

**EAST ALABAMA RURAL PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
MEETING MINUTES  
DISTRICT POLICY COMMITTEE & TECHNICAL ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE for the SOUTHERN DISTRICT  
November 19, 2009  
East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission - Anniston**

Policy Committee Members in Attendance:

Ms. Donna Matthews, representing Mayor Roy Adamson, City of Lineville  
Mayor Charles Merkel, Town of Oak Grove  
Judge Ryan Robertson, Cleburne County  
Mayor Brian Young, City of Piedmont  
Mayor Steve Baswell, Town of Ohatchee  
Mayor Brian York, City of Talladega  
Mr. Bill Curtis, East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission

Technical Advisory Committee Members in Attendance:

Mr. Brian Rosenbalm, Calhoun County  
Mr. Shannon Robbins, Cleburne County  
Mr. Tim Markert, Talladega County  
Mr. William D. McDaniel, ALDOT 4<sup>th</sup> Division

Other Attendees:

Mr. Shawn McComb, Talladega County  
Mr. Michael Hosch, Calhoun County  
Ms. Dawn Landholm, East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission  
Ms. Stacey Browning, East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission

Ms. Dawn Landholm, acting as Chairman, called the meeting to order at approximately 1:05 p.m.

Under “Old Business”, Ms. Landholm asked if there were any corrections to the minutes from the July 16, 2009 meeting. Mayor Charles Merkel motioned that the minutes be approved, and Mayor Brian Young seconded. The minutes were adopted by a unanimous vote.

Under “New Business,” Ms. Landholm opened the floor for nominations for Chairman of the Policy Committee. Mayor Merkel nominated Mayor Anna Berry, who was not present at the meeting. Judge Ryan Robertson nominated Mayor Brian York. A motion was made to close nominations. Mayor York was elected to the Chairman position by a vote. Ms. Landholm then opened the floor for nominations for the position of Vice Chairman of the Policy Committee. Mayor Baswell nominated Mayor Berry. A motion was made to close nominations, and Mayor Berry was unanimously elected to the position of Vice Chairman.

Ms. Landholm then opened the floor for nominations for Chairman of the Technical Advisory Committee. Mr. Brian Rosenbalm nominated Mr. Shannon Robbins for the position of Chairman. A motion was made to close nominations. Mr. Robbins was unanimously elected to the position of Chairman of the Technical Advisory Committee. Ms. Landholm opened the floor for nominations to the position of Vice Chairman. Mr. Robbins nominated Mr. Rosenbalm for the position. A motion was made to close nominations. Mr. Rosenbalm was unanimously elected to the position.

Mr. William McDaniel gave an update on ALDOT's projects in Calhoun, Talladega, Cleburne, and Clay Counties. Mr. McDaniel provided a handout summarizing these projects, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. Mr. McDaniel prefaced his update with a discussion of the budget shortfalls that are currently plaguing ALDOT. He said that projects that say "scheduled" on the list were not necessarily going to be let soon or when they were scheduled to be let. He mentioned that the stimulus jobs were the first priority at the moment. Mr. McDaniel specifically discussed Transportation Enhancement projects and how they will be funded, and mentioned that ALDOT would not be asking for submissions for projects for another year and a half. Current projects will be authorized on a first-come, first-serve basis, with an emphasis on stimulus projects. Mr. McDaniel mentioned that there is a Rails to Trails project in Piedmont that was accidentally left off the list. He discussed the resurfacing of Iron Mountain Road, adding there would also be a bridge replacement project. He also discussed the widening of US 78 in Oxford. Phase I of a project at Jacksonville State University is authorized, and the University is looking for bidders. Mr. McDaniel mentioned that Phase II of a streetscape project in Lineville is almost complete. Mr. McDaniel also discussed the streetscape project in Heflin, mentioning some of the problems that it has had. The construction of the project is underway.

With no further new business, Ms. Landholm moved on to the "Special Program." She turned the floor over to Ms. Stacey Browning for this portion of the meeting. The "special program" was a review of information obtained by Ms. Browning and Ms. Landholm at the National Rural Peer Learning Conference in Savannah, Georgia. A copy of the handout "Lessons from the National Rural Peer Learning Conference" is attached to these minutes. Ms. Browning discussed the Livable Communities Initiative, a federal program that emphasizes access to affordable housing and transportation. She then discussed regional livability, in which the issues of sustainability and livability were applied to a region rather than a community. Regions looked at upcoming projects that would influence growth and determined how they wanted that growth to happen. Ms. Browning then discussed corridor studies, specifically the study undertaken by Northwest Alabama on US 72. A land use, access management, and mobility study was conducted, and accessibility was found to be a key to the region. Economic development was seen as vitally important, and scenarios were developed. Ms. Browning discussed transit planning and the ways in which Georgia's transit development plans emphasize finding where populations that need transit live. In the discussion of Transportation Authorization, Ms. Browning discussed the fuel tax, funding for transit, and smart growth.

Ms. Landholm discussed the Alabama Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan, and elaborated on how human services and transit funding can be combined. She mentioned that the plan emphasizes the better use of existing transit. She also discussed how the Plan was created and how transit dependent populations were identified. There was some discussion on the transit systems in the region. Ms. Landholm discussed access management, and she mentioned that a model access management ordinance had been started and would soon be revisited. She discussed how access management became an issue to the EAC because the southern portion of the region along Highway 280 was worried about growth making the area look more like Highway 280 in Shelby County. The ordinance would provide communities with menu-like options from which they could pick and choose which ones would work for their specific needs. She also mentioned that ALDOT in Montgomery had been working on access management as well. Ms. Landholm discussed the extension of SAFETEA-LU and transportation authorization bills. She mentioned the conflicts that are occurring in Congress concerning the authorization. Mayor Young mentioned that a fuel tax would adversely affect rural populations, and asked if this had been addressed at the conference. Ms. Browning and Ms. Landholm answered that the question had been asked at the conference, but the topic had not really been addressed.

Under "Open Discussion and Announcements," Ms. Landholm mentioned that the next meeting would take place on January 21, 2009 at 1 p.m. at the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission. She then asked if there was a motion to adjourn. Mayor Baswell motioned to adjourn, and the meeting was adjourned.