1. Roll Call

*Members present:* David Ahrens, Mark Clear, Ken Golden, Chuck Kamp, Jerry Mandli (arrived during item 5), Al Matano, Mark Opitz, Chris Schmidt, Robin Schmidt

*Members absent:* Judd Blau, Jeff Gust, Steve King, Paul Lawrence, Ed Minihan

*MPO Staff present:* Bill Schaefer, David Kanning

*Others present in an official capacity:* Dwight McComb (FHWA), Diane Paoni (WisDOT)

2. Approval of May 1, 2013 Meeting Minutes

Moved by C. Schmidt, seconded by Opitz, to approve the May 1, 2013 meeting minutes. Motion carried.

3. Communications

- Letter from City of Sun Prairie Alder Mary Polenske requesting that the city be considered for bus rapid transit service as it is further studied, and email response from Schaefer about the study. Schaefer said that MPO staff also provided a presentation on the BRT study at a City of Sun Prairie Transit Commission meeting.

  Golden expressed frustration with the communication exchange. He said he would have liked the response to mention the desirability of the city contracting with Metro for service to Madison to build the ridership necessary to justify BRT service in the future. R. Schmidt noted that it was good the city was talking about the need for bus service and suggested that perhaps the MPO Chair should invite city officials to talk about bus service planning. Kamp said he agreed with Ken, but noted Metro would have difficulty serving Sun Prairie now due to its shortage of buses. There was further discussion regarding the fact that the lack of a regional transit authority (RTA) is an impediment to transit service expansion to suburban communities and also results in funding inequities.

- Letter from Al Matano, on behalf of the MPO Policy Board, in support of Wisconsin Southern Railroad’s TIGER grant application to rehabilitate the track between Middleton and the Village of Lone Rock.

  Schaefer noted that the MPO provided a letter of support for the same grant project application in the prior round of TIGER funding last year. The board discussed the funding amounts and the parties responsible for local share contributions.

- Letter from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Wisconsin Division approving the Madison urban area boundary and an attached letter from WisDOT asking the USDOT for the approval. Schaefer said that final approval of the planning area boundary was still pending.

  C. Schmidt asked if the Village of Oregon had contacted the MPO about the planning area expansion. Schaefer responded that he hadn’t received any communication about the issue, but that the Oregon Village President participated in the voting for the city/village appointments to the MPO Board.

- Memo from Steering Committee for the Capital Region Sustainable Communities project to partnership members regarding the ongoing regional collaboration. Schaefer explained that the Capital Area RPC had contracted with a communications firm to develop a communications strategy for the initiative. A working session with leaders was planned to help develop the strategy and the committee is looking for partnership members to identify “thought leaders” for the session. The committee is also asking participating organizations to identify efforts they’re engaged in to meet the “grand challenges” identified. Schaefer asked board members to contact him with any suggestions for leaders to invite to participate in the session or for volunteers. R. Schmidt volunteered to participate in the session(s).
4. Public Comment (for items not on MPO Agenda)

None

5. Special Order of Business: U.S. Department of Transportation Presentation and Discussion Related to the Federal Transportation Planning Review of the Madison Area Transportation Planning Board Activities

Dwight McComb, FHWA, provided a presentation with background information on the planning certification review. He stated that federal funding is allocated to the Madison area for transportation improvements. Congress has designated the MPO as the planning organization that plans and directs that funding to address the priority improvements needed for the transportation system in the region. Federal law requires that U.S. DOT review the planning process conducted by MPOs in areas over 200,000 in population every four years. McComb said the planning process is important because there is limited funding available for the transportation needs in the area. The process evaluates the regional needs and prioritizes strategies to guide the effective and efficient investment of the limited funding to address the needs of the area. The process ensures all sectors of the community are heard and lays the framework for the future transportation system. McComb reviewed the required products of the planning process, including an annual work program, regional transportation plan, congestion management process, and TIP. He said U.S. DOT will prepare a summary report following the close of the comment period, which runs through August 16. He asked the board for comments on the planning process.

R. Schmidt asked McComb how well the Madison MPO was doing from his perspective. McComb responded that the MPO was doing a good job overall. He commented that a challenge was establishing an identity because of the many agencies conducting transportation planning in the area. Golden asked how many other MPOs in the state are affiliated with regional plan commissions. McComb stated that a little over one-half are housed with an RPC. Golden asked how the MPO was doing since the separation of the MPO function from the RPC. McComb said he didn’t think the separation had been detrimental to this point. He said the MPO’s plans were coordinated with and well balanced with the other planning efforts in the area. Golden said that he has seen the MPO gain more visibility since its separation from the RPC. Matano asked about the topics covered in the staff discussions for the review. McComb said the topics related to the federal planning requirements. He said U.S. DOT staff will report their findings to the MPO Policy Board, probably in late fall.

Golden commented on the importance of the job and job-related transportation services provided by the YWCA for low-income persons and the need to find a way to continue funding for the program. Golden said that 250 persons relied on the service with many more on a waiting list. The top employer destination was Epic in Verona. Kamp explained that the program has received Federal Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) funding in the past, but that program was eliminated in MAP-21. Those types of activities can be funded with transit formula funds, but Metro Transit’s overall federal funding is going to decrease significantly with the elimination of all discretionary programs. Opitz asked about the level of public participation at the open house. McComb stated that two individuals attended. One had questions about ongoing projects in the area and showed a strong interest in the planning process. Another individual gave a prepared statement.

6. Resolution TPB No. 76 Approving Amendment #4 to the 2013-2017 Transportation Improvement Program for the Madison Metropolitan Area & Dane County

Schaefer reviewed the project revisions included in the amendment. One of the projects was the YW Transit JobRide program just discussed, which will receive federal JARC funding in 2013 from leftover funding under SAFETEA-LU. He said most of the other projects involved minor cost and/or schedule changes. The new projects are several new rail crossing signal and gate replacement projects and a new county project (CTH P) that was awarded STP-Rural funding.
7. **Review of Preliminary Draft Listing and Ranking of Candidate Projects for STP Urban Funding for 2014-2018**

Schaefer said that MPO staff scores and ranks projects for STP-Urban funding each year as part of the TIP development process. Local units of government are asked to resubmit project applications each year even if they have been included in the 5-year program in prior years because of schedule or project scope/design changes. Schaefer reviewed the preliminary draft listings, including the projects programmed each year and the amount of carryover funding. The major 2014 project was E. Johnson Street. Design work was close to being completed on that. The project includes intersection and bus stop improvements. Matano asked for clarification on the bus stop improvements. Schaefer said that the plan was to move the stops to the far side of the intersection to improve bus operations and to eliminate some stops, which are now every block. Schaefer noted that starting in 2014 STP-Urban funds would not be needed to support the planning program due to the increase in federal planning funds the MPO will receive starting next year. The major projects in 2015-'16 were the two segments of the CTH M corridor reconstruction project and the Cottage Grove Road project from the Interstate to Sprecher Road. Schaefer said the CTH M project included a separate multi-use path and some grade-separated crossings.

Schaefer said that at the interagency TIP project coordination meeting he questioned City of Madison staff about the timing of the Cottage Grove Road project. The timing was scheduled to coincide with the Interstate bridge project, but that project had now been delayed until 2019 because of the current Interstate study. City of Madison Engineering staff said they still wanted to proceed with reconstruction of Cottage Grove Road in 2016. The city is concerned about further delays in the Interstate bridge project. Schaefer said there is a grocery store being constructed along that roadway segment, but Clear noted that was scheduled for next year. The major 2017 project was McKee Road (Maple Grove Rd. to CTH M). It includes a ped/bike underpass for the Ice Age Junction Trail. Three projects are currently shown as programmed in 2018 – Johnson Street (Baldwin to First), McKee Rd./CTH PD (Commerce Dr. to Badger State Trail), and CTH PD (CTH M to East of Nine Mound Rd.) – although there is a shortage of funding of about $500,000 for the CTH PD project. He said the priority listings for 2018 were very preliminary due to design scope and funding issues that needed to be worked out for some of the projects. Schaefer said the McKee Road project application was submitted by the City of Fitchburg and would tie in with the improvement to McKee Road to be done as part of the planned Verona Road/McKee Road interchange. McKee Road would be expanded to six lanes for this segment. The CTH PD project would tie into local street and intersection improvements planned to support the Epic campus growth. The projects were discussed at the TIP project coordination meeting. The cost and funding for the rail crossing improvement needed on E. Johnson Street was discussed. Also, county staff said they did not support the McKee Road project. If that is the case, the MPO could not program it since it is a county roadway.

Schaefer said the actual STP-Urban funding level for 2016-2018 was uncertain. For now it is assumed the funding will remain the same. The allocation should be known in the next few weeks. He said the listings, with any revisions, would be reviewed again with the board at the August meeting. The listings are approved by the board as part of the TIP in October.

Golden asked Schaefer to report on the total cost for the CTH M corridor improvements, including the Mineral Point Road intersection improvements and the Pleasant View Road extension. Golden stated that he thought it would be interesting to compare the total cost to the cost of BRT. Schaefer said that the cost for the CTH M corridor work was $37 million dollars. That doesn’t include the Pleasant View Road extension and two roundabouts funded with ARRA funding. Golden also asked if the additional planning funds for the MPO could be used to support the land use/transportation plan update. Schaefer said that potentially some funds could be used to support transportation related land use planning work. Golden commented that the MPO and CARPC working together on a land use and transportation plan update should be included as a discussion item at a future meeting.
8. Recommendation Regarding the MPO’s Representative to the City of Madison’s Long-Range Transportation Planning Committee

Matano said that C. Schmidt and Steve King are the current MPO representatives, and King’s appointment is up. Schaefer said King is interested in continuing to serve on the committee. Matano said he was on the committee as a county representative. Golden mentioned he had just been appointed as a Madison Transit & Parking Commissions representative to the committee.

Moved by Clear seconded by R. Schmidt, to recommend that Mayor Soglin reappoint Steve King as the MPO’s representative to the City of Madison’s Long-Range Transportation Planning Committee. Motion carried.

9. Resolution TPB No. 77 Accepting the Madison Transit Corridor (BRT) Study Report and Recommending Proceeding with Detailed Design and Environmental Analysis

Golden passed around a copy of a substitute resolution with some relatively minor, non-substantive modifications to Resolution TPB No. 77. There was some discussion to clarify some of the language changes. Golden indicated that he thought his recommended changes increased the enthusiasm level. The purpose of the resolution was to maintain the momentum for BRT and keep the project moving forward. Schaefer said resolution stemmed from the final BRT Study Oversight Committee meeting and was suggested by Golden. He said City of Madison leaders might not be comfortable moving forward to the next phase of study without additional discussion and opportunities for public involvement through the city’s transportation plan, but he thought it was perfectly appropriate for the MPO to take a leadership role on this regional project and make a recommendation to move the project forward. Golden added that he thought the recommendation to set up an intergovernmental committee was the most important as he thinks that is a key to moving the project forward. Kamp indicated he thought it was appropriate for the MPO to play a leadership role and that he would endorse the resolution. After explaining that the Transport 2020 committee was never formally abolished, Matano said that there was no reason why that committee couldn’t implement BRT just as easily as commuter rail. Following some further discussion, it was agreed that the substitute resolution could be adopted tonight with minor non-substantive edits made by Schaefer and approved by Matano.

Moved by Golden, seconded by R. Schmidt, to adopt Substitute Resolution No. 77 Accepting the Madison Transit Corridor (BRT) Study report and Recommending Proceeding with Detailed Design and Environmental Analysis. Motion carried.

10. Update on Beltline (USH 12/14/18/151) (USH 14 to CTH N) Corridor Study and Discussion of Draft Problem Statement, Goal, and Objectives

Matano said that he read an article about this project after the agenda was distributed. Schaefer confirmed that there was an article in the paper about the study and reported that WisDOT is starting the public involvement phase of the initial “Planning and Environmental Linkages Study.” As part of the required federal process, WisDOT sent a letter to the MPO asking if it wanted to be a participating agency. Schaefer said that he responded to the letter and confirmed the MPO’s interest in participating and noted Golden’s appointment to the policy committee. Schaefer said he would participate on the technical committee and had already been attending other staff meetings. Schaefer said the agenda for the first policy and technical committee meetings included a review of the draft problem statement and draft goals and objectives. Schaefer indicated that he placed this item on the agenda to see if board members had any comments on that. He said he thought it was fine and was happy it addressed traffic crossing the Beltline as well as traffic using the Beltline and also addressed alternative transportation modes.

Golden suggested that this item be episodically placed on the TPB’s agenda so that the board can advocate certain policy positions related to the project. Golden said the board may wish to examine how transit could be considered as a way to address Beltline traffic volumes, and then forward recommendations to WisDOT. Golden said that he would like to have a discussion about the “southern reliever” and forward the board’s
collective recommendation about this alternative to WisDOT at the appropriate time. At the request of Ahrens, Golden provided more information about this alternative.

11. Initial Discussion on Potential Revision to MPO Board Structure and Membership

Schaefer said the MPO is required to consider changes to the policy board structure after each Census in light of changes to the planning area boundary. MPOs have until fall of 2014, but it would be prudent for the board to address the issue sooner rather than later. Schaefer said he had put together some different scenarios to stimulate board discussion. He mentioned that U.S. DOT is preparing some guidance on the new requirement that the major transit operator be represented on the MPO policy board. The draft guidance is due in October so the board may want to wait until then before taking any final action.

R. Schmidt suggested deferring discussion until the next meeting. Golden suggested sending the scenarios to the local units of government in the MPO planning area to get their comments. Matano commented that he didn’t think it was imperative for the board representation to be most proportional to population. Clear asked if there were any requirements on MPOs to ensure the most proportionate representation on the policy board. Schaefer said no. Golden commented on the history of the MPO board structure since the redesignation in 1999 and said a conscious effort had been made to have proportional representation. In response to a question about scenarios 4-6 which reduce the county appointments, Schaefer said that adding a cities/villages appointment and/or a separate Metro representative increases the board size and it is already large. Reducing the number of county appointments would offset that. He said one could make an argument the county is currently overrepresented on the board given the county’s role in planning and maintaining the urban transportation system. He also mentioned the state statute that allows counties to transfer jurisdiction of county highways in incorporated areas once a county reaches 500,000 population – something that will officially occur following the next Census. Opitz suggested another scenario to consider in which one of the City of Madison’s appointments is eliminated and a Metro Transit representative is added. He noted that would keep the current board size and would also address the proportional representation issue. Golden expressed support for a separate Metro Transit representative that wasn’t one of the City of Madison’s representatives.

After further discussion regarding whether the scenarios should be sent out for comment, Matano suggested that the Board defer the entire matter until the next meeting to allow the board to review and make any desired changes to the scenarios before sending them out for comment. Golden agreed.

Moved by Golden, seconded by C. Schmidt, to defer further discussion and any action on the to the next meeting.

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

Deferred.

13. Discussion of Future Work Items

Matano asked for clarification on the Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan Update. Schaefer said the item would be on the next meeting’s agenda.

14. Announcements and Schedule of Future Meetings

Schaefer said that the August meeting agenda will include election of officers, which is done annually. Kamp announced that Metro Transit had been contacted by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) about the remaining planning funds originally awarded for the Transport 2020 project. FTA has said the grants could be withdrawn if there is no activity in the near future. To address this issue, a number of people had been looking into an appropriate reconfiguration activities for use of that funding. An update would be provided in the future.
Clear asked how staff thought the review had gone. Schaefer responded that he thought it went well. There were no major issues. The discussion focused on ways to improve the planning process, including Title VI initiatives and overall public involvement activities. Kamp said he mentioned the numerous transit studies despite the lack of funding.

The next meeting will be held August 7, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. at the Madison Water Utility Building, 119 E. Olin Ave., Room A-B.

12. Adjournment

Moved by Clear, seconded by Golden, to adjourn. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:10 PM.