

**Washington Area Highway Transportation Committee Meeting  
Council Chambers of City Hall  
405 Jefferson Street  
Washington, Missouri 63090**

**Monday, January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 8:00 AM  
Minutes**

**Present:** Craig Mueller, Stephen O'Connor, Ray Frankenberg, Bill Straatmann, Mayor Hagedorn, Joe Holtmeier, Sandy Lucy, Bill Miller, Darren Lamb, Sal Maniaci

**Absent:** Ed Fischer, Bob Engemann, L.B. Eckelkamp, Tim Brinker, Mike Coulter, Jeff Niemeyer

Chairman Bill Straatmann opened the meeting with a roll call and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of minutes from November 27, 2023, motion made, first and seconded, passed without dissent.

- 1. Amtrak- Craig Mueller-**We had our quarterly MORPAC meeting, so I put some things in the packet. Thanks for printing those out, Gina. Just go over some of the highlights. First and foremost was their Federal Corridor ID Program, where they had applied for a third train on the Missouri River Runner and some extension, possibly to the St. Joe market. So, they received that federal grant to study that program. That study is going to start on March 1 and hopefully conclude by the end of the calendar year 2024. It's like a five step process. So, that's the first, like we talk about here, just getting it in the chain and kind of moving that along. That first step is fully funded by the feds. Step two is going to require a 10% match. They did ask for money in their budget this year, fiscal year 2024, to kind of get some of those matching funds, but it was not included in the budget. So, they're kind of working on this next fiscal year 2025 to get some of that funding in. So, as those things come up, we can kind of watch to see how that goes. They did get \$1.5 million included in their budget for inflationary purposes to run the existing river runner. And that was approved. So, they have those funds and they're happy to get those. I included some of the stuff in the packet with on time performance, which has been going really well for the train, especially in the last quarter. The last few months, the trains have been on time and going pretty well, barring a little bit of service reduction they had in cold weather. And they had some description for that, saying when forecasts are around zero or so cold like that, they need to run two locomotives on each train. They do that in case there's a problem or a long delay, that they have electric and heat to be there for the cars, but that also requires that they cut their amount of locomotives in half. Right. To do those trains. And we are somewhat subject here because we now have that through train that goes to Chicago. So, along that route, those temperatures could be much colder than they are necessarily here. And they did have some things like when they have water main breaks, like when we have cold weather, like that. They have similar problems with rails, but they had just a couple of service reductions, and it still led to, like I said, really good on time performance through this last quarter.

They talked about a bicycle pilot program, which is something locally we've been talking about quite a bit with our tourism department and things like that. Lots of people requesting, especially along the Katie Trail route, to be able to bring their bikes on the train and ride someplace else. So, they've kind of moved forward with that. And they're going to do a study coming up here, March through September, where they're going to allow the baggage cars to carry some of those, like each of the cars that we have now can hold a bike or, pardon me, three bikes. And they sell tickets accordingly. So, a lot of times, people that want to go in a group can't do that because there's just not enough. So, they're starting this program to try to get, to allow usage of the baggage car to have larger groups with more bikes and hopefully improve ridership. Washington, Missouri is not going to be included in that pilot program

because they outlined a number of stations along the route, Herman included, which, like I say, people are mainly pushing for it, are the ones that probably aren't going to be included in the study. And what they said is that they have platform challenges, so they have to have all the cars on the platform, including the baggage car, to be able to load things in and out. And right now, they said that for whatever reason, I'm still trying to get the exact details as to why Washington was kind of excluded from that group. Something about 300ft on the platform and staffing and things like that.

**Sandy Lucy**-So, aren't they going to improve our platform, though?

**Craig Mueller**-That was some of Emily Hopkins and I were asking those questions that they're like, I know we've got upcoming improvements and we're going to ask some because it was going to be. Maybe they will be addressed in those, and maybe if they're not, maybe that's something we could include. So, kind of starting to have those discussions after hearing that it was going.

**Sandy Lucy**-It was going to be moved to the west a little bit, wasn't it?

**Craig Mueller**-There were ADA improvements, and I don't know if that includes some extension of that platform or if it's just.

**Darren Lamb**-I could briefly, just from memory, it's been a while since we had a meeting with them. I just asked Charles, it's 2025 when the improvements are scheduled. It is to the west. And you would basically wear in front of the caboose that's down there in that park. I mean, closer towards that, you would have that all open, have a broader access for the people. I mean, that's what I remember. And I think an ADA ramp, better ADA accessibility. I think that's what I remember.

**Sandy Lucy**-So that might help.

**Darren Lamb**-Yes.

**Craig Mueller**-So, that's what we're going to kind of match those things up and see. And obviously study goes, so nothing really would happen until a little bit further along the road. But we're going to kind of maybe have those discussions, see if there's something we can do there to accommodate those.

My fourth item, the overall Amtrak, was really excited about their ridership. As you can see in some of our on and off datas and things like that, they're exceeding pre Covid numbers, which is great. And this year, through six months, they're looking at what could be a record year. They said 97,000 riders was about half of their record year, which was 202,000 riders in the early 2000s. So, they're, like I said, just super pleased with how that's going. They say Missouri ranks fourth in the country among Amtrak in what they called ridership recovery, saying, okay, we're getting that back. So, it was pretty exciting news for the state of Missouri and December 2023, where we had some ride the rails with Santa and events like that, that they were within 100 riders of the record for the River Runner for that month period, which was pretty great.

April 3 is our next meeting there, and I think that was the highlights of what they had to say.

**Bill Straatmann**-Very good. The Christmas venture was really well done. One of my employees took their kids, three smaller kids, to Herman and then was able to come back. Just about the right amount of time. And everything worked pretty cool.

**Craig Mueller**-They said they had a ton of people and it was very well received. So that's great.

**Bill Straatmann**-Good report, Craig. Glad you stayed on top of this. Tourism is going to continue to be a big need or whatever. And MoDOT's right in there is one of the items that I think people are going to be looking for in the future.

**Craig Mueller**-They were saying that in their presentation for this Corridor ID Program that MoDOT is doing a really good job and they've got for bids for who's going to do this corridor study and things like that. And that we were way ahead of the pack of a lot of people nationally. So that was a very good sign about moving forward with some of the stuff they have. Obviously, there's future funding and questions will arise in that study, but it's on the right path.

## **2. Causeway-Missouri River Bridge Flood Issue**-No new report.

- 3. Highway 47 Corridor Committee-Jim Grutsch-** Nothing new really on the Corridor Committee, other than MoDOT has an ongoing study of that entire corridor.
- Ray Frankenberg-**I'm just looking at the agenda. Is there an update on our agenda each month about the project on 47 from Washington to St. Clair? Because I think it's in design or not design.
- Stephen O'Connor-**It was a study phase.
- Ray Frankenberg-**Yes. It'd be nice each month if we heard where that was at.
- Darren Lamb-**I think that was always the Corridor Committee.
- Ray Frankenberg-**Okay. All right, then I guess I have the question. Is it still progressing?
- Stephen O'Connor-**It's still progressing. We haven't got really deep into it, but we had a meeting in December with some of the towns along the route in Franklin County and said, we've got HNTB under contract. HNTB was there, too, and they said we'll kind of laid it out where the study should last about a year and a half. By next summer, the study will be complete and there will be some public involvement as well. I think they have two meetings that discuss some of the updates as they move along.
- Ray Frankenberg-**So, the study is about a year and a half out for completion. Okay.
- Stephen O'Connor-**But the money for construction is not there until the second half of 2027, fiscal year 28 for us.
- Sandy Lucy-**But the study is already done for the roundabout and the expressway. Yes, that part of it is out there. We're not waiting on any study for that? We're just good to go. But these are the next phases, right.
- Ray Frankenberg-**And the funding is totally different, too. One of them, MoDOT is doing all the work and all the design, the acquisition and the study will be out a year and a half. And the construction dollars are in 27. That's kind of the one I'm tracking. I think that's the big one for us.
- Stephen O'Connor-**And when Union Expressway was coming up, we had no money to do 47. Union Expressway was a 2020 project that originated.
- Jim Grutsch-**It was 2019.
- Stephen O'Connor-**So, there was no plan to do 47 at that time. But now we do have a plan.
- Bill Straatmann-**Anything else? No. Any questions, comments about it?
- 4. Franklin County Transportation Committee-Jim Grutsch-** I will give you an update on the expressway and the roundabout on 47. We're continuing in the final phase of property purchase for the roundabout. There's one more property that we have to finalize. On the expressway, plans are still in progress and for the bridge itself, because I had to wait until they had all of the test results before they could do the final design. They should have those to MoDOT for review by March, April. And then MoDOT has several months to review that before they release those. So, it's an ongoing process with that. That's the status of the expressway and the roundabout.
- Bill Straatmann-**Jim, is anything from your end or Union holding up any part of this study?
- Jim Grutsch-**There are two properties that Union says are probably going to end up going to court and going to condemnation. So that may end up taking a year or two to finalize that. So, it's one of those condemnation things that takes awhile.
- Bill Straatmann-**I'll refer to the Missourian and Patrick McKenna and the comments for this area. And Patrick McKenna, he's kind of the general manager. I'm not sure what you would call him. He's in there making things happen. He's a director. And he was very complimentary of what the people in Franklin County are doing.
- Sandy Lucy-**He said we were smart.
- Bill Straatmann-**Yes, I loved it. So, they see us as a progressive town. We know the importance of good transportation systems, and they recognize it. And I say that to Steve, too, because Steve's a big part of that. Steve continues with taking care of the Washington area and also that new projects over in union.
- Jim Grutsch-**But we get to the point where we just have to let it play.
- Bill Straatmann-**Yes. So again, thank you for what you're doing over there and continue to let us know if we can help you.

**Jim Grutsch**-Okay, thank you.

**Bill Straatmann**-That's all we can do. Any comments, questions for Jim? Stephen, you got any comments about what's going on over there?

**Stephen O'Connor**-Not really. In the Union paper or in the Missourian paper Union kind of complained about MoDOT employees attend this meeting, but they don't attend the meetings in Union. And I've never been invited to a meeting in Union. So that kind of ticked me off. It's hard to go to a meeting when you don't know about it.

**Bill Straatmann**-I got to tell you, I'm not invited necessarily to the meetings in Union either.

**Stephen O'Connor**-I did talk to the reporter that wrote that, and he amended his article saying that I said, I've never been invited and can't go to a meeting you don't know about. So that was in the paper. It was changed, but it didn't call me out by name. It just said MoDOT. But I know who they're talking about when they say they attend this meeting and don't attend the other meetings. Just wanted to clarify that.

**Mayor Hagedorn**-Thank you for attending ours.

**Bill Straatmann**-You bet. That's exactly right.

**Sandy Lucy**-Well, they only meet quarterly, don't they?

**Stephen O'Connor**-They do meet quarterly, and I didn't know that. The December meeting, they talked about inviting me in the future so I can attend if I know about it.

**Ray Frankenberg**-I think it's very important to us that you're here and also, Joe coming over for the county and the representative coming out. You guys being here is all we can do to help communication and the county as well.

**Jim Grutsch**-Can I make a correction there? MODOT is indeed invited and a standing member of the Franklin county transportation Committee, Stephen, does attend that and has very valuable input at the meeting. Yes, the corridor committee that we have not had a meeting in probably a year.

**Bill Straatmann**-That's probably right.

**Jim Grutsch**-But as far as the other meeting with Union on some of the other issues, even Franklin County is not invited to some of those. So I don't know what to tell you about that. Thank you.

**Bill Straatmann**-Thank you. Thanks, Jim. Well, the more that we can cooperate and become involved, I guess the better for us all. We're all part of MoDOT. MoDOT's who's going to build the roads and stuff for us, take care of us.

**Stephen O'Connor**-I mean, there is concern that if this project doesn't keep moving, they could get the funding pulled.

**Bill Straatmann**-Sure.

**Mayor Hagedorn**-Is there a deadline?

**Stephen O'Connor**-Our planning group's been dealing with Franklin county and with the city of Union to keep this thing moving.

Yes. There is a deadline. We got an extension until June of this year.

**Jim Grutsch**-There is an extension until June of 24.

I don't know that Union will be able to hit that deadline.

**Sandy Lucy**-What's the extension? What's the extending? The funds are going to be available. Extension on the funds. And those are federal.

**Mayor Hagedorn**-That's for acquisition, is that correct?

**Jim Grutsch**-That's for acquisition and plan approval.

**Ray Frankenberg**-But I think you're talking about all of the funds are in jeopardy. I mean, the whole grant. Right?

**Jim Grutsch**-The grant for the expressway and the roundabout. Yes.

**Sandy Lucy**-So, all of that was until June? No, the other grants are longer than June.

**Jim Grutsch**-The big grant, that is still available.

**Ray Frankenberg**-Is that a completely separate grant that goes from Washington to St. Clair?

**Jim Grutsch**-That is a separate grant.

**Ray Frankenberg**-So, the expressway grant is what we're talking about, may expire.

**Jim Grutsch**-And this Franklin County's portion of that, the roundabout, we could get approval of that virtually immediately, but there's no sense in us moving forward with that unless the expressway is approved. So that's why we've been waiting until the plans are approved for that before we go ahead and request final approval for that, for the roundabout.

**Bill Straatmann**-So, Commissioner Brinker is the person to talk to about making sure this grant doesn't expire.

**Jim Grutsch**-He would be probably the one that would push it the hardest and have the ability to do that.

**Craig Mueller**-Do you think it's hinging on this land acquisition or condemnation process?

**Jim Grutsch**-Yes.

**Craig Mueller**-And an extension would be maybe based on, hey, we're this far into the process, and yes, we can expect an end date of and extend it again.

**Jim Grutsch**-The Federal Highway has very specific rules and dates that they give you more than what they feel is more than ample time to acquire the properties and develop the plans and what have you. And now Union has received two extensions. The likelihood of them getting a third extension, I don't know. There has been a lot of legwork put into this, so just have to wait and see.

**Bill Straatmann**-That's the key part of this.

**Jim Grutsch**-It is a topic of discussion quite often with our Commission Union. Hopefully, things get moving right along.

**Bill Straatmann**-Let us know if we can help you anyway, Jim.

**Jim Grutsch**-Okay, thank you.

**Bill Straatmann**-One thing I did read in the paper, and Representative Marquart, maybe you can fill us in. When the last tax issue was passed, it could be renewed or could be revoked on by the legislature at different times. The half sent gasoline tax. The gasoline tax. And there was a question whether the representatives or the people in Congress would renew it. Are they going to put it up for a vote or something?

**Representative Marquart**-It can always be altered. Change to legislature. As a matter of fact, they attempted to do that last session and it failed. But it's not my understanding that there is a sunshine on that gas tax.

**Bill Straatmann**-I didn't think there was because I kind of remember it, but when I read it in the newspaper. Maybe that's where I misread it, that there was going to be an attempt to bring it back up before the legislature?

**Representative Marquart**- There seems to be always somebody that is concerned with that, and they're always talking about it. Also understand that you can apply for a rebate for the gas tax if you save your receipts and fill out the form and submit them properly.

**Sandy Lucy**-Have many people done that?

**Representative Marquart**-I haven't seen the totals on that. I do have that information, I think, on budget books, but I don't know what that is right now.

**Stephen O'Connor**-I think it's less than they expected.

**Bill Straatmann**-Cumbersome just to do it.

**Representative Marquart**-I believe they are raising more money than what they had projected.

**Sandy Lucy**-So, I think there are some legislators who don't like the tax, and so they repeal it, but I don't know. Do you think they have support to do that?

**Representative Marquart**-I don't think so.

**Bill Straatmann**-I just threw it out there because I thought if there was an effort to not renew it or continue it, to renew it and add on to it. The thing is, it was in three phases. It was going to increase, what was it, another year and then \$0.05 another year. So, it had three different levels. And evidently we've gotten through the first phase and now we're getting into the second. And the question is if the legislature has to vote on that increase each time.

**Representative Marquart**-They do not have to vote on that each time. Yeah. When it was enacted, it laid out the plan to raise to a certain tax, yes. And then I would say in the future, if they want to do

something else, then they would have to change the gas tax legislation. But the way it is now, my understanding is the way it is now, it's set and revenues should be coming in as usual.

**Bill Straatmann**-That is such an important tax. And Stephen you know that because of MoDOT is doing projects now that they weren't even considering before this thing was passed, 47 being one of them.

**Bill Straatmann**-So, stay on top of that, if you don't mind, and just make sure that something isn't going to slip through that we need to talk to people about to continue this. As it was passed by the legislature, and again, it was passed by the legislature. It didn't go before the vote of the people. That was a key point. That was the only way it got done. Legislatures got up there and said, we need it, and it'd be hard to let go of that.

**Representative Marquart**-Well, once you receive those funds and start utilizing, then it's hard to stop utilizing those funds.

**Bill Straatmann**-Anyway, that's just a thought. It seemed like I read that in the article and maybe that I was reading into it or whatever. Anyway, anything else?

5. **MoDOT 50/50 Grants- Darren Lamb**-The only thing I have is a report that hopefully will be, design will be completed here, hopefully in a couple of months so that we can go out for bid. And this is for at Oldenburg Industrial Park on Highway 100. We do have a special meeting with the Council today to award a contract. We were waiting some approvals from the Corps and EDA. We received those, I think, at least from the Corps late last week. And so the council's got a special meeting today to go ahead and award a contract for the improvements within Oldenburg Industrial park. So that would be just for the roadway going into the park. That's not anything to do with the Highway 100 because that's a separate contract. But that will be moving forward today with the council. So, we're excited to finally get that going. It's been pushing a rock up a hill to get this. It's amazing what it takes to do progress. Anyway, that's where we're at.

**Bill Straatmann**-While you're standing there, how about Rabbit trail drive, those improvements that are happening there?-Rabbit trail drive. Well, Charles is going to go ahead and bring up a couple of projects, but as far as that goes, I think we are in RFQ's, so I'm trying to keep track of all of our projects. He's going to give you an update at the end with regards to, we just went through, we have applications that are going to be going to East West Gateway next month, and we just had resolutions of approval from the Council. But one of those is at East Fifth street and South Point Road at Highway 100. We are applying for CMAQ funds through East West Gateway to go ahead possibly and add a second turn lane and a dedicated right turn lane to go westbound which is really needed right there. We expect that we'll need that, especially with the development that's going to be occurring just along East Fifth Street, just a little bit further north.

**Ray Frankenberg**-Anyway, I totally agree with the right turn lane there. I've sat there.

**Darren Lamb**-There's a lot of cars lined up in the queue for that. We understand that. And like I said, until we apply for those funds.

**Stephen O'Connor**-And a second left as well.

**Darren Lamb**-Yes, and a second left as well. But I think hopefully we get a good chance of getting the grant. I'm not aware of any other. Is the county making a CMAQ application this round?

**Jim Grutsch**-No, we are not.

**Darren Lamb**-So, I don't know unless any other cities are making one. I feel good about the possibility of us going ahead and getting this, but we'll have to wait and see. I don't think they award that until May, when we hear at least a recommendation, so we'll keep you posted.

**Bill Straatmann**-It's interesting to see what MoDOT has to do with signage and warnings and all the things that they have to do when there is a project is going to be begin. You start seeing the signs.

**Darren Lamb**-Well, what you're seeing out there now, I think Stephen can tell you, is basically with the contract to do the asphalt improvements out there, but it starts with the concrete work that's taking place now. And I think KJU is the sub on that.

**Stephen O'Connor**-Correct. And I think they're starting this week. The message board said the 29th. Yes, we have good weather this week, so, yeah, I would expect them out there. We were going to try last week, but last week was no good.

**Bill Straatmann**-But it's going to be a lot of activity on Highway 100, I guess, on the west end of town.

**Stephen O'Connor**-I think it's from Washington street to East Fifth street. They're going to overlay that entire stretch and do some like. We're going to get some concrete work done with the ADA ramps, a little bit of sidewalk.

**Bill Straatmann**-Very good. That's very good. That's huge. Improvements needed for years. Any other comments about the grants?

6. **MoDOT Northeast District-Warren County**-No new report.
  7. **Washington Special Road District- Bill Straatmann**-You guys have any problems with the Special Road District fundings and whatever? You guys are all in agreement?  
**Darren Lamb**-We have revenues coming in from. I get a monthly report.
  8. **Old Hwy 100 Bridge-Stephen O'Connor**-We're reviewing the estimate to make sure it's still good. We still don't have a consultant to do the work yet. We haven't been adding projects the last two years to our STP, so we'll see when that goes. Definitely want it to get done. We want it off of our inventory.
  9. **Airport**-No new report.
  10. **Team Track-Sal Maniaci**-No new report.
  11. **East-West Parkway-Charles Stankovic**-Holding pattern right now due to winter weather.
  12. **Public Transportation**-No new report.
  13. **Other Business- Darren Lamb**-I will say you were mentioning earlier about 47. I think the city's focus will eventually be on extending four lanes south to where that intersection was going to be planned for the East West Parkway. And that's really a goal that the city is going to be looking at. As far as 47 further south than that. Time will tell, but I mean, that's where it currently goes, from four lanes down to two. Basically, we want to take that all the way to what was the Kleekamp farm. It's been purchased but where that East West Parkway roadway is out there or where that intersection would be anyway.  
**Ray Frankenberg**-So, is that going to fall into line with the capacity and safety improvements on 47? Possibly?  
**Darren Lamb**-It's all taken into account. And I think what you're going to see, Ray, is if development were to, like I said, that farm has been sold and I think that there's two developers that bought two separate tracks. I don't know if I've been hearing that one of them might purchase out the other one or they might work a deal, and if they do so. But we will be working with them on their access to 47, knowing full well that we want that East West Parkway roadway access. And that's part of the plans that HNTB be taking a look at, et cetera.  
**Stephen O'Connor**-And that's some of the public involvement that we're talking about. Everything together.  
**Bill Straatmann**-That's going to be an important project.
- Charles Stankovic**-I'll talk about the grants we're going to apply for. The first ones are we have our Front Street and High Street projects. They're supposed to go in 25, but with inflation, costs of construction, it was going to be twice as much to construct that we have awarded. So East West Gateway recommended that we reapply to cover those extra construction funds. So that's what we're doing for those projects. And then, as Darren alluded to, we're going to put in the CMAQ up there 100

and East Fifth street. And then we're going to put in a block grant for East Fifth street from 100 to International to put in sidewalk through there and repave and all that.

That's what we got.

**Bill Straatmann**-Needing improvements. Very good. Thank you.

**Charles Stankovic**-And then you were asking about Rabbit Trail is out for RFQ right now for design. And then we just got back RFQ's for Third Street from Jefferson to High street. That's our next grant project as well.

**Joe Holtmeier**-And Third street is going to be constructed this summer?

**Charles Stankovic**-Third street, yes. Should be starting here sometime in March.

**Bill Straatmann**-And the paving, that will be done as soon as the asphalt plants reopen, I assume, for the city streets that are pretty rugged right now. That's the plan. As in Second street.

They're waiting on asphalt, so that's a matter for the newspaper to pick up and say, hey, these streets are going to get paved with asphalt. We're waiting for the asphalt companies to plants to open up.

**Charles Stankovic**-They still have a little bit of sidewalk, whatever, but yeah, they're on track for hopefully March when the plants open back up, do the asphalt, and then they have a little bit of work at the intersections for the crosswalks.

**Bill Straatmann**-We understand it, but a lot of people see this and they say, why aren't they cleaning up these streets? And they're all rugged looking and they're undone. They're not finished. And that's the reason, basically, that's why I bring it up, so that maybe their report, newspapers can say, hey, this is not the way they're going to be standing. As soon as the asphalt plant is open, that will be done.

**Ray Frankenberg**-And I think what we're seeing out there now is it's a project that's been bid, but we're making sure all the utilities and everything under the street are up to par. And we're just in the middle of huge improvements. It's just construction. We want to take care of everything.

**Charles Stankovic**-So, hopefully paving in March and then late March, April, they'll finish up the pavers and the intersection, work the crosswalks.

**Bill Straatmann**-I'll entertain a motion to adjourn. So moved I have a second. All in favor? Aye.  
All-Aye.

**Bill Straatmann**-Any Opposed. Thank you.

#### **14. Adjournment-Motion made and seconded to adjourn, passed without dissent at 8:35 a.m.**