



## Meeting Minutes

### CMAQ Project Selection Committee Tuesday, March 13, 2012 CMAQ offices

**Committee Members Present:** Ross Patronsky, Chair (CMAQ), Marty Buehler (counties), Bruce Carmitchel (IDOT), Luann Hamilton (City of Chicago), Larry Keller (Council of Mayors), Mark Pitstick (RTA), Mike Rogers (IEPA)

**Staff Present:** Patricia Berry, Doug Ferguson, Don Kopec, Holly Ostdick, Joy Schaad

**Others Present:** Reggie Arkell, Chalen Daigle, John Donovan, Tara Fifer, Aimee Lee, Chad Riddle, Chris Staron, David Tomzik, Mike Walczak, and Thomas Weaver

#### 1.0 Call to Order

Committee Chair Ross Patronsky called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m.

#### 2.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements

Chairman Patronsky stated that Mr. Buehler, who requested the agenda item on IDOT/Federal Local Project Process Review, asked that the discussion be moved to after the Active Program Management item. There were no objections.

#### 3.0 Approval of Minutes—February 9, 2012

On a motion by Mr. Buehler and a second by Mr. Rogers, the minutes of the February 9, 2012 meeting were approved as presented.

#### 4.0 CMAQ Active Program Management Policies

Chairman Patronsky drew the Committee's attention to the latest staff draft of recommendations. He explained each recommendation and the committee made comments and asked questions. Regarding the proposed requirement that phase 1 engineering be completed at the sponsor's expense prior to the date of PSC program recommendations (usually in July) it was agreed that sponsors that do not have their project's PDR (project development report) submitted to IDOT by the time of PSC

recommendations, cannot be included in the program, but can be placed on the B List, if the project so merits. The process to move projects from the deferred list to the funded program was clarified as: the project shows completed phase and the sponsor requests consideration to move into the funded program; the PSC considers the request based on a verification of the project's status and availability of funding. If approved by the Committee, the project follows usual TIP amendment procedures. The fact that CMAQ PSC and Transportation Committee meetings are scheduled based on the IDOT lettings will ensure minimal TIP processing delay for the changes that cannot be handled administratively. Those dates can be viewed in the *Programmers' Resources* section of the CMAP website. It is believed that once a phase is judged "ready" by IDOT and FHWA, the TIP processing would take two months at most, so should not be a problem.

The accomplishment sunset recommendations were discussed. Each work phase is allowed the programmed year and two additional years to be completed, i.e. three years. The milestones that will be used to define each phase's accomplishment are laid out in the draft policy recommendations and were reviewed. It was clarified that a project that is delayed beyond the three years, becomes a deferred project and it loses its guaranteed funding status. Ms. Hamilton expressed the importance of maintaining the October 2011 approved B List to show that those projects are priorities in the FFY 2012-16 timeframe.

The Committee discussed the funding ratio policy for traditional roadway projects whereby phase 1 engineering will be funded at 0% federal share and subsequent phases at 100% federal share. It was clarified that for transit projects that do not have distinct preliminary engineering (phase 1) and design engineering (phase 2) phases – the engineering will be funded at 50% and the other work types at 100%. An accommodation for extenuating circumstances, whereby sponsors can request traditional funding ratios of 80%/20% for all phases was discussed. Such requests will be considered, but only phase 1 engineering will be programmed at the onset. Other phases of work can be brought into the program at a later date.

The purpose and use of an annual obligation goal was discussed. There was discussion of the options of where "letting ready" or non-construction "obligation ready" contingency projects should be drawn from. It was agreed that the priority would be laid out as:

1. Out-year projects in the current CMAQ program,
2. Deferred projects, which have priority over regular B List projects,
3. Vetted Projects:
  - a. Regular B List projects,
  - b. Projects with partial CMAQ funding that would be increased,
  - c. Projects with good air quality benefits but have not been placed in the CMAQ program,
4. Extraordinary projects, i.e. projects that are CMAQ eligible but have not been evaluated for benefits previously.

It was clarified that projects that had previously ranked well for air quality benefits (out year CMAQ projects and approved B List projects) should keep their priority over extraordinary projects, but the emphasis will be projects that are “ready to go” to meet the year’s obligation goal, so that distinction may be moot.

It was agreed that the current B List would be replaced with a new B List each time a new CMAQ Program is adopted, but the list of deferred projects would remain over time. If a sponsor wants their project in the new program or on the new B List, they would have to submit a CMAQ application in the call for projects.

Mr. Pitstick asked that the contingency structure be clarified in the final write up. Mr. Buehler asked that the final write up also include definitions of apportionment, rescission, state appropriation and obligation authority. Mr. Buehler brought up the concept of a “combination bid” which is an aggregation of projects let together. This would be a way to bring smaller ready projects into the program without adding a lot of staff administration effort.

Ms. Ostdick drew the Committee’s attention to the listing of current project standings. Ms. Berry stated that several members had expressed interest in seeing status of projects, obligations, and obligation rates regularly, and that the staff is working on reports to show that in an effective manner.

There was a discussion on how and when the CMAQ program would switch over to the new funding ratios and it was agreed that sponsors of projects in the FFY 2012-16 program should have the option of switching to the new percentages as discussed in the document.

On a motion by Mr. Buehler and a second by Mayor Keller, the project listing and the staff policy recommendations, as amended during the meeting, were approved as recommendations to forward to the CMAP Transportation Committee.

## **5.0 IDOT/Federal Local Project Process Review**

Mr. Buehler reviewed the committee’s previously discussed concerns about the project development process. Mr. Buehler drew the Committee’s attention to a write up that the county engineers had developed. He stated that IDOT staff is doing an excellent job and that some delays have been reduced in the last few years. For further improvement he suggested that logging the amount of time that steps take and analyzing the data for average or normal processing times, or benchmarks, would be helpful. Once benchmarks are established, if IDOT staff could be assigned to watch for projects that were not progressing at near normal timeframes; those projects could be dealt with before the delays become problematic.

There was discussion of various agencies’ experiences and how monitoring project progress could be helpful. Several committee members commented that there are many players in the project development process, that delays occur throughout the process, not

just at IDOT, and many delays are the result of actions that ensure a better final project. The committee members supported the recommendation of contacting IDOT to ask for establishment of a function to react to projects that are not meeting benchmarks. On a motion by Mr. Buehler and a second by Ms. Hamilton, the Committee voted to have staff prepare a request letter from the Project Selection Committee to IDOT.

**6.0 Other Business**

There was no other business.

**7.0 Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

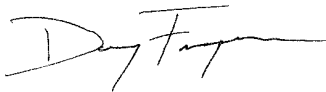
**8.0 Next Meeting**

The next meeting was confirmed for April 5, 2012 at 2:00 p.m. at the CMAP offices.

**9.0 Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Douglas Ferguson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Douglas Ferguson  
Committee Liaison  
3-29-12 //JMS