



Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

July 21, 2021 via ZOOM

The meeting was called to order at 8:33am by the transit planner, Deborah Hill. Housekeeping rules and the agenda were reviewed, and a roll was taken. There were 20 in attendance including guests: Kierra Branch of ODOT, Elizabeth Baxter of Region 2, and Dan Dalton of KFH.

Updates on the four regional special projects were given. Both consultant-led studies, Employment Transportation and the Strategic Planning OC/OC, are in progress with initial interviews and stakeholder interviews conducted and the beginnings of first progress reports coming together. The Regional Resource Guide website is built and waiting to be populated with data from all regional MM which is due the end of July. The site will be populated, reviewed for ease of use, and be ready to be a live asset to the region by the end of August. The media outreach campaign in each county is also underway. MM were reminded to take pictures of billboards or other media choices, and to put in place some methodology to ascertain the effectiveness of the media campaign. The regional level media campaign will be a PSA (Public Service Announcement) which will air on local tv stations and be produced in a fashion accessible to social media venues as well as tv. Filming of the PSA will take place on August 5 and 6 at each public transit location in the region.

Next the regional survey of needs assessment was discussed. In years prior, each county distributed its own version of a needs survey resulting in data that was not consistent throughout the region. A standardized regional survey has now been established with a permanent web link address and QR code link for easy access. This will give the region consistent data that can be “pulled” at any time it is needed, as well as gathered in county specific ways to provide input for the county level reviews of unmet needs, goals, and strategies. The survey is also available in paper format in regular print, large print, and shortly in Spanish, from the MM. Survey data will be collected continuously throughout the year and pulled in September in order to separate the data and send the county specific results to each county for their review of needs and goals. Cumulative data will be used to help review and establish regional unmet needs, goals, and strategies.

A presentation and discussion of regional goals then commenced. The Steering Committee had begun to review and revise regional goals in late 2020 and early 2021 but the progress in this area was tabled when the 5310 funding cycle began in February of 2021. Now that the funding cycle is complete for this year, we are revisiting and progressing the review of regional goals. To date, the SC had determined 7 regional “goals” and prioritized them. However, upon further insight from lessons learned going through the new 5310 funding project requirements, and upon further thought in regard to the goals as they were listed, it was concluded that:

1. Several of the previous “goals” were neither SMART, nor goals, but rather strategies and action steps for goal fulfillment.

2. The goals as currently presented did not align well with regional performance measures, nor did they provide for ease or effectiveness of use when applying for 5310 funding, nor strategically promote the attainment of maximum possible 5310 funding points for projects.

The SC was presented with two options for a structure for goals to be presented in going forward. The discussion is NOT to change or alter the content or substance of regional goals, only to consider the format or context in which the goals are presented, and to do so with an emphasis on ease of use and effectiveness for 5310 project funding. The two structural ways of presenting goals are a funnel, where there are many goals and fewer strategies for fulfillment, and an inverted funnel which is just the opposite with fewer, broader goals and more strategies for fulfillment. Considerations for both models were presented. The biggest advantage in using an inverted funnel structure would be that all 5310 projects would be able to correlate with at least two of the top three regional goals and almost all projects would also correlate with the number one regional goal. This would allow for the maximum 5310 funding points to be obtained for every project.

A model with three regional goals was presented, and compared to the current 7 goal model. Next followed an open discussion of the proposed three goal strategic model. Mike McBride commented that the new way of presenting goals was excellent and would make funding requests much easier. Dan Dalton expressed a viewpoint “from the outside” adding that they have seen this proposed approach work very effectively elsewhere calling it a “generally specific” approach. Each of the transit directors was called upon, by name, and asked for their opinion and input. All SC members were in agreement that it makes better sense to present the regional goals in a new structure without losing the integrity of any of the goals previously derived. A verbal vote was taken to proceed with three regional goals, as presented, and to have a larger number of strategies for each goal that could more easily be adjusted year over year to reflect regional changes in situation, circumstance, or priority. There was no one in opposition and no further questions or discussion took place. The vote carried.

The date for the next meeting, which is August 18, 2021 was reviewed and a brief discussion was had with the group as to their preference to continue SC meetings virtually, in person only, or a hybrid format of virtual and in person. We decided to consider the format just for the August meeting at this time since health circumstances and mandates are still so in flux. It was decided that the August meeting would be offered in a virtual format with both zoom access and in-person access.

For the good of the region, Mike McBride announced that all 10 Senior Centers in Belmont County are now opened with staffing and programming at each coming back on board. He anticipated that this will significantly increase NMET transportation demands. Also, both Tracy Haines and Nicki Silver were acknowledged for providing service above and beyond expectation to their communities.

Hearing no other announcements, participants were thanked for the privilege of their time and their willingness to participate for the good of moving the region forward, and the meeting concluded at 9:20 am.