

HRMPO Policy Board Minutes
May 19, 2022, 3:00 p.m.

Rockingham County Administration Center
20 East Gay Street, Harrisonburg, VA 22802

Voting Members	Non-Voting Members	Staff
City of Harrisonburg	Bill Yates, JMU	Bonnie Riedesel, CSPDC
Sal Romero	Michelle DeAngelis, FTA	✓ Ann Cundy, CSPDC
Deanna Reed	Kevin Jones, FHWA	✓ Rita Whitfield, CSPDC
Vacant	Grace Stankus, DRPT	
Gerald Gatobu	Rusty Harrington, Aviation	
George Hirschmann, Vice Chair		Others
Rockingham County	Alternates	✓ Tom Hartman, Harrisonburg
✓ Casey Armstrong	Rhonda Cooper, Rockingham	✓ Burgess Lindsey, VDOT
Rick Chandler	✓ Rachel Salatin, Rockingham	✓ Kyle Lawrence, Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition
✓ Stephen King	✓ Cheryl Spain, Harrisonburg	✓ Dylan Nicely, Rockingham
Town of Mt. Crawford	Ande Banks, Harrisonburg	✓ Mark Merrill, CTB Member*
✓ Dennis Driver, Chair	✓ Alex Wilmer, Bridgewater	✓ Shane McCabe, VDOT*
Town of Dayton	Neal Dillard, Mt. Crawford	
✓ Angela Lawrence	Christa Hall, Dayton	
Town of Bridgewater	✓ Brad Reed, VDOT*	
Jay Litten	Jeff Lineberry, VDOT	
VDOT	✓ Don Komara, VDOT	
✓ Randy Kiser*	Matt Dana, VDOT	
	Wood Hudson, DRPT	
Zoom Participants*		

Call to Order

The May 19, 2022, meeting of the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (HRMPO) Policy Board was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Chairperson Dennis Driver. Pursuant to §2.2-3708.2 of the Code of Virginia, HRMPO Policy Board members may participate in meetings of the HRMPO or its committees through electronic communication means. Those who attended virtually are indicated by an asterisk; all others attended in-person.

Approval of Minutes

Chairperson Driver presented the minutes from the April 21, 2022, HRMPO Policy Board meeting. Mr. King moved, seconded by Ms. Lawrence, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment

Chairperson Driver opened the floor to the public for comments. There were no comments from the public.

Approval of the FY23 UPWP (Board Action Form#22-2)

Chairperson Driver presented for consideration the FY23 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). Ms. Cundy gave a brief review on the FY23 UPWP, noting that it is the annual work program and budget for the MPO. She stated that the Policy Board released the draft FY23 UPWP for the 21-day public comment period at their April 21, 2022, meeting and no comments were received. Ms. Lawrence, moved, seconded by Mr. Armstrong, to approve the FY23 UPWP. Motion was carried by unanimous vote.

HRMPO 2045 LRTP Update (Board Memo#22-8)

Chairperson Driver presented for consideration the HRMPO 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Update. Ms. Cundy gave an update on the LRTP. She reviewed the Project Development Framework, noting that the Framework Document outlines how LRTP projects are identified, screened, and scored for the Fiscally-Constrained and Vision Lists in the LRTP document. Ms. Cundy stated that staff conducted a preliminary project screening to determine whether projects from the 2040 LRTP and recent study recommendation meet a VTrans need. She noted that the VTrans need screening results will be confirmed in June. Ms. Cundy stated that Avid-Core has developed a draft action plan for Phase 2 of public engagement for the LRTP update. She stated that Phase 2 will focus on the draft projects to be scored and prioritized in the 2045 LRTP. Ms. Cundy reviewed the next steps, noting that HRMPO staff, LRTP Working Group, Kimley Horn, and Avid Core will spend the remainder of May and June finalizing the Phase 2 public engagement deliverables, and finalizing the strategies and schedule for public engagement activities.

HB 444 Changes to FOIA for Virtual Meetings (Board Memo #22-9)

Chairperson Driver presented the HB 444 Changes to FOIA for Virtual Meetings. Ms. Cundy stated that the General Assembly has passed, and the Governor has signed HB444 into law, which will allow electronic meetings for appointed bodies like MPOs. She noted that these electronic meeting provisions can only be used for two, or 25 percent of the public body's meetings per year, whichever is greater and will take effect September 1, 2022. Ms. Cundy stated that according to the new law, HRMPO is eligible to hold up to three meetings virtually each year. After some discussion, it was the consensus of the members present for staff to present a recommendation to the Policy Board at a future meeting with suggested dates and additional guidance on public notice for holding virtual meetings in accordance with the MPO's Public Participation Plan.

Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB)

Mr. Mark Merrill, CTB Board member, was in attendance to give an update on CTB's activities. He reported on CTB membership, noting that the Board consists of 17 members appointed by the Governor. He gave an update on budget negotiations between the House and Senate and the Governor regarding a proposed variety of tax cuts, including suspending a scheduled increase in the gas tax, elimination of statewide grocery tax, doubling the standard deduction for state income tax, and tax rebates from the States surplus budget. Mr. Merrill gave an update on the Six-Year Improvement Program, noting that spring meetings were conducted by the nine districts across the state soliciting public comment. He expressed his appreciation for all those who attended the spring meetings, noting that feedback was generally positive. Mr. Merrill reported on: SMART SCALE Round 5 and the methodology for scoring eligible projects; highway safety concerns and increase of fatalities in Virginia; Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) safety concerns; impact of increased operation costs; improving and expanding passenger and freight rail throughout Virginia; reported on the expansion of Exit 300 southbound I-66 ramp; announced a public hearing on June 28th regarding the widening of Interstate 81 Harrisonburg-area widening on Exits 243 and 247; and funding for Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) applications. On behalf of the HRMPO Policy Board, Chairperson Driver expressed his appreciation for Mr. Merrill's attendance and updates.

Agency Updates

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

Mr. Komara gave an update on Route 682 Friedens Church Road bridge project in Rockingham County, noting that it was moving along very well; Route 720 Smithland Road and Town of Broadway bridge projects; reported on the Six-Year Improvement Program public meeting that was held on May 9, 2022, at Blue Ridge Community College Plecker Center; announced a public hearing to be held on May 24th from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., at the Staunton District office for the widening of Interstate 81 from mile post 221 to 225 in Augusta County; and a public hearing for a six-lane widening project on Interstate 81 through the City of Harrisonburg on June 28th at Pleasant Valley Elementary School in Harrisonburg, from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Reed reported on SMART SCALE, noting that a total of 56 preapplications were submitted. He noted that the smart portal for full applications will open June 1st. Mr. Reed gave an update on the Project Pipeline Program Study in the City of Harrisonburg on U.S. 11, from Pleasant Valley Road to Mosby Road.

Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)

Ms. Cundy gave an update on DRPT. She reported that DRPT released its FY23 Draft Six-Year Improvement Program on April 20th and a copy may be viewed on the DRPT Open Data Portal. Ms. Cundy reported that DRPT is encouraging everyone to participate in Bike Month this May, promoting biking as a commuting option.

Harrisonburg Department of Public Transportation (HDPT)

Ms. Spain reported on HDPT's activities as follows: gave an update on the Feasibility Study for Microtransit; reported on James Madison University's (JMU) graduation, noting that ridership was low due to limited graduation tickets; and noted that Passio Technologies was on site to upgrade, install, and implement the Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) on the City of Harrisonburg's transit buses to improve customer service and increase passenger ridership.

Harrisonburg Public Works

Mr. Hartman announced the completion of the Friendly City Trail Shared-Used Path project, which consists of sidewalk and shared-use path improvements that provides connectivity and recreational options to people walking, jogging, and bicycling. He announced a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the



project will take place in Hillandale Park on Wednesday, May 25, at 1:00 p.m. Mr. Hartman gave an update on the University Boulevard relocation project; various construction and paving projects in the area; and SMART SCALE projects.

Other Business

Under Other Business, Chairperson Driver introduced and welcomed Mr. Kyle Lawrence, Executive Director of the Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition, who presented a video by Kline May Realty on the Shenandoah Valley Rail Trail. He noted that the plan is to buy the defunct rail line that runs from Broadway to Front Royal, and turn it into a one-of-a-kind trail. Mr. Lawrence stated that the Shenandoah Rail Trail Partnership is an unincorporated coalition of public, private and non-profit organizations along the proposed Shenandoah Valley Rail Trail that have come together with the vision of transforming an unused single-track railroad corridor from Broadway to Front Royal into a multi-use almost 50-mile trail re-connecting communities, businesses, schools and many local cultural and historic resources. He noted that the project is still in the planning phase, but Kline May is supporting the effort as a way to improve the community.

Upcoming Meetings

Chairperson Driver announced the following upcoming meetings: HRMPO TAC meeting will be held on June 2, 2022, at 2:00 p.m., and the HRMPO Policy Board meeting will be held on June 16, 2022, at 3:00 p.m.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the HRMPO Policy Board, Mr. King moved, seconded by Mr. Armstrong, for adjournment at 4:10 p.m. Motion was carried by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ann W. Cundy".

Ann Cundy
Director of Transportation