2023, Executive Board Meeting Minutes

Executive Board Chairman Mark Potts asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the November 16, 2023, Executive Board Meeting. Glen Cofer made a motion to approve the minutes, it was seconded by Don Walker and members of the Executive Board approved the minutes.

Bylaw Discussion Creating Single Board Technical Staff & Executive Board

Stacy Morrison from TDOT summarized that most of the RPO's are combining their Executive Boards and Technical Committees into one Board. A common example is that the combined board has a Chairman that is an Executive Board member, and a Vice Chair that is a Technical Committee member. The next year, the Vice Chair moves into the Chairman's position and a new Vice Chair is elected from the Executive Board.

Stacy suggested that Laura and Ekem from ETDD work with Troy Ebert of TDOT to come up with a proposal for the November 2024 RPO Meeting.

Chairman Mark Potts called for a motion to approve the study group exploring combining these two Committees. Glen Cofer made the motion, Mike Patterson seconded it, and Committee members approved the motion.

Urbanized Area Adoption

Michelle Christian, with TDOT reported that the data from the 2020 Census was now available and is being reviewed by TDOT. There were some changes including using housing data. The results of federally mandated changes show that the Census needed to adjust the measurement process for small Urbanized Areas (populations less than 50,000). The newly defined communities in the South RPO are: Harriman-Kingston-Rockwood, Newport, Sevierville and Sweetwater.

The TDOT was given permission to smooth out areas along roads and thoroughfares, include less dense housing areas, which allows sparser areas to be included in the community Functional Classifications system. The Functional Classifications are Interstate, Other Freeway, Principal, Arterial, Major Collector, Minor Collector and Local.

Ms. Christian then requested an RPO Board motion accepting the new Census boundaries, the TDOT smoothing process and the Functional Classification updates. Chairman Mark Potts called for the motion. Glen Cofer made the motion, it was seconded by Mike Patterson and committee members approved these changes.

TDOT Project Updates

Dexter Justis with TDOT discussed the 10 Year Plan. The projects are from start to finish, include some 3-year plan projects and adds new projects. It insures that projects in the plan can be funded. The TDOT's Project Prioritization was used insuring that urban versus rural projects were evaluated separately so they would be scored similarly. Mr. Justis noted that it is a long-range plan and may change, especially in the second five years.

Committee members voiced multiple comments and questions. Concerns about what happened to former projects submitted to TDOT but not included in the final plan like improvements on US 11W & SR 61. Observations that the focus appears to be on urban versus rural projects. And would TDOT look at bicycling route needs if asked to do so? Mr. Justis stated that the TDOT reviews all projects and requests submitted and reevaluates priorities annually.

State Aid Funding

Lisa Dunn with TDOT gave updates on the Transportation Modernization Act Funding. About half of the funds have already been spent. There is an interactive State Aid Dashboard, with a QR code, that is updated every Sunday. This tool reflects all the funding allocations and can be downloaded into Excel. She urged all Road Supervisors to check their info on this website and contact her if they see any discrepancies.

Coordinator's Report

Ekem Amonoo-Lartson of ETDD provided the RPO Coordinators' report. He noted that the local official's meetings would continue, and a Transportation Plans for Monroe County will be completed this year and three more are scheduled for next year. Assistance is also provided for transportation grant applications,

Work Program

Laura Smith presented ETDD's RPO Work Program for FY2025 – FY2026 with included budget to the committees. She summarized the five specific tasks in the contract. They include Rural Planning and Program Management, Community Outreach & Engagement, Transportation Grants Coordination, Rural Planning Administration and RPO Focus which includes the County Wide Transportation Plans. She then asked for a board motion to approve this RPO Work Program.

Chairman Mark Potts asked for a motion to approve ETDD's Work Plan for FY2025 – FY2026. Glen Cofer made the motion, Rene'e Crowe seconded, and Committee members approved the motion.

TDOT/FHWA Updates

Ms. Christian reported on TDOT grants with reminder of grant funding database on TDOT's website.

Questions/Discussion/Other Business

None.

Public Comment

None.

Adjourn

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:30 a.m.

DRAFT