



**SIERRA VISTA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
MEETING MINUTES: SEPTEMBER 17, 2020**

**APPROVED**

**MEETING LOCATION:**

City of Sierra Vista, City Hall  
City Manager's Conference Room  
1011 North Coronado Drive  
Sierra Vista, AZ 85635

To attend the meeting by telephone:  
Call 1-415-655-0001. Meeting # 287 957 271.  
Enter # for Attendee ID. For Arizona Relay  
Service use 1-800-367-8939, or dial 7-1-1.

**MEETING DATE AND TIME:**

September 17, 2020  
3:00 PM

**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REQUEST  
ACCOMMODATION FOR SPECIAL NEEDS:**

Website: [www.svmmpo.org](http://www.svmmpo.org)  
Email: [SVMPO@SierraVistaAZ.gov](mailto:SVMPO@SierraVistaAZ.gov)  
Administrator Phone: 520-515-8525

**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Chair	Rick Mueller, Mayor, City of Sierra Vista
Vice-Chair	Tom Borer, County Supervisor, Cochise County
Member	Rachel Gray, Vice-Mayor, City of Sierra Vista
Member	Joy Banks, Councilmember, Town of Huachuca City
Member (Non-Voting)	Richard Searle, STB District 3 ( <i>telephonically</i> )

**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Member	Sarah Pacheco, Councilmember, City of Sierra Vista
--------	--

**STAFF:**

SVMPO Administrator: Karen L. Lamberton, AICP

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Jeremy Moore, Arizona Department of Transportation (*telephonically*)  
Cynthia Butterworth, Councilmember, Town of Huachuca City, (*alternate member/telephonically*)  
Peggy Judd, Cochise County Supervisor (*alternate member/telephonically*)  
Ed Stilling, FHWA (*telephonically*)  
Kevin Adam, RTAC (*telephonically*)  
Brent Crowther, Kimley-Horn, LRTP Project Lead (*telephonically*)  
Dale Miller, Rick Engineering, LRTP Sub-Consultant (*telephonically*)

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Chair Mueller called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m. Vice-Chair Borer, Members Gray and Banks were present. A quorum was present. Town Councilmember Cynthia Butterworth, who is the designated alternate to Member Banks, and Cochise County Supervisor Peggy Judd, who is the

designated alternate for Vice-Chair Borer, was also present by telephone. Chair Mueller acknowledged the presence of additional attendees who had called in.

## **2. ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA**

Chair Mueller asked if the Board had any changes to the Agenda. Hearing none, the Chair asked for a motion to accept the agenda, as presented. Member Gray made the motion, Vice-Chair Borer seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

**MOTION:** Member Gray

**SECOND:** Vice-Chair Borer

**ACTION:** PASSED UNANIMOUSLY 4/0

## **3. CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

Chair Mueller asked if anyone who had called in had anything to present at the Call to the Public. Hearing none, the Call to the Public was closed.

## **4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

Chair Mueller asked if the Board had any comments or questions on the Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes of June 18, 2020. Board members took a few minutes to look them over and then Vice-Chair Borer moved to approve the June 18, 2020, meeting minutes, as presented. Member Gray seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**MOTION:** Vice-Chair Borer

**SECOND:** Member Gray

**ACTION:** PASSED 4/0

## **NEW BUSINESS: PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION**

### **5. BY-LAW UPDATE TO SECTION III: ORGANIZATION**

Administrator Lamberton presented potential language to add the newly appointed State Transportation Board member position for this region as a voting member of the Board of Directors. Richard Searle has been appointed to this position by Governor Ducey. The District Engineer for the SouthCentral District, Rod Lane, would serve as his designated alternate. State Transportation Board positions are six (6) years but a year had already lapsed with the District 3 position without an appointment: Mr. Searle's term of office is for five (5) years, ending in 2025.

Mr. Searle asked for clarification on what role the State Transportation Board members or ADOT had on other MPO Board's. Administrator Lamberton stated that the SVMPO was the only MPO currently without a State Transportation Board/ADOT representative. Chair Mueller noted that this position at the State Transportation Board had been vacant for several years and as a result there has been no voting representative for this position at the SVMPO. Administrator Lamberton added that ADOT had regularly attended and participated with the SVMPO, pending the Governor's appointment to the State Transportation Board.

Board members discussed the implications of future State Transportation Board members not being from Cochise County and potentially not being familiar with the Sierra Vista region. Member Gray pointed out that this position could later be re-set as a non-voting position if it appeared that Mr. Searle's successor was not interested or available to attend the MPO meetings. Mr. Searle explained that no matter what County the next State Transportation Board member was from they would have a responsibility to represent the Sierra Vista MPO region and should be interested in participating with the Sierra Vista MPO.

Chair Mueller asked if there were any other questions about this proposed update to the SVMPO By-Laws. Hearing none, he called for the question. Member Gray then moved to revise the SVMPO By-Laws as presented to Section III: Organization A. 1 (c, e and f). Vice-Chair Borer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Searle was congratulated and welcomed to the SVMPO Board by Chair Mueller. The new member's voting position would take effect at the next Board meeting in November.

**MOTION:** Member Gray

**SECOND:** Vice-Chair Borer

**ACTION:** PASSED 4/0

#### **6. FY21 BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEE APPOINTMENT**

Administrator Lamberton stated that the SVMPO has one standing advisory subcommittee with a focus on regional bicycle and pedestrian issues. Nominations for positions are brought to the Board for approval. One new member, Mr. Brian Byer, has been brought forward for consideration, with a recommendation from Vice-Chair Borer.

Vice-Chair Borer then moved to appoint Mr. Bryer to the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Subcommittee. Member Banks seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**MOTION:** Vice-Chair Borer

**SECOND:** Member Banks

**ACTION:** PASSED 4/0

#### **7. SVMPO 2050 LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE**

Administrator Lamberton stated that, as the Board was aware, one of the primary work activities of the regional MPO was to prepare a long-range transportation plan. The SVMPO's long-range transportation plan should be updated every five years and have a minimum 20-year horizon year. The SVMPO's first update will cover the timeframe of 2020 to 2050.

A selection committee, consisting of all the member jurisdictions and a representative of the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Subcommittee and ADOT, reviewed Cost Proposals from firms that qualified for the SVMPO On-Call List. Administrator Lamberton then turned this agenda item over to the consultant team, Kimley-Horn, who was awarded this project.

Brent Crowther, the Kimley-Horn Project Manager, thanked the Board for the opportunity to work again with the SVMPO region. Their consulting team has done several projects down in this area, including the Sierra Vista Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. A Power Point presentation had been made available to each of the Board members and had been posted on the SVMPO website in advance of the meeting. The consultant team briefed the Board on the tasks and schedule planned for this work effort. They have already begun coordination with the State traffic modeling staff on updating the roadway network and calibrating the regional travel model to more recent traffic counts taken throughout the region.

The last side of the presentation included several questions for Board discussion. Board member highlighted several topics:

**Areas of greatest concern** included identifying the priorities for major corridor improvements needed for the future; all weather access on major roadways; that the plan be multi-faceted in its approach and look at pedestrian and multi-use path connectivity throughout the region; how to coordinate transit outside the urban Sierra Vista area with other locations in and outside of the SVMPO region; highway shoulder condition and the impact of freight on the network.

County Supervisor Peggy Judd mentioned the Sun Corridor Trail Alliance group that is just forming to advocate for a hiking trail, similar to the Arizona Trail, that would go from Las Vegas to Douglas, cutting through the SVMPO region.

**Information requested** included modeled location of most future need; safety information and identifying potential of partnerships for funding of future projects.

Chair Mueller stated that the Board did want a **briefing at every Board meeting** with a focus on milestones. It was also requested that the Board be kept apprised of the progress of the work effort. Mr. Richard Searle recommended that technical details be handled by jurisdiction technical staff and the SVMPO TAC and other Board members agreed with that statement. Board members also concurred that they do want to see final drafts, with an opportunity to comment, before adoption, but not every working paper, if it is still in a very preliminary work form.

This was an information and discussion item.

## **8. SVMPO STAFFING**

Chair Mueller asked the Board if this item could be deferred until after the RTAC update and future items. Hearing no objection, this item was tabled, and the Board moved to Item 9 of the agenda.

### **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS/DIRECTION TO SVMPO ADMINISTRATOR MAY BE GIVEN**

## **9. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

The RTAC Liaison, Kevin Adam, stated that a lot of activity was going on at both the National and State level right now. Although the State was not yet out of the pandemic, the economic forecasts are not as dire as it was first projected. There may still be a significant loss of state revenues of about \$63 million, instead of the earlier projected losses of \$1.1 billion, but July revenues showed a boost generated by the delayed income tax filings. HURF is harder hit but still not as bad as

expected: currently looks like a FY20 loss of \$90 million instead of the earlier projected loss of a \$145 million dollars. The State Transportation Board is now going to take up the ADOT 5-year program for approval and it is expected that they will approve in October or November.

At the Federal level there are a number of pending appropriation bills, but some, if not all, may be deferred until after the November election. There is some discussion of the FAST ACT (the transportation bill that expires end of September) being extended for as long as one year.

Chair Mueller thanked Kevin Adam for his time. Board members all indicated that they are currently on the RTAC electronic mailing list for legislative updates.

This was an information item.

#### **10. UPCOMING SCHEDULED MEETINGS and ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

State Transportation Board Meeting – September 18<sup>th</sup> at 9 a.m. Lake Havasu/Telephonic

BPAC Mtg – September 29, 2020 at 10 a.m.

TAC Mtg – November 4, 2020 at 10 a.m.

The Administrator advised the Board that a number of scheduled meetings had been cancelled or were being rescheduled as virtual meetings. She then provided a briefing on a number of work activities of the MPO:

- ❖ The FY21 Work Program was accepted by FHWA on July 30, 2020. Final adopted version is posted on the SVMPO Website and was made available to all Board members.
- ❖ The FY21 Transportation Improvement Program is still pending State Transportation Board adoption of the five-year plan as the Board had just heard from the RTAC update. The Administrator did advise the Board that all pending SVMPO TIP projects had been entered into the State electronic submittal program (ESTIP).
- ❖ The FY21 Title VI & Environmental Justice Plan & FY20 Title VI Goals and Accomplishment Report was accepted by ADOT Civil Rights Division on August 24, 2020. Copies had been provided to the Board and several positive comments were made by the ADOT Civil Rights Division about Title VI activities undertaken last year.
- ❖ The Short-Range Transit Plan Update has just been awarded to the consulting firm, Michael-Baker. The Board was provided with the tentative schedule and it will be an effort undertaken in coordination with the region's Long-Range Transportation Plan. This plan is required for Vista Transit to receive their Federal Transit Authority (FTA) funds.
- ❖ The City of Sierra Vista's Hosting Agreement and Town of Huachuca City's Match Agreement with SVMPO have been fully executed and recorded.
- ❖ Cochise County's Match Agreement is not yet completed. Vice-Chair Borer indicated he will ensure this is completed and brought to the Board for approval. He also advised the County has serious financial constraints right now.
- ❖ Administrator Lamberton went over the FY21 Member Jurisdiction Estimated Match amounts needed and advised that these amounts are lower than previously estimated because the two-year work program allows us to use carry-forward In-Kind towards both FHWA and FTA fund sources. That will not be true for the next two-year Work Program of FY22/FY23.

- ❖ Work activities moving forward include the start-up of the Long-Range Transportation Plan and the Short-Range Transit Plan updates. Construction projects include the nearly completed emergency signal project in the Town of Huachuca City and Whetstone area; the North Garden project is at 35% design and is under jurisdiction staff review. It must be substantively completed by June 2022 (*Final acceptance by July 27, 2022 per IGA Amendment Two*); County's LIDAR flight pending final MOU; Vista Transit has made recommended ADA improvements to bus shelters and completed installing the transit announcement system approved in FY19.

This was an information item.

## **11. ANNOUNCEMENTS & JURISDICTION UPDATES**

Chair Mueller asked if any Board members had any current information to share. Member Banks noted that the signal project was moving along very well and ADOT had come through in stating that they were not opposed to some pedestrian improvements on the highway within the Town boundaries, but ADOT did not have any funding for a project like that right now. Administrator Lamberton noted that partnerships with the region can sometimes help to accelerate those kinds of projects.

Members Gray and Borer stated they had nothing to add at this time. Mr. Searle stated that the State Transportation Board would be considering the State 5-year transportation plan in their next few meetings. There are several bridge projects in Cochise County and a re-construction of the bridge over the railroad on Highway 191, which he noted wasn't in the SVMPO region, but was in Cochise County and been a topic of concern for freight movement for some time. Chair Mueller had nothing else to add to this item.

This was an information item.

## **12. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Administrator Lamberton stated that the next Board of Directors meeting is set for **November 19, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.** The Long-Range Transportation Plan is likely to be the major topic of discussion. The 2021 calendar will also be tentatively set at this next Board meeting.

In addition, Administrator Lamberton reminded Board members of a planned Work Session set on the calendar for **Thursday, October 15, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.** This is also likely to be focused on the Long-Range Transportation Plan goals, performance measures and priorities. These issues are policy issues, appropriate for the Board guidance. The more technical details would be brought to the SVMPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and directly to each member jurisdiction staff that are focused in that area.

Administrator Lamberton asked the Board if they would be available for a potential one item Board action item to approve a pending County MOU related to funding for a future LIDAR flight. She stated it was in a final draft but was unfortunately not ready in time for this September Board meeting in a form that could be approved by this Board. The Board has previously been briefed on this project and approved it in the SVMPO Work Program. The

MOU is required paperwork to move the STBG funds into the Work Program and pass it through to the County for this County-wide LIDAR flight covering the entirety of the SVMPO region. This flight provides critical data for roadway and drainage infrastructure improvements. Board members agreed this matter could be handled by a telephonic meeting. Administrator Lamberton stated that they would need a quorum, but the meeting itself would likely be 10-15 minutes at most and could be done entirely by telephone.

This was an information and discussion item.

### **SVMPO STAFFING (Taken off the Table as Agenda Item 8)**

The Chair returned to Agenda Item number 8 on SVMPO Staffing, with concurrence of the Board, before taking up the next item on the SVMPO Administrator Evaluation. He stated that the Board memo in the packet did not actually reflect exactly what the issue was that the Board needed to discuss. He expressed his concern that current guidelines for the SVMPO Administrator lacked clarity in what actions could be taken to hire new SVMPO staff.

The Board discussed this issue but no clear consensus appeared to be present: some Board members felt that existing documents such as the approved Board Work Program identified staffing and funding adequately but others were unsure that the paragraph provided in the Work Program and guidance in the existing approved documents was enough direction. Member jurisdictions handle hiring differently with some allowing directors, within approved budgets, to hire and others have their Councils or Town/City Managers directly approve positions. Member Banks noted the value of the two SVMPO staff members that she was aware of: Mr. Donovan, the current SVMPO Civil Engineer helping with Town with their signal project and Cat Porter, the SVMPO intern who did some great work that helped to meet transit planning requirements. Chair Mueller stated that having additional MPO staff may be needed for MPO work activities but that the Board would like to make sure that the Board and the Administrator are protected if in the future a staff member working for the MPO became a problem and might need to be disciplined or fired.

Member Banks asked if the SVMPO attorney had looked at the issue yet. Chair Mueller stated that wasn't a bad idea and Sierra Vista could ask the attorney to look at it and make sure that the SVMPO Board and the SVMPO Administrator was protected in how hiring was accomplished for the MPO. Member Gray stated that she would help with this effort and this item could be brought back for future Board action. Potential solutions included approving a Resolution of the Board or adjusting language in the approved Work Program or, possibly, other SVMPO approved documents, so that the Administrator and the Hosting Agency knew exactly what positions were approved and funded.

This was an information and discussion item.

### **13. SVMPO ADMINISTRATOR EVALUATION**

Chair Mueller asked that Board members use the previous evaluation form that covered the SVMPO Administrator's first year in this position. Administrator Lamberton indicated that she had transmitted to each Board member the revised evaluation form. After some discussion,

Member Gray obtained a hard copy of the previous evaluation form and provided it to Board members present. Administrator Lamberton indicated she would transmit it out electronically to the Board members for their review. *The original evaluation form, and the Administrator's Self-Assessment for the previous two years, was transmitted to the FY20 Board members via e-mail the evening of September 17<sup>th</sup>)*

Chair Mueller asked the Administrator for a brief review of her self-assessment provided to each Board member. Administrator Lamberton covered the highlights of the previous year's work efforts. Chair Mueller asked Board members to fill out the evaluation form and provide it back to him by October 2<sup>nd</sup>.

No specific direction was given to the SVMPO Administrator, nor were any changes proposed to her employee contract, currently set to expire in August of 2021.

This was a discussion item with the SVMPO Administrator.

#### **14. ADJOURNMENT of REGULAR SESSION**

Administrator Lamberton thanked members for taking the additional time needed to complete all the agenda items for today's meeting.

Chair Mueller adjourned the regular meeting at 5:00 p.m.