

**EAST ALABAMA RURAL PLANNING ORGANIZATION
MEETING MINUTES
DISTRICT POLICY COMMITTEE & TECHNICAL ADVISORY
COMMITTEE for the NORTHERN DISTRICT
January 14, 2010 – 1:30 p.m.
Etowah County Courthouse - Gadsden**

Policy Committee Members in Attendance:

Mayor Tony Wilkie, City of Centre
Judge Melvyn Salter, Cherokee County
Mayor Edward Mackey, Town of Leesburg
Dawn Landholm, representing Bill Curtis, EARPDC

Technical Advisory Committee Members in Attendance:

Mr. Curtis Vincent, ALDOT 1st Division
Mr. Corey Chambers, Cherokee County
Mr. Robert Nail, Etowah County

Other Attendees:

Mr. Ben Thackerson, ALDOT District 5
Ms. Stacey Browning, EARPDC

Chairman Mayor Wilkie called the meeting to order at approximately 1:30.

Under “Old Business,” Mayor Wilkie asked if there were any corrections to the minutes from the previous meeting in November. Mr. Curtis Vincent mentioned that his name was missing from the list of those in attendance, and the correction was noted on the previous meeting’s minutes. Mayor Wilkie asked for a motion to approve the minutes with the correction, which was provided by Judge Salter, with Mr. Vincent seconding. The minutes, with the correction, were approved.

It was determined that there was no other “Old Business.”

Under “New Business,” there was a question about a project on 273. Mr. Vincent explained that there had been some revisions necessary because ADEM’s stormwater permits have become more strict. Mayor Mackey discussed the PEMCO access lane project in relation to these permits. These stormwater best management practices are going to affect every project let by ALDOT, and the federal government is much more involved in these projects. If a project has already been let, and the permit expires, then the project will need to go through this stormwater process. However, if the permit does not expire for the duration of construction, then the project will not have to go through the process. The process is very rigorous, encompassing soils, water, etc. A question was asked about any new stimulus money coming in. Mr. Vincent explained that stimulus projects had to be authorized by March. Most of the projects are soon to be let. ALDOT

is still operating under the continuing resolutions, including the rescissions. This means that they cannot plan very far ahead. Many projects were moved back because of money issues. The I-59 paving project is scheduled to begin paving on Monday. ALDOT anticipates that each side will take a year to complete.

A project along 411 is progressing and is set to be complete in early spring. It is 90% complete currently. There are plans for asphalt paving that will depend on funding. The middle section of this project has not changed. A paving project on 68 is on the books, but has not been let yet. A project on 35 from 68 to Watsons Crossroads is also set to be let this year. The bridge project on 35 across Little River is close to completion, but it is not being handled from District 5.

After determining that there was no other “New Business,” the meeting moved on to the special program, which involved a discussion of access management. Ms. Browning discussed fundamentals of access management as well as some strategies for managing access along major corridors. Ms. Browning discussed the consolidation and elimination of driveways, installation of medians and turn lanes, and construction of access roads. She also mentioned interconnectivity as a strategy for access management, noting that interconnections alleviate congestion on arterials by providing for alternative routes. She then discussed several access management projects, including the Elmore County, Alabama, access management policy, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. She explained the components of the Bruton Smith Parkway Design District, an access management and aesthetics project in Georgia. This is a special district created along a state highway in Georgia to guide new development. She also discussed the Franklin County, Virginia project in which an overlay district was used to provide for access management. The Austell Road Access Management Plan was mentioned as a corridor study in which specific recommendations were made for existing intersections and roadway segments. This plan was created by an outside consulting firm. The Peachtree Corridor Access Project in Atlanta was discussed as an example of a non-capacity project that improved capacity and traffic flow, as well as decreased delays and emissions.

Under “Open Discussion and Announcements,” Ms. Landholm announced that the next meeting would be on May 13, 2010 at 1:30, and Mayor Mackey offered to let the RPO use Leesburg’s Town Hall for the meeting. After determining that the next meeting would be held in Leesburg, the meeting was adjourned.