1. Roll Call

Members present: Mark Clear, Jeff Gust, Chuck Kamp, Steve King, Jerry Mandli (arrived during item #3), Al Matano, Ed Minihan, Mark Opitz (arrived during item #5), Chris Schmidt, Robin Schmidt

Members absent: David Ahrens, Ken Golden, Paul Lawrence, Patrick Stern

MPO Staff present: Bill Schaefer, David Kanning

2. Approval of November 5, 2014 Meeting Minutes

Moved by C. Schmidt, seconded by R. Schmidt, to approve the November 5, 2014 meeting minutes. Motion carried.

3. Communications

- Letter from WisDOT approving amendment No. 6 to the 2014-2018 TIP.
- Letter from WisDOT regarding nominations for the technical and policy advisory committee members for the Interstate 39/90/94 Study. Schaefer said that the board had nominated Chris Schmidt to serve on the committee. Schmidt confirmed he was willing to continue to serve on the committee.
- Letter from WisDOT regarding the STH 19 Preservation Study from USH 12 into Waterloo in Jefferson County. Schaefer said a smaller study was recently completed on STH 19 for the Sun Prairie/Windsor area. R. Schmidt asked for the definition of “preservation study”. Gust said that the goal of a preservation study is to keep a roadway viable in its current state for as long as possible without adding travel lanes. Schaefer noted that access point planning and consolidation are some of the most crucial components of corridor preservation.
- Letter drafted by Bill Schaefer on behalf of the MPO Policy Board supporting the Capital Area Regional Planning Commission’s Healthy Communities Grant.
- Letter from the USDOT approving the 2015 Unified Planning Work Program and funding.
- Brochure from WisDOT regarding an online interactive public survey with a mapping component that is being done for the interstate study. Schaefer said that two public meetings are scheduled for next week. The MPO may use the same interactive tool for its regional transportation plan update.

Matano shared the following with the board:

- Email message sent to Matano City of Madison resident Michael Barrett expressing opposition to Metro Transit’s bus stop consolidation program.
- Link to report from FHWA Office of Highway Policy Information with an updated, lower long-range forecast for VMT growth. Gust commented that growth of around 1% per year is still expected. Schaefer commented that national or state forecasts aren’t that meaningful for urban areas and specific corridors.

4. Public Comment (for items not on MPO Agenda)

None

5. Presentation on the Beltline (USH 14 to CTH N) Corridor Study

Schaefer introduced Larry Barta, WisDOT Southwest Region and Tom Lynch, Strand Associates. Schaefer said that Barta had previously given the Policy Board a presentation on the Beltline origin-destination study. The purpose of this presentation will be to provide an update on the status of the corridor study. Barta provided a presentation with some background information and the results of travel modeling to date. He said the current Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study will be completed this year, following by the
beginning of the EIS study in winter 2016. Barta summarized the PEL study process and objectives. He reviewed some of the results from the public survey conducted. He summarized the stand-alone transit strategies that were examined, including BRT. Although these systems will not reduce Beltline traffic, enhancing the existing transportation system remains a study objective and these and other strategies could be brought forward as a supplemental strategy. Barta then reviewed traffic impacts from the three roadway scenarios examined (north and south corridors and Beltline expansion). He provided slides showing the large amount of latent demand on the Beltline. He then summarized some of the comments received at the recent public meetings and reviewed the next steps.

Schaefer said that a comment made on the survey at the technical committee was that the survey asked about support for funding of transit and pedestrian/bicycle improvements while only asking about support for Beltline improvements. However, in reality funding for BRT, etc. would come from a special tax while Beltline funding would come from state gas tax revenues as part of the major projects program. R. Schmidt asked if all vehicle types were examined for the southern roadway corridor scenario as she thought it would draw much of the truck traffic off of the Beltline, making it safer. Lynch said that the travel demand model can provide truck information. Barta said the Verona Road study showed that locally-oriented truck traffic makes up a high percentage of overall traffic truck within the Madison area. There are many truck-centric businesses along the Verona Road route. A much small percent (about 2,000 per day) are trucks just traveling through the Madison area. Also, trucks tend to avoid traveling through Madison during peak periods.

Barta said that WisDOT was studying the traffic impacts of an alternative, more compact growth scenario in Madison with more development occurring inside the Beltline. Schaefer said that much of the growth in this scenario is located close to the Beltline so it is unlikely Beltline traffic would be reduced. Lynch said preliminary results show the more dense development pattern would cause Beltline volumes to increase. The board discussed how new technology might affect the roadway system. Barta said there is a lot of interest in how smart cars and connected vehicle technology will affect operational performance and safety. It is difficult to predict the impacts other than that safety will be improved. Capacity would likely be increased some as well. In response to a question from Matano about the Badger Road crossing, Barta showed the numerous potential new street or ped/bike crossings that will be analyzed. Schaefer added the analysis includes transit benefits of the crossings.

Opitz noted that no improvements are shown between Verona Road and Fish Hatchery Road or between Mineral Point Road and Old Sauk Road. Barta said that the list was not exhaustive. Potential bottleneck improvements on Mineral Point Road and elsewhere are currently being studied. Opitz commented that the Greenway Cross extension across USH 14 is designed to reduce traffic getting onto the Beltline for that movement, but that there is nothing comparable between Verona Road and Fish Hatchery Road. Many people use CTH PD. He asked about any similar strategies for that segment of Beltline. Barta said that improvements to CTH PD would be one strategy. Barta provided the example of adding a local street connection between South Towne Drive and John Nolen Drive. Barta noted that turbulence associated with weaving traffic at all of the interchanges is an important consideration. Minihan commented that the federal government holds easements along CTH B between USH 51 and the Interstate. Only the existing right-of-way could be utilized in that area, making a new south corridor route unlikely.


Schaefer summarized a letter City of Madison Mayor Paul Soglin sent to him and the Janesville and Beloit MPOs expressing concern about the lack of multimodal options in the I-39/90 corridor between Madison and the Illinois state line. Mayor Soglin was interested in setting up a meeting to discuss the issue. Schaefer said that WisDOT prepared a brief document that identifies new ped/bike facilities and park-and-ride lots being considered as part of the project in the Janesville area. Schaefer said the idea of implementing new bus service connecting Madison, Janesville and Beloit during construction made sense to provide an alternative travel option. Mitigation funds for major projects have been used in the past to fund advertising for ridesharing.
promotion as well as new transit service in the Milwaukee area. That might be an option. Funding that is used for intercity bus service would be another option for service targeted to commuters who travel to Madison for their job. Schaefer said he prepared a draft response letter for the Board’s review and approval that mentions this idea and offers to meet to discuss the issue.

Matano said he was disappointed the board did not see the November letter from Mayor Soglin earlier, and Schaefer said it wasn’t an urgent matter and the board didn’t meet in December. Gust commented that it seemed late to request intercity bus service as a mitigation measure since the environmental document had already been completed. Clear commented that it would be interested to see if there was demand for such service. Schaefer commented that a study was done in 2008 and Census data was available on the number of Rock County and Janesville residents working in the Madison area. It was discussed why the Van Galder bus service doesn’t work for commuters. R. Schmidt questioned the timing of the response letter, and Clear responded that no action had been taken since the original letter was written. Matano said he wouldn’t support sending the letter because of the timing, but was willing to participate in a meeting on the issue. Gust said he would vote no since the issue should have been addressed in the environmental document. Clear asked what mitigation measures have already been approved for the project. Schaefer said that some money was being used for an information campaign about the construction project targeted towards Illinois tourists.

Moved by R. Schmidt, seconded by King, to approve staff sending the response letter. Motion carried.

7. Appointment to the MPO Citizen Advisory Committee

Schaefer said that Cristel Gjerde, a member of the Dane County Chapter of the League of Women voters, has resigned from the committee. She has recruited Ingrid Roth, current co-president of the League, to take her place. Schaefer said that he supports continuing to have a member from the Dane County League of Women Voters on the committee.

Moved by Opitz, seconded by Clear, to appoint Ingrid Roth to the MPO Citizen Advisory Committee. Motion carried.


Schaefer briefed the board on the status of the functional classification system map update and why the update was needed. Schaefer explained that the project was on hold since last spring because WisDOT needed to take counts on streets that were being added as proposed collectors. Those counts were recently taken and used to confirm whether a street met the requirements to become a collector. MPO staff used the travel demand model to forecast travel volumes on the proposed planned collector streets. As a result of these efforts, five of the proposed collector streets have been removed from the map. Schaefer said that some changes to the urban area boundary are being proposed in conjunction with the functional classification update, most notably the area around CTH K. That roadway is now proposed as an urban principal arterial. Schaefer said MPO staff would review the map again with the MPO technical committee and send it out to local officials for review and comment.

Clear asked how many changes have been made to the map. Schaefer reviewed some of the changes and offered to provide a list of the major proposed changes at the next meeting. Schaefer emphasized that the functional classification map identifies how the roadways are being used, not desired use. He said local communities can still maintain their own maps for their own purposes.

9. Initial Discussion Regarding the Planning and Public Participation Process for the Regional Transportation Plan 2050

Schaefer informed the board that staff was in the process of developing a public participation plan for the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), including details on the planning process. Schaefer noted that staff has
already started work on data collection and development of draft population, household and employment forecasts for the RTP. Staff will start to engage the board and public during the spring or early summer of this year. Schaefer said that the RTP must be completed by March 2017, but that the goal is to complete it by the end of 2016. A general schedule was included in the packet, which identifies the general work elements that must be completed. Staff is currently working to develop a more refined schedule, public participation plan, and planning tasks list that will be incorporated in a draft document to be reviewed and approved by the board. This will include more details about how we intend to engage the local officials and public. Schaefer said that the purpose of this agenda item was to obtain early input from the board that could be incorporated into this document.

Schaefer highlighted some of the key public participation strategies. A steering committee will be created. The MPO’s citizen and technical committee will assist with obtaining input from staff. Updates will be provided at Dane County Cities and Villages and Towns Association meetings. MPO Policy Board meetings may also be scheduled in other communities. Schaefer said a more interactive website is planned, similar to the one used for the interstate study. Presentations will be posted online and Facebook will also be utilized. A random public survey was planned. Such a survey would help obtain answers to questions that are more representative of the general public from a geographic, ethnic and income standpoint. Schaefer provided examples of some potential survey questions that could be asked and noted that the full set of questions is currently being developed. Schaefer added that the Capital Area Regional Planning Commission (CARPC) will conduct a “values survey” as their first step in updating the regional land use plan, and that he will coordinate with them on question development. In addition to these efforts, a regular series of public meetings will be held.

In terms of planning process, Schaefer said he planned to use the land use development scenarios developed for the WisDOT studies. MPO staff developed one scenario based on local plans and trends. Another more compact growth scenario was being developed for the City of Madison, which MPO staff could revised to include other communities. Transportation projects could then be paired with those scenarios. Schaefer noted that a fully integrated transportation and land use plan is not possible, since CARPC will not start their land use plan for at least two more years. Schaefer said that he would like the RTP to do a better job of assessing how much it will cost to maintain the street system, and incorporate that into the financially constrained plan. Minihan said that the Town of Dunn estimates the future costs of maintaining their roads. Weather is a significant factor in determining maintenance schedules.

R. Schmidt asked if there was a way to involve the public sooner as they may be more committed to the process then. Schaefer said that he thinks it is best to have something for the public to react to. At the first public meetings this fall, the plan is to have some draft goals, policies, and objectives for people to comment on and provide trend and background information on the transportation system and results of the public survey. Input would be sought on things to address or include in the plan. Kamp said that he visited Champaign-Urbana and Minneapolis-St. Paul last year, and that he was struck by how much the Minneapolis-St. Paul MPO was in the news. He said the Champaign-Urbana MPO held roving public input meetings in different neighborhoods and communities by using a fully wrapped roving bus that was retired from the transit system. These meetings were held in various locations, including farmers markets and parades. People would stop by and ask questions about transportation-related topics. Kamp added that Metro Transit is now trying to hold public input sessions, rather than only public hearings, whenever a route change is proposed. Tweet sessions have also been held and were very successful -- over 30 comments were received during the first lunch hour session. That tweet session was advertised on buses using flyers and through other methods. Board members from Metro Transit’s TPC were available to answer questions during the Tweet session. Kamp volunteered to help the MPO if it wishes to use the same public outreach tool.

10. Status Report by Madison Area TPB Members on Other Projects Involving the TPB

Schaefer reported that he was unable to make the last Stoughton Road meeting, but heard that more outreach efforts will be needed to address environmental justice issues. The EIS may be delayed past May or June as a
result. Schaefer added that the recommended alternative from the USH 51 study is being scaled back. WisDOT is now focusing on intersection improvements.

11. Discussion of Future Work Items

Schaefer said that adoption of the functional class map will occur at the February or March meeting. The Regional Transportation Plan survey will be conducted this spring or early summer. A second ITS Plan workshop is scheduled for the end of this month. It will focus on communication between various agencies. Staff is continuing to make good progress on the Bicycle Plan; more information will be shared within the next couple of meetings. The Bicycle Wayfinding Plan project is finally moving forward and the attendant RFP will be made public soon. Staff is continuing to make good progress refining the STP-Urban scoring criteria. We will review our work with the MPO technical committee later this month and provide an update at the next MPO Policy Board meeting.

12. Announcements and Schedule of Future Meetings

The next meeting will be held Wednesday, February 4, 2015 at 6:30 p.m. at the Madison Water Utility Building, 119 E. Olin Ave., Room A-B.

13. Adjournment

Moved by King, seconded by Opitz, to adjourn. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:26 PM.