

Brazos County Regional Mobility Authority

Board Meeting Minutes

September 23, 2020

- **Certification of Quorum and Attendance**

Voting members present were Tedi Ellison, Chair, Presiding; Dennis Christiansen, Vice Chair; Jason Bienski, Board Member; Veronica Morgan, Board Member; and Alan Munger, Board Member. The minutes were taken by Lisa Lyon, RMA Administrative Assistant. Additional participants included Steve Aldrich, Prarthana Banerji, Jayson Barfknecht, Bart Benthul, Nancy Berry, Doug Bramwell, Elizabeth Cuhna, Brent Hairston, Paul Kaspar, Taslima Khandaker, Tim Lomax, Doug Marino, Rob Maxwell, Karl Mooney, John Nichols, Terry Paholek, Duane Peters, John Polster, Troy Rother, Dan Rudge, Jason Schubert, and Lance Simmons.

- **Welcome and Open Meeting**

Ms. Ellison called to order the regular meeting of the Brazos County Regional Mobility Authority Board at 9:00 A.M. on September 23, 2020. Due to continued COVID-19 constraints, the meeting was held via Zoom. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States and Texas flags followed by an invocation given by Ms. Ellison.

- **Announcement of New Board Member**

This is Jason Bienski's first meeting as an official voting member of the RMA Board. Mr. Bienski replaces Ms. Ann Horton as the City of Bryan's appointee to the RMA Board. Ms. Ellison gave him a warm welcome.

- **Minutes from the May 26, 2020, RMA Board Meeting**

The minutes from the May 26, 2020, RMA Board Meeting were reviewed and considered for approval. Dr. Christiansen made the motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Munger. The minutes were adopted by a unanimous vote.

- **Review and Possible Adoption of the RMA Strategic Plan**

Ms. Ellison presented the Draft 2020 Strategic Plan for review and final comment by the Board. (The draft plan, as viewed at the meeting, is attached and made a part of these minutes.

The following changes were requested and agreed upon unanimously by the Board.

Introduction Section:

Added to the end of paragraph three: 3) pursue the implementation of other projects that would be beyond the MPO purview.

Challenges Facing the Brazos County Regional Mobility Authority Section:

Under the first bullet point, the sentence *“The RMA should study current funding sources and amounts as the beginning of a conversation about how all users, the citizens, visitors and college/university students can all contribute an equitable share to financing the transportation network.”* was changed to: The RMA should participate in a study on current funding sources and amounts as the beginning of the conversation about how all users can contribute an equitable share to financing the transportation network.

Entirely remove the second bullet point (which begins with the sentence *“All users of the Brazos County transportation network contribute to the traffic congestion on our local roadway system.”*)

Under bullet point three, remove the second sentence *“Of particular concern is that RMAs in other parts of the state have a strong toll road focus, which according to local government surveys is something our citizens do not support at this time.”*

Opportunities for the Brazos County Regional Mobility Authority Section:

Under bullet point two, keep the words that were struck out *“and is funded by student fees and parking revenues. If it was a public transportation system, it would have the seventh largest ridership in the state of Texas.”*

Under bullet point two, the sentence that begins *“As Brazos County approaches Transportation Management Area status, the RMA is positioned to lead a regional discussion on how to eliminate barriers...”*, change “is positioned to lead” to “is positioned to participate in”.

Under bullet point three, remove the third sentence *“Citizens have been vocal in their desire that there is some attempt at equal contribution from all users for service provided.”*

Brazos County Regional Mobility Authority Goals and Strategies Section:

Goal 4 – Work with the MPO to identify needed Mobility Projects (beyond University Drive)

Add a new Strategy Five which reads “As allowed by statute, identify and implement important community projects that are beyond the MPOs purview but can improve the local and regional transportation network.”

Rename the current Strategy Five to “Strategy Six: Continuously review regional transportation data...”

Change the Title of Goal Four to Read “Goal 4 – Work to identify needed Mobility Projects (beyond University Drive)”

Other changes to note from the document shown today are to lighten background on document, update table of contents, and correct page numbering.

Dr. Christiansen made the motion to adopt the 2020 Strategic Plan as amended today and upload the document to the RMA’s website. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bienski. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

- **Review and Possible Adoption of Shared Expense Agreement between the RMA and the Brazos County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)**

There were concerns from the Federal Highway Administration and the Texas Department of Transportation Planning & Programming Division regarding commingling of funds between the RMA and MPO. To show the RMA is not using State Planning funds to pay for any portion of RMA operations, these agencies have asked that an agreement is signed to clarify how expenditures that could be used for both the RMA and MPO are being accounted for separately. The Shared Expense Agreement follows the FY 2021 Budget that was adopted by the RMA and there was no increase in funds. This document has been drafted by the BCSMPO and has been approved by the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, and the Texas Department of Transportation Planning & Programming Division. The Technical Advisory Committee of the MPO reviewed this document at their last meeting and recommended approval with the expiration date being September 30, 2021, and the agreement being adopted each fiscal year.

Mr. Munger made the motion to adopt the “Shared Expense Agreement” as submitted. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bienski. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

- **Review Draft Policy Documents**

The RMA will use Brazos County's current Drug and Alcohol Policy and Travel Policy developed by the Brazos County Human Resource Department and the Brazos County Auditor's Office respectively. The Board does not have to take action on these policies; however, they were compiled for the Board to review. There were no questions or discussion regarding the policies.

- **Board Member Reports**

Dr. Christiansen reported on the RMA Website and Logo Development – A big thank you to Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI) and Dr. Katie Turnbull and her staff for their efforts to develop the RMA's website and logo. TTI staff developed four logo choices and the one selected was on today's meeting agenda. The RMA website design is in its final stages and has been released for preview. You can view the site at BCRMA.org. The website was shown during the meeting. Requests for additions or changes should be forward to Lisa Lyon.

Ms. Morgan reported on the University Drive Feasibility Study - The consultant working on the study has submitted models for review by TxDOT's Traffic Division. They are currently working on addressing comments and reviewing some of the origin/destination traffic data. Once those evaluations are complete, they will start evaluating proposed designs. They are trying to get the existing conditions model in a good state before they start evaluating proposed designs.

- **Chairman's Report**

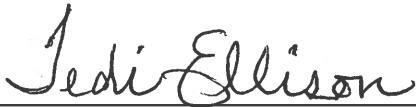
Ms. Ellison has spoken with John Raney, Kyle Kacal, and Charles Schwertner and they are all in support of the legislation for the additional \$10 registration fee which is just one factor in raising revenue for the RMA. It is important to try and get this passed during the upcoming session. After approval by the legislature, it may take some time to get the referendum for the county residents to vote on. Since the legislature only meets every other year, if it isn't considered this year it would be two more years until it could be considered again. Ms. Ellison showed the Board Members a resolution in support of the fee that she would like to be presented to each of the entities including Brazos County, City of Bryan, City of College Station, Texas A&M System, Brazos Valley Economic Development Corporation, and the Bryan/College Station Chamber of Commerce. By signing the resolution, it will show our communities' support and will be beneficial when trying to get this legislation approved. The bill will be pre-filed in November and it would be the best-case scenario if the resolutions could be filed along with the bill. There was a suggestion to add other possible funding options to this resolution; however, at the moment that is the only option allowed by state law. A copy of the resolution will be sent out to RMA Board Members after the meeting.

The next RMA Board Meeting will be held via Zoom on Thursday, October 28, 2020, at 9:00 a.m.

- **Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Munger. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bienski. The motion passed by a unanimous vote and the meeting was adjourned at 10:17 a.m.

ATTEST:



RMA Board Chair or Vice-Chair
Brazos County Regional Mobility Authority



RMA Board Secretary

10-28-2020

Date