

**EAST ALABAMA RURAL PLANNING ORGANIZATION
MEETING MINUTES
DISTRICT POLICY COMMITTEE & TECHNICAL ADVISORY
COMMITTEE for the SOUTHERN DISTRICT
July 23, 2009 - 10:00 a.m.
ALDOT Division 4 Office – Alexander City**

Policy Committee Members in Attendance:

Mayor Oscar Crawley, City of Lanett (represented by Mr. Jerry Thrower)
Mr. Bill Curtis, East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission

Technical Advisory Committee Members in Attendance:

Mr. Donnie Cash, City of Roanoke
Mr. William D. McDaniel, ALDOT Division 4

Other Attendees:

Mr. Larry Woodruff, City of Goodwater
Mr. Jerry Thrower, City of Lanett
Ms. Doris Culver, Town of Rockford
Mr. Patrick H. Bolt, City of Valley
Ms. Lucy Arrington, Town of Woodland
Mr. Anthony R. Lackey, 3rd District, ALDOT Division 4
Mr. Eric M. English, 4th District, ALDOT Division 4
Ms. Dawn Landholm, East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission

Ms. Dawn Landholm, acting as Chairman, called the meeting to order at approximately 10:00 a.m.

Under “Old Business”, Ms. Landholm asked if there were any corrections to the minutes from the April 30, 2009 meeting. Mr. William McDaniel moved that the minutes be adopted as presented. Mr. Bill Curtis seconded the motion, which was passed by a unanimous vote of the committee.

Ms. Landholm informed the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission is still going through the process of hiring a new staff member, who will become the RPO Program Coordinator.

Under “New Business”, no officers were present to report.

Ms. Landholm informed committee members that SAFETEA-LU is scheduled for reauthorization this year. Representative Jim Oberstar, who is chairman of the Committee on

Transportation and Infrastructure, has proposed some changes to the regulations which would strengthen the role of the Rural Planning Organizations. Ms. Landholm explained that she has not read the proposed legislation, so she cannot provide details at this time. Hopefully, information will be made available at the National Rural Transportation Conference at the end of October.

Mr. William McDaniel, of ALDOT's 4th Division, gave an update on ALDOT's projects in Chambers, Coosa, Randolph, and Tallapoosa Counties. Mr. McDaniel began with a review of approved American Recovery and Reinvestment Act projects in the four county area. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation is attached to these minutes. One division of the stimulus package was for Transportation Enhancement (TE) projects. TE projects were eligible to be funded at 100% Federal Aid. The application deadline was June 30, 2009, and projects were awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. All of the stimulus TE funds had been expended prior to June 30th. Other projects were eligible for the standard 80% federal/20% local match funding. In the RPO's Southern District, the City of Alexander City received 100% funding, and the Cities of Valley and Roanoke received 80/20 funding for their TE projects.

Mr. McDaniel then referred committee members to the handout entitled "Status of County/City Projects", a copy of which is attached to these minutes. In reviewing the project listing, Mr. McDaniel explained that HRRR stands for the "High Risk Rural Roads" program. These funds may be used to improve safety on roadway sections that have a high incidence of accidents. Safety improvements could include striping, correcting superelevation on curves, replacing signs, installing guardrails. Several bridge and resurfacing projects are underway. One of the more major projects is the Cusseta Industrial Park access road. Turn lanes are being added to County Road 388 and to Cusseta Industrial Boulevard. An industrial access road project in Dadeville has just been completed. The Transportation Enhancement project on Broad Street in Alexander City is almost complete.

Regarding the handout on US and State Route projects, a copy of which is attached to these minutes, Mr. McDaniel asked the committee to review the projects, and ALDOT staff would respond to questions. Committee members had no questions.

Finally, Mr. McDaniel informed committee members about the Safe Routes to School Program (SRTS), which is offered through ALDOT's central office in Montgomery. Mr. Bill Luckerson oversees the program. The primary purpose of the program is to make physical improvements and develop programs that will make it safer and more appealing for children in grades K-8 to walk or ride bicycles to school. The program is a joint project between ALDOT, the Alabama Department of Education, and the Alabama Department of Public Health. These projects are eligible for 100% Federal Aid, no local match required. The funds may be used in conjunction with other funding sources, for example Transportation Enhancement. Additional information is available on the Department of Public Health's website: www.adph.org/srts. Some local examples of SRTS projects include the City of Auburn's planned construction of sidewalks around four schools and the City of Lineville's planned construction of sidewalks along Highway 9 to the elementary and middle schools.

Under motions or resolutions, Ms. Landholm directed committee members' attention to the proposed FY2010 meeting calendar, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. Because the National Rural Transportation Conference is at the end of October, she has proposed moving the October meeting to the first Thursday in November. That would allow her and the new Program Coordinator to give a presentation about the information they gathered at the conference. During the second through fourth quarters, she proposed scheduling the meetings on the fourth Thursday of the first month of each quarter, as in previous years. The meetings would continue to be held at 10:00 a.m. at the ALDOT Division 4 office. Ms. Landholm asked if anyone wanted to suggest changes to the dates, time, or location. Mr. Jerry Thrower moved that the meeting schedule be approved as presented, with no change in the meeting time and location. Mr. Donnie Cash seconded the motion, which was passed by a unanimous vote of the committee.

Under "other new business," Ms. Landholm announced that new officers would be elected at the November 5th meeting.

The "special program" will be a review of the Transportation Enhancement Program. Ms. Landholm explained that, although Transportation Enhancement (TE) grants have been awarded for this fiscal year, local governments can start planning their grant applications for next fiscal year. Although some committee members have seen this presentation, there are several new mayors and council members who may not be aware of the TE program.

Ms. Landholm directed committee members to a handout by the National Transportation Enhancement Clearinghouse entitled "12 TE Activities", a copy of which is attached to these minutes. This handout summarizes the types of projects that qualify for TE funds. She then turned the floor over to Mr. McDaniel.

Mr. McDaniel distributed a handout of his PowerPoint presentation "An Overview of Transportation Enhancement Projects", a copy of which is attached to these minutes. Key points raised during the presentation were:

- TE grants fund projects that help improve the appearance of existing transportation facilities or that expand transportation options beyond vehicles traveling on roadways.
- Project funding is 80% federal and 20% local match.
- The federal funds are paid on a reimbursement basis.
- The federal funds may be used for construction materials and labor—preliminary design, engineering, inspections, and similar work is not eligible for federal funding.
- Project must be let within two years of contract execution.
- ALDOT must pre-approve any changes in the construction plans, even if not federally funded.
- Work should be inspected daily.
- Adhere to all ALDOT requirements for construction, reporting, closeout, etc.

Mr. McDaniel's presentation included examples of area pedestrian and bicycle, landscaping and scenic beautification, historic rehabilitation, and rails-to-trails projects. In 2007, local governments in ALDOT's Fourth Division were funded for over \$1 million in projects. Recipients were the Cities of Lineville, Anniston, Opelika, Lincoln, and Talladega.

Under “persons wishing to be heard on matters not included in the agenda”, Ms. Landholm asked committee members to think about topics they would like to learn more about. RPO staff can put together presentations about those topics or try to find people who are willing to speak about those topics at no charge to the RPO.

Under “Open Discussion and Announcements”, Ms. Landholm announced that the next joint meeting of the East Alabama Rural Planning Organization’s District Policy and Technical Advisory Committees for the Southern District is scheduled for Thursday, November 5, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. in the ALDOT Division 4 office in Alexander City.

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