

**Transportation Resource Oversight Committee Meeting  
(Lake and Porter County)  
Tuesday, April 27, 2021  
Minutes**

This meeting was convened as an electronic meeting, pursuant to Governor Holcomb's Executive Order 21-08. All persons were meeting remotely on a Zoom platform that allowed for real time interaction and supported the public's ability to observe and record the proceedings. When the agenda item was provided for public comment, this was supported as well.

Charles Bradsky called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call was taken by Candice Eklund. In attendance were Duane Alverson (Lake County), Bob Thompson (Porter County), Kevin Breitzke (Porter County), Mark O'Dell (Chesterton), David Wright (GPTC), Bob Fulton (Hobart), Blossom Mabon (Lake County Community Services), AJ Bytnar (Gary), Julio Arichavala (East Chicago), Dean Button (Hammond), Steve King (Merrillville), Jeff Huet (Schererville), Bryan Blazak (St. John), Nick Bellar (Winfield), George Topoll (Union Township), Beth Shrader (Valparaiso), Mike Jabo (Valparaiso), Tim Hollandsworth, Lauri Keagle, Jake Dammarell, Michael Duffy, Eric Wolverton, Trisha Nugent, Don Oliphant, and Dennis Cobb.

NIRPC staff included Charles Bradsky, Meredith Stilwell, Kevin Polette, Flor Baum, and Candice Eklund.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the January 26, 2021 TROC meeting were approved on motion by Bob Thompson and seconded by AJ Bytnar. With Duane Alverson, Bob Thompson, David Wright, Bob Fulton, Blossom Mabon, AJ Bytnar, Dean Button, Jeff Huet, Bryan Blazak, Nick Bellar, Beth Shrader, and Mike Jabo voting in the affirmative, and no one voting in the negative, the motion passed.

#### **Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

#### **NOFA Summary**

Charles Bradsky discussed the summary of NOFA projects that were approved for the 2020 NOFA. These projects were also entered into the FY 2022-2026 TIP. Charles mentioned that he received one comment from the Gary Public Transportation Corporation and since they are present, he will let them voice it again shortly.

#### **Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA)**

Charles Bradsky stated the CRRSAA funds are 80/20 matching funds only and cannot be used for local match of another federally funded project or for new road construction. These funds can be used in conjunction with other funds such as CMAQ, TA, HSIP, and STBG, and can be used for any phase (PE, ROW, CN). These federal funds must be obligated by the end of FY 2024. He further stated that the listing of projects from the 2020 NOFA will be used as the guideline for project. Charles noted that if a schedule cannot be met after stating a project can be accelerated, that project will be pushed to FY 2027 or FY 2028 and will not be given a legacy status (extra points in future NOFAs)

Below is a summary of the projects that requested acceleration using CRRSAA funds. The federal share amounts reflected have been rounded up.

- GPTC – Grant Street and Hobart Service Expansion project. David Wright stated there is no Right of Way (ROW) required and the project could be implemented in 2023. Funds requested were for \$754,000 in FY 2023, FY 2024 and FY 2025, for a total federal share of \$2.2 million in CMAQ funding.
- City of Valparaiso – Transit Oriented Development (TOD) project for a multi-use trail. Project is currently in the TIP for 2026, but they are confident the letting can occur in 2023. There is one ROW parcel and one railroad crossing (local RR company). The federal share is \$1.9 million in 2026, with a request to be accelerated to 2023. Beth Shrader also requested the \$118,000 that is programmed for PE in 2023, be moved to 2022.

- Lake County - Bridge #97 project on Colorado Street over Deep River, is in FY 2025 for \$836,000 in federal funding. Project was partially funded in the 2020 NOFA and Duane Alverson feels this could go to letting by December 2024. Full funding is now being requested for this project. There are six ROWs and no railroad crossings. The federal share currently programmed is \$836,000 for construction only. Duane requested \$1.3 million in federal funding to include all phases of the project. There was a discussion regarding the ROW risks, and keeping this project where it is with full funding.
- Town of Merrillville – Mississippi Street and 69<sup>th</sup> Avenue project. Project has ROW funds only in the TIP. They feel this project could go to letting by February 2024. There are seven ROWs and no railroad crossings, with ROW funding of \$100,000 in FY 2024. After discussions at the meeting regarding the ROW risks, this project could be moved to 2026 with \$1.8 million (includes cost escalation) in federal funding.
- Town of Winfield – 117<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Randolph Street project. The Town Council has approved the acquisition of ROW. Federal share is \$1.2 million for construction in 2026. This would be a new project in the TIP.
- The City of Hammond – The NEPA document is currently be prepared and will include both phase 1 (2018 NOFA) and phase 2 (2020 NOFA) for the project on Summer Street. There is no ROW for either phase. Phase 1 letting is scheduled on December 7, 2022. Federal share is \$3.7 million in the TIP in 2026 and the project could be accelerated to 2023.

Jake Dammarell added that the Town of Griffith contacted him during the meeting and requested to advance their project on Broad Street and Avenue H. The project has PE funding in 2023 and requested funding of \$1.7 million in 2026.

The Committee agreed to advance the projects in Hammond (\$3.2 million in 2023) and Valparaiso (\$1.6 million in 2024), which would add \$4.8 million in available funding back into FY 2026.

A motion was made by Dean Button and seconded by Mike Jabo, to approve the following project & program changes:

- Hammond's Summer St Phase 2 will be accelerated to FY 2023 (CRRSA-21 funds) for \$3,200,000
- Valparaiso's TOD to downtown trail will be accelerated from to FY 2024 (CRRSA-21 funds) for \$1,700,000 and receive \$118,300 for PE in FY 22 (CRRSA-21 funds)
- Lake County's Bridge #97 will be fully funded (CN) in FY 2026 and receive \$325,000 for PE in FY 22 (CRRSA-21 funds)
- GPTC will receive \$754,000 in FY 2025 for the Grant St Rapid Transit expansion (Charles will look to find funds in FY 23, & FY 24 to support this).
- Griffith's Intersection Improvement will receive CN funding in FY 2026 (STBG or CMAQ) of \$1,776,000
- Merrillville's Intersection Improvement will receive CN funding in FY 2026 (STBG or CMAQ) of \$1,795,000
- Winfield's Intersection Improvement will receive CN funding in FY 2026 (STBG or CMAQ) of \$1,355,000

With Duane Alverson, Bob Thompson, David Wright, Bob Fulton, Blossom Mabon, AJ Bytnar, Dean Button, Jeff Huet, Bryan Blazak, Nick Bellar, George Topoll, Beth Shrader, and Mike Jabo voting in the affirmative, and no one voting in the negative, the motion passed.

Charles will send the updated spending plan to the TROC Committee after the meeting. The updated list of recommended projects will be included in the TPC meeting materials for their meeting on June 8 at 10:00 a.m.

### **New Business**

Charles reminded the Committee of the virtual Local Quarterly Meetings that are scheduled for May 4, 5, and 6.

### **Adjournment**

Having no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:22 a.m. The next meeting will be held on July 27, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.