

**EAST ALABAMA RURAL PLANNING ORGANIZATION
MEETING MINUTES
DISTRICT POLICY COMMITTEE - CENTRAL DISTRICT**

April 17, 2008 - 1:00 p.m.

EARPDC Headquarters Building – Anniston

Members in Attendance:

Mayor Anna Berry, City of Heflin
Mr. Lance Grissett, Talladega County
Mayor Clemmie Lewis, Oak Grove
Mr. Charles Merkert, Calhoun County
Mr. DeJarvis Leonard, ALDOT 4th Division
Mr. Shannon T. Jones, ALDOT 4th Division
Mr. Steve Williams, ALDOT 4th Division
Mr. Bill Curtis, East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission
(represented by Ms. Dawn Landholm)

Other Attendees:

Mr. Clint Andrews, Federal Highway Administration
Mr. Jack Plunk, Calhoun County MPO
Mr. Patrick Hall, East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission
Ms. Dawn Landholm, East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission

Mayor Anna Berry, acting as Chairwoman, called the meeting to order at approximately 1:00 p.m.

Under “Old Business”, Mayor Berry asked if there were any corrections to the minutes from the previous meeting. Mr. DeJarvis Leonard moved that the minutes be adopted as presented. Mayor Lewis seconded the motion, which was passed by a unanimous vote of the committee.

Ms. Dawn Landholm reminded Committee members that, in previous meetings, she had asked for Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) member appointments. She suggested that, since few appointments have been made, the District Policy Committee (DPC) and the TAC meet together. Doing so would have many advantages:

1. the Mayors who have not been able to attend meetings could appoint a TAC member as their alternate representative;
2. TAC members who are alternate representatives would not be required to attend two meetings; and
3. DPC members would be able to ask technical questions of the TAC members without having to channel questions and answers through the program coordinator.

Some other regional commissions have taken this action, and Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) staff in Montgomery have expressed their approval of actions that will help increase participation and region-wide representation in the consultation process, as long as it meets federal requirements.

Furthermore, as with our region, some other regional commissions have been having difficulty obtaining Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) appointments and/or participation. The regions that do have citizen committees have difficulty getting citizens to participate unless there is a problem they want to discuss. ALDOT staff have allowed the regional commissions to include the public in the consultation process in the way that works best in each region. Ms. Landholm suggested that the DPC consider abandoning the formal CAC structure and periodically hold open-invitation public meetings. For example, when the draft Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is available for public review, each county could make its section of the STIP available for public review, then the RPO could conduct county-by-county meetings to obtain citizen input. These meetings would be coordinated with ALDOT's public review activities.

The proposed changes will require an amendment to the Bylaws, which Ms. Landholm will present to the Committee at the next meeting for its review and recommendation to the Regional Policy Committee.

There was no other old business.

Under "New Business", Mayor Barry stated that she had no report.

Mr. Patrick Hall, under staff reports, announced that the East Alabama RPO and the Calhoun Area Metropolitan Planning Organization had organized an Access Management Workshop. The workshop will be held in two locations: on June 11th at the Calhoun County Chamber of Commerce in Anniston; and on June 13th at the Betty Carol Graham Technology Center on the Central Alabama Community College campus in Alexander City.

Mr. Leonard, of ALDOT's 4th Division, then updated the Committee about the status of transportation projects that are underway or programmed for Calhoun, Clay, Cleburne, and Talladega Counties. These projects, which are listed in the State's Five Year Plan, included:

- Paving contract for Highway 21/Talladega Bypass has been signed, and paving will start this summer.
- The Alabama DOT will begin the resurfacing of US Highway 280 in the Town of Oak Grove this summer.

Discussion about these projects ensued.

There were no motions or resolutions or other new business.

Under “Special Programs”, Mr. Hall gave a brief presentation on “access management”, explained how the workshops to be held in June will expand upon the information being presented today, then played a short video entitled “Access Management is Good for Business”. The accompanying primer that covers the information in the video presentation which is attached to these minutes.

No meeting attendees wished to be heard on matters not included in the agenda.

Under “Open Discussion and Announcements”, there was a discussion of the “Access Management is Good for Business” video, including potential for access management in the East Alabama area, and developers attitudes of access management. Mr. Steve Williams, of ALDOT’s 4th Division noted that developers have started adopting their own access management techniques in site plans, and would be very open to municipal ordinances and controls.

Ms. Landholm announced that the next meeting of the East Alabama Rural Planning Organization’s District Policy Committee for the Central District is scheduled for Thursday, July 24, 2008 at 1:00 p.m. in the EARPDC board room.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.