

Meramec Region Transportation Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
August 13, 2020

Members Present: Gary Brown (Dent), Ray Walden (Dent), Darrell Skiles (Dent), Vic Stratman (Maries), Steve Vogt (Maries), Darryl Griffin (Osage), Larry Kliethermes (Osage), Darin Pryor (Phelps), George Lauritson (Pulaski)

Guests Present: Preston Kramer via Zoom (MoDOT), Steve Engelbrecht via Zoom (MoDOT), Kim Tipton via Zoom (MoDOT), Anita Ivey (Pulaski), Dale Martin (Phelps)

Staff Present: Anne Freand, Caitlin Jones, Samantha Maddison, Kaitlyn Bland and Bonnie Prigge (MRPC)

Call to Order & Welcome: Ray Walden, Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:03pm.

Approval of June 11, 2019 TAC Minutes: Ray Schwartze motioned, Steve Vogt seconded. The minutes were approved as submitted.

Proposed Highway 63 Alliance: Bonnie Prigge provided a handout to the TAC members which presented information on the proposed Highway 63 Alliance between RPCs and counties from Cole County to the Arkansas state line. A follow-up meeting will be held on September 25th from 10-2pm. Planning staff from each RPC will be gathering data to highlight the need for the widening of 63. Information on traffic counts, crash statistics and population will be gathered to provide a basis for any future discussion. The group discussed the possibilities of Transportation Development Districts (TDD) or other funding mechanisms that would help with funding for the construction of the highway.

Discussion on MoDOT Planning Framework Update: Bonnie Prigge provided a handout to the TAC reviewing the process for MoDOT's updated Planning Framework. The framework highlights the process that RPCs and other planning entities go through to assist MoDOT in their prioritization of construction projects. Steve Engelbrecht noted that any changes were considered minor.

MRPC Planning Framework Matrix: Anne Freand reviewed the Planning Framework Matrix with the TAC, which was initially adopted in late 2019. She noted that this year the matrix numbers would be provided for all identified unfunded needs, per county, when MRPC and MoDOT visit with county commissions in the next few months. Staff and MoDOT are working to complete the data and will have final numbers at each meeting. Anne reminded all TAC members that the matrix numbers are for reference only and do not require each county to prioritize based on the final numbers provided.

Arrive Alive: Bonnie Prigge provided an update on Arrive Alive and crash statistics in the Central District. Additionally, the fatality rate for the region has increased and highway patrol has seen a summer surge. Bonnie noted that there will be no back to school fairs to increase awareness; however, Steve Vogt noted that MoDOT had received a national award for the Buckle Up, Phone Down initiative.

Road Safety Audit Update: Anne Freand presented findings from the June 26, 2020 Road Safety Audit. The group convened at Hermann City Hall and discussed options for improving the intersection at Highway 100 and J. Low cost improvements included removing weeds and trees from lines of sight for both directions of travel. Additionally, the sign coming off of Highway J is currently a Yield sign and could be replaced with a Stop sign to require traffic to come to a complete stop at the intersection.

Additional suggestions included lowering the suggested curve speed and increasing intersection signage.

MoDOT Updates and Staff Reports (As time allows): Ray Schwartz noted that the committee should have discussed the nominating committee results and Anne Freand noted it would be on the October agenda. Anne Freand presented the MRPC Transportation website page and asked the committee to review for any changes that they may notice. Kim Tipton, MoDOT, updated the committee on the State Freight & Rail Plan. She also noted that no new TAP applications will be accepted at this time due to budget cuts. Preston Kramer gave a construction and maintenance update for regional roadways and bridges. He noted that a lot of chip seals and local crew work has been going on, the Route 49 bridge in Crawford County is complete, and the Route 100 bridge is 50% complete.

Member Reports (As time allows): Ray Schwartz brought up the support for a gas tax increase with simple ballot language. He believes that residents would support it as long as the language was clear as to where the money was going. The committee discussed his comments and Ray made a motion to send a letter to the state representatives and senators in support of road/bridge funding. George Lauritson seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Next TAC Meeting: October 8, 2020

Adjournment: Steve Vogt motioned for adjournment, George Lauritson seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 5:20 pm.