1. Roll Call

Members Present: Beaupre, K. Clark, R. Clark, Dunphy, Ginder, Koprowski (for Hoelker), Severson (for Kugler), Kennedy, McComb, Murphy, Phillips (for Nelson), Sobota (for Beck), Sylvester, Andros (for Violante), Vela, Woodard

Members Absent: Dryer, Coville, Even, Kirchner, Scheel, Simon


2. Approval of January 28, 2009 Meeting Minutes

Moved by Kennedy, seconded by Vela, to approve the January 2009 meeting minutes. Motion carried.

3. Discussion on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), Stage 2 Solicitation for Local Projects, and Project Eligibility Requirements

McComb provided a power point presentation on ARRA highlighting the Act’s objectives, available FHWA funding, and other key rules and provisions. WisDOT is responsible for implementing the Act. Transit funding is also available through FTA programs. He reviewed the apportionment of FHWA program funding to Wisconsin and suballocation between state and local projects and different areas of the state. The MPO is responsible for selection of projects using STP-Urban funds suballocated to the Madison urban area. All rules regarding federal-aid transportation programs apply. He also reviewed the different dates by which state and local funds must be obligated (i.e., funding agreement signed by FHWA). He emphasized the high degree of accountability and transparency expected with regular reporting and data provided on projects and jobs created. Because of this, FHWA will be increasing its scrutiny in overseeing the implementation of the Act.

Rod Clark distributed a handout and reviewed the ARRA funding distribution in Wisconsin and WisDOT’s process for state and local projects. Wisconsin is receiving $529 million. About $355 million is apportioned for state projects. About $16 million must be set aside for Transportation Enhancement (TE) projects. That leaves $159 million for other local projects, including $49 suballocated to the largest urbanized areas and $110 million that can be used anywhere in the state. Clark said the $110 million could be used for state projects, but WisDOT’s goal is to use all of it for local projects. Clark clarified that WisDOT would ask the MPOs to prioritize TE projects in their planning areas. Both the state and local ARRA project delivery processes are being done in two stages. The first stage for both was initiated before the final bill was passed because of the much tighter deadlines that were included in the House bill. The Governor has released the list of Stage 1 State projects, which total around $300 million out of the $355 million available. The proposed bid letting schedules for these are April-June 2009. A Stage 2 process will select additional projects with a deadline of March 2010 for obligation and April for letting. The state will also be ready with additional projects in case funds are redistributed either from other states or the funds set aside for local projects if they aren’t used. The Stage 1 solicitation for local projects resulted in only 40 projects that could meet the April/May letting timeline. A Stage 2 solicitation has been initiated for two groups of projects: those that could have PS&E completed by May 1 for letting by June/July 2009 and those with a PS&E date of December 1 and letting by spring 2010. Clark said a clarification letter was just sent out indicating that projects currently scheduled to be let between January and September 30, 2010 are eligible for ARRA funding. WisDOT received guidance from FHWA that
these projects were eligible if construction was moved up a year from 2010 to 2009. PS&E for these projects must be done by June 1 with letting in the 2009 construction season. As a result of this change, the deadline for Stage 2 projects has been pushed back a week to April 8. Clark then briefly reviewed the Federal eligibility requirements for the different local project programs and the Federal/state requirements that must be completed by the PS&E dates.

Woodard asked if Clark expected some funds to be redistributed. He said it was probable. McDonald said he wanted to clarify that no STP-Urban projects were approved under the Stage 1 solicitation and that the full $9.7 million was available for Stage 2 projects. He said Monona Drive was the project he was thinking of in particular. Schaefer said the two projects they know were approved are the Aberg Avenue ped/bike overpass and the CTH N (Yahara River) Bridge. Clark said Monona Drive was not approved for Stage 1 funding. He clarified that there is no separate Local Bridge Program funding, but that WisDOT is setting aside some funds for bridge projects. The CTH N bridge project would have come out of Madison’s STP-Urban funds if it was in the Madison urbanized area, but he thinks it was determined to be only in the MPO planning area. McDonald asked if a TIP amendment was required by April (the application deadline) for Stage 2 projects not currently in the TIP, because MPO staff planned to process the amendment following the MPO’s scoring and ranking of projects. Clark said no, except perhaps for projects in the first group with a PS&E date of May 1. Vela said the City of Monona intended to apply for Stage 2 funding for Monona Drive with a May PS&E date. It was pointed out, however, that the project is scheduled to be let this year so it wouldn’t be eligible for ARRA funding. Clark added that ARRA funding can’t be used to pay the 20% local match for projects already federally funded. McDonald asked how long it will take WisDOT to review the Stage 2 local projects submitted for eligibility and whether MPO staff could get a list of the projects submitted in order to start work on scoring and ranking them. Clark said staff hoped to finish the review within ten days, but certainly by late April. He thought a list of projects submitted could be provided. Stausske said the City of Middleton planned to possibly submit the Allen Boulevard project for May/June PS&E, and Sylvester said the City of Verona’s Nine Mound Road project was ready to go. However, it was pointed out that there are required processes that must be followed and others questioned whether they could meet that deadline. Clark commented that even though PE is eligible for funding for Stage 2 projects with a December 1 PS&E date, this is proving difficult because the process is time consuming if it must go through the state system. This might make the timeframe difficult to meet. Dunphy asked if local governments must prioritize their own projects if they have more than one, and Clark said this wasn’t necessary for projects in the MPO planning area since the MPO will be prioritizing them. Schaefer commented that it might be good to have some backup projects ready to go if one or more of those prioritized for funding wasn’t able to meet the deadline. Clark agreed. Woodard added that this would also be a good strategy if funds were redistributed next year. Phillips pointed out it was likely that the last project funded may only be partially funded. Clark said the MPO would have an option in that case of partially funding the one project or reducing the funding to less than 100% for other projects. Phillips asked what happens if the cost comes in higher than the estimate. Clark said the State will have some contingency funds available and may make available some additional funds with a 20% match.

4. **Review and Recommendation on Resolution TPB No. 25, Amendment #3 to the 2009-2013 Transportation Improvement Program**

Schaefer said this amendment includes Metro’s two ARRA grants, which Metro plans to use for the purchase of 18 hybrid low-floor buses, 3 small low-floor buses, security cameras, and electronic display signs. Metro has also agreed to include a small accessible van for the City of Stoughton for its share ride taxi service. The amendment also includes revisions to state and local projects that were approved for ARRA funding under the Stage 1 process. State projects are the Interstate 94 reconstruction and widening from I-39/90 to CTH N and USH 151 (Main and Bird Street bridges) bridge painting. Local projects are the Aberg Avenue ped/bike overpass and CTH N (Yahara River) bridge replacement. Lastly, the amendment includes a revision to the current I-39/90/94 study from
Madison to DeForest, expanding the limits and scope of the study to a statewide planning study of I-94 from the Minnesota line to Oconomowoc.

Moved by Clark, seconded by Woodard, to recommend approval of Resolution TPB No. 25.

5. Committee Member Reports

Kennedy reported on the efforts of UW-Madison, working with the City of Madison, to vacate Johnson Street and modify the N. Randall Avenue crossing of the rail line for the South Campus Union project.

Vela said that a June letting is scheduled for the first phase of the Monona Drive project. Engineering has started for the second phase, and a public meeting is scheduled for March 30.

Ginder reported that the City of Middleton was close to adopting a new, updated pedestrian/bicycle plan. They only have one small roadway project this year given the tight budget.

Phillips mentioned that construction work had started on University Avenue project and it was going well thus far.

Switzer reported that the comment period on the Connections 2030 Plan closed on February 27. They received 1,100 individual comments and were reviewing them. A revised draft plan will be completed late this summer and public hearings held on it.

Sobota reported that a Metro fare increase would go into effect on April 5. Some service improvements will be implemented with the added revenue. Fitchburg will be adding weekend service to the route serving its new Target center.

Koprowski mentioned the I-94 study that will be starting soon that was noted under Item 4.

Woodard noted that the Fish Hatchery Road reconstruction project south of Lacy Road would be starting in a month. The city is awaiting WisDOT authorization on the ped/bike overpass for the Capital City Trail.

6. Staff Reports

McDonald reported on the MPO Board’s outreach meeting in Sun Prairie. Dave Trowbridge made a presentation on Transport 2020 and the Finance/Governance Subcommittee recommendations. While it wasn’t one of the scheduled public meetings, over 100 people still turned out to comment on the issue. At member’s places was Amendment #2 to the TIP that the Board approved at the March meeting. Schaefer said the amendment included three transit projects that were awarded funding: Dane County’s mobility management and training program, employment transportation services for low-income persons to be implemented by YW Transit, and two small buses for Sun Prairie.

7. Next Meeting Dates

The next meeting dates are Wednesday, April 22 and Wednesday, May 27.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Bill Schaefer