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Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAQ)

DRAFT

CMAQ Project Selection Committee Minutes

Minutes – April 1, 2021

Via GoToMeeting

Members Present: Doug Ferguson (Chair, CMAP), Darwin Burkhardt (IEPA), Mark Pitstick (RTA), Mayor Jeff Schielke (Council of Mayors), Tom Rickert for Chris Snyder (Counties), Jeff Sriver (CDOT)

Staff Present: Erin Aleman, Alison Case, Teri Dixon, Kama Dobbs, Jane Grover, Jaemi Jackson, Elliott Lewis, Jared Patton, Mary Weber

Others Present: Elaine Bottomley, Lenny Cannata, John Donovan, Mike Fricano, Tony Greep, Kendra Johnson, Noah Jones, Mike Klemens, Daniel Knickelbein, Matt Pasquini, Keith Privett, Troy Simpson, Kristian Skogsbakken, Brian Stepp, Sonali Tandon, David Tomzik

1.0 Call to Order

Mr. Ferguson called the meeting to order at 11:02 a.m.

2.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements

Mr. Ferguson informed the committee that, in accordance with Gov. Pritzker's Disaster Declaration on January 8, 2021, that it is not practical or prudent for the committee to meet in person at this time. To ensure transparency, CMAP staff will provide meeting materials one week in advance, a recording of the meeting will be posted to the CMAP website, and all votes will be taken via role call in compliance with the Open Meetings Act.

3.0 Approval of Minutes – October 29, 2020

A motion was made by Mayor Schielke, seconded by Mr. Pitstick, to approve the minutes of the October 29, 2020 meeting as presented. A roll call vote was conducted:

 Aye Darwin Burkhardt
 Aye Doug Ferguson
 Aye Mark Pitstick
 Aye Jeffery Schielke
 Chris Schmidt

Aye Tom Rickert
 Aye Jeffrey Sriver

With all in favor, the motion carried.

4.0 Program Monitoring

4.1 Project Programming Status Sheets

Mr. Ferguson presented the program status sheets for active and deferred CMAQ and TAP-L funded projects.

4.2 Programming Summary and Obligation Goal

Mr. Ferguson presented the CMAQ programming summary and obligation goal for 2021.

5.0 Project Changes

Mr. Lewis presented project change requests for two (2) projects which can be found in the project change request memo. A motion was made by Mayor Schielke, and seconded by Mr. Rickert, to approve the project change requests. A roll call vote was conducted:

 Aye Darwin Burkhardt
 Aye Doug Ferguson
 Aye Mark Pitstick
 Aye Jeffery Schielke
 Chris Schmidt
 Aye Tom Rickert
 Aye Jeffrey Sriver

With all in favor, the motion carried.

6.0 Project Change Request Approval Procedures

Mr. Lewis presented the results of an analysis of past CMAQ/TAP-L project change requests and how they aligned with existing TIP amendment definitions. The presentation concluded with a recommendation of establishing thresholds for formal approval by the Committee or administrative modifications by CMAP staff.

Mr. Rickert inquired about the \$10 million cap associated with existing TIP amendment definitions. Mr. Lewis explained that that is an absolute dollar amount cap that would require formal approval if exceeded, regardless of the percentage increase. Mr. Rickert expressed concern with the proposed cap of \$1 million cost change increase, though understanding the benefits of the recommendations generally. He expressed the opinion that it doesn't further the transparency of the Committee. He also asked whether the \$1 million cap would be cumulative as the analysis presented did not specify costs between phases. Ms. Dixon confirmed it would be a cumulative amount and reiterated the rationale behind the proposal.

Mr. Rickert then restated his suggestion to revisit the dollar amounts per phase and the threshold amount in the interest of transparency. Mr. Ferguson continued explaining the benefits of the proposal, including the ability to reallocate staff time and preventing projects from being delayed, but also agreed that this would need to be monitored closely and that projects under the proposed thresholds may still be brought to the Committee for discussion and approval. Ms. Dixon pointed out that no matter what, the changes would be reported to the Committee.

Mr. Pitstick expressed his comfort with the proposal and understood the rationale and benefits behind the recommendations, especially in light of the fact they are an attempt to align with existing TIP amendment procedures. He addressed concerns by Mr. Rickert by pointing out the importance of the percent change thresholds as opposed to the absolute dollar amount cap.

Mr. Donovan is also comfortable with the concept as presented but noted the differences between the reasoning for the existing TIP amendment procedures and the intent of the Committee's role. The former tends to be in place for project controls whereas the Committee is responsible for a program-wide perspective. He cautioned staff in assuming discretion over when to bring projects eligible for administrative changes to the Committee, but again asserted his agreement with the proposal concept.

Mr. Rickert wanted to clarify he is not opposed to proposal in principle and understands the desire to streamline program management. He concurred with Mr. Donovan's observation of the differences between TIP amendment changes and oversight of the CMAQ program, noting that the program is a shared responsibility and that each project and project change request should be carefully vetted to align with overall program objectives. He intends to review the proposed thresholds more closely as well as discuss it with the Counties to get their input. Ms. Dixon responded that was the reason no action was requested at this time, allowing for discussion and evolution of the proposal as needed.

Mr. Ferguson welcomed additional feedback as members had time to review the proposal more deeply and discuss with any affected parties in the coming weeks. Staff will receive the feedback, revise the proposal as needed, and present at the next meeting.

7.0 FY 2022-2026 Program Development – Selection Process Timeline

Ms. Weber presented to the committee an update for the FY 2022-2026 program development and an overview of the applications received.

Mr. Pitstick asked how the total amount of funding requested across all applications compared with past calls for projects. Mr. Ferguson answered that the approximate \$1.7 billion total requested was a little lower than previous programs. He also noted that the large overall project cost relative to the amount requested was due, in part, to the inclusion of CTA's Red Line Extension project in total project sums.

In a response to a follow-up question by Mr. Pitstick regarding CMAQ funding levels, Mr. Ferguson replied that there is roughly \$220 million available to program. Mr. Pitstick also inquired about the availability of applications for Committee members to view in addition to the summaries presented. Mr. Ferguson stated that, while the application submittal process through eTIP makes accessing projects more difficult, CMAP staff can provide more data and would make applications of interest to Committee members available to them upon request. Applications on eTIP are available to applicants and CMAP staff, but not currently open to the general public. Committee members may request access to view applications directly in eTIP.

Mr. Ferguson updated the CMAP staff is still reviewing project eligibility over the next several weeks before starting the analysis period.

8.0 Public Comment

There were no comments from the public.

9.0 Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 13, 2021 at 11:00 a.m.

10.0 Other Business

No other business was raised.

11.0 Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:41 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Elliott Lewis