

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

**Monday, February 26th, 2024 at 8:00 AM
Minutes**

Present: Craig Mueller, Stephen O'Connor, Bill Straatmann, Mayor Hagedorn, Joe Holtmeier, Sandy Lucy, Bill Miller, Tim Brinker, Mike Coulter, Darren Lamb, Sal Maniaci

Absent: Ed Fischer, Ray Frankenberg, Bob Engemann, L.B. Eckelkamp, Jeff Niemeyer, Charles Stankovic

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

Approval of minutes from January 29, 2024, motion made, first and seconded, passed without dissent.

1. **Amtrak- Craig Mueller**-No new report.
2. **Causeway-Missouri River Bridge Flood Issue- Bill Straatmann**-We have talked about this, and this has been on the agenda for as long as I can remember, 25 years. Anyway, it appears and Steve, maybe you can bring us up to date as to what the plan is. I hope everyone had a chance to review this. I know, Joe, it probably came from your district out of what they're going to try to do, to do the studies so that when and if the river comes up again, at least they will have studied it to where they have some options of what they're going to do with it.

Joe Gildehaus-I know they're in the process of that study.

Bill Straatmann-Because it came out of your district, obviously. But it's a great study, and I've never really ever seen it presented like this. Basically, it's a timeline of how they're going to do it. It's going to take a little over a year to do the study, and it encompasses an area starting with, actually with the Herman Bridge. They bring that into the equation. I'll just read what it is supposed to be, proposed model of sub basins includes 800 sq. miles bottom land and contributing tributaries with 40 miles of Missouri river and the potential to shorten the modeled reach. There are two bridges along the Missouri river, one in Herman gage and the second at the Washington gage. MoDOT may have new bridge plans for a proposed causeway across the floodplain would likely need to include this in the analysis. So, they've actually identified it. Now, if in fact, there's going to be some type of a causeway, they're going to tell us whether they're going to even consider it or not. But you got to have studies, and this is \$100,000. This is going to cost, and it's going to take a year to do. It's the first step. But if it's going to be next time there's a flood, hopefully we will be able to identify what to do. That's what this does. So I think it's something great for this area, particularly both counties. Joe, you guys had to be front and center on this because it's in your county.

Joe Gildehaus-It's a start.

Bill Straatmann-It's a start. That's right. Any comments, Joe, for the group?

Joe Gildehaus-It's going to be a long year. I hope it gets done.

Bill Miller-Does that causeway have much of a priority? We've been talking about it for years and years.

Bill Straatmann-It had to be studied, and this is the study, so it can't start. Nothing's going to happen until there was a study. And at least this is the study now that gets it going. It could be ten years before we have another flood, could be next year, could be this fall, but at least it's going to have a study of what we could do or should do or can't do based on the hydraulics and whatever, or the water whatever

coming down the river. So, it's a start. I mean, it's like paying your dues before you can ever have anything done.

3. Highway 47 Corridor Committee- Jim Grutsch-Good morning. The Highway 47 Corridor remains under study by MoDOT. If I can speak for Stephen.

Stephen O'Connor-You can.

Jim Grutsch-That's an ongoing process. It's an elaborate study, and it will take a little while.

The Highway 50 and 47, with the expressway and the roundabout. The engineer is getting very close to submitting the plans to MoDOT for the bridge and the expressway. That should be within the next month. MoDOT said they will review it as soon as they get it, and hopefully it'll be ongoing and approved. That's about the only update I have on that.

Bill Straatmann-You had a piece of property that you were still...

Jim Grutsch-There are two pieces of property in the expressway portion of that that are going, it looks like they're going to go to condemnation, but that's where it's at right now. It's in negotiation right now, but it looks like they can't come to a meeting of the minds and it will go to condemnation.

Bill Straatmann-So how much is that really holding us back? Nobody can go forward until you've got the ok or can you?

Jim Grutsch-You really can't go forward. Our portion is the roundabout for Franklin County. We can't build the roundabout until the bridge is built.

Bill Straatmann-Anything we can do to expedite?

Jim Grutsch-Not that I know of.

Bill Straatmann-Anyway, so who actually is the front person handling it?

Jim Grutsch-It would be Bill Hampton is the individual that works with Cochran Engineering to implement and the City of Union. Jonathan Zimmerman and JD Kelly at City of Union to facilitate those purchases of those properties. And that's where it is right now.

Sandy Lucy-So, the county and the city have not secured all the property?

Jim Grutsch-The county has secured its portion underneath our project.

Sandy Lucy-Okay, that's what I thought. I misunderstood you a while ago.

Jim Grutsch-But underneath the expressway portion, the bridge and the expressway over to 47, the roadway itself, there are two main parcels that have to be secured by the City of Union.

And those are probably going to condemnation.

Bill Straatmann-How long do you expect that to take generally?

Jim Grutsch-They're hoping that it'll be a few months.

Sandy Lucy-Have they started the process?

Jim Grutsch-Yes.

Craig Mueller-There was some discussion last time that there's a window on using those funds.

And I think we talked about it last time. Well, if this takes too long, there might be trouble getting or securing that funding.

Jim Grutsch-That's still ongoing. Those discussions are ongoing. The City of Union especially is trying to get inside that window to make sure that we are eligible to get that funding.

Bill Miller-Those discussions have been ongoing for a number of years.

Jim Grutsch-Yes, it has.

Bill Straatmann-The actual study was done 25 years ago on widening Highway 47.

Jim Grutsch-And this phase of it, the expressway and the roundabout, that all started in 2017/18. So, it has been going on for quite a while. Absolutely.

Bill Miller-Well, is the state aware of the traffic on 47 between here and Union?

Jim Grutsch-They certainly are.

Stephen O'Connor-That's why we're doing the study. We're studying it's different than Union Expressway, but we're looking to improve 47 between St. Clair and Washington. And we're doing our own study. And that's supposed to be done in about 2025, early 2025. Things take time. You can't just snap your fingers.

Bill Miller-Well, is it the bridge and the connection to Highway 50? Is that the big hold up?

Jim Grutsch-The bridge and that connection over to Highway 50. That is where the property is going to condemnation. That farm ground that's in the floodplain, that is the area that's going to condemnation.

Tim Brinker-Just to give a little more edification relative to where we are and what's holding up, the expressway and the roundabout are progressing as they are deemed by law to progress. That is, you got to acquire the right of way, lay it out and build it. Right now, we're in the right of way acquisition, which is great because that means we're progressing and it's done. It's going to happen. The dirt will start turning probably next year, and that way we'll be able to rock and roll with the interconnection of the two legs of 47. The 89 plus million that MoDOT has committed to the project and put down in the budgetary process that is guaranteed the project will happen is the question as to when and the timing of it all. It's been identified, recognized and slated. So that's a great thing in the overall picture. The issue is timing, and everybody wants it right now. Stop buying green bananas and such like that, as Les Bohle once said years ago. But that's where it is. So, hopefully it'll happen sooner than later. And the bottom line, all agencies and entities, as Tom Blair told me last week, said, just stay on top of us and I said, okay, okay, we'll stay on top of MoDOT.

Bill Straatmann-Tim, has the right of way between Washington and Union been identified where the highway is going to go?

Tim Brinker-There's identification. There's plenty of space there from what we're told. It's the inlets and the ingress egress that are the challenges, especially on the south leg.

Bill Straatmann-So, do you see it on both sides?

Tim Brinker-I don't know where it actually falls.

Bill Straatmann-In and out, is that how you see it?

Tim Brinker-It's there.

Bill Miller-Well, this committee has been on top of it for years and years.

Tim Brinker-Hurry up and wait. But anyway, in the meantime, we get fed the information, get anxious, and the folks in the public get anxious about it, and I totally understand it. That's the difference in that expressway portion, too, is the fact that the County's responsibility and commitment is to that dual lane roundabout. The city's portion, City of Union is responsible for that expressway and the bridge. So, with two government entities, one waiting on the other sometimes, and it gets a little murky, but it's progressing. Thank you.

4. **Franklin County Transportation Committee- Jim Grutsch**-We did meet about the only business that was handled there was the reelection of the chair and the vice chair. And there is in your packet, there is a chart that is not the proper chart for the Transportation Committee. I think a memo went out to everybody on the committee here that you were going to be receiving the proper information for that.

Bill Straatmann-Not to dwell on that. But there's a lot of money that is coming in as a result of the last gas tax increase. Is that then forthcoming? Have you started to receive some of that?

Jim Grutsch-That's between the Treasurer and the City of Washington. That doesn't have anything to do with the Transportation Committee. What you saw in that report.

Bill Straatmann-As I recall, the bill, the County got 15%, and the Cities each got 15% of some of the monies, the additional monies. Darren, would you know?

Darren Lamb-I think there was a graph in your packet. So, you see a little bit of a spike. This is just what the City has received. But you see this spike? That's what you were looking for and what you've been talking about with the increase in that. That's our allocation that we're getting, and that's the increase of what you're seeing. So, I think in 2023, it was up to \$283,000. Whereas in the past years, if you see this, I mean, you're anywhere between \$175,000 to \$190,000. So, you are seeing a definite increase in it. And that's why we included this within your packet.

And this is just the cities.

Bill Straatmann-Now, how has that been allocated? Or how will it be allocated?

Darren Lamb-And then when the City just shows a project that we have for transportation, turn it to the County. I've talked with Commissioner Brinker about it before in the past of why they can't just automatically allocate that directly to the City, and why that has to sit over in their account. No offense, but sometimes we get more interest on our money over here. Just so you know. That's the reason why I ask. So, if they would allocate that over to us, we could go ahead and generate a little bit more money out of that. But we haven't moved forward on that portion of it. But basically it sits in an account over at the county, and then the city goes ahead and applies for those funds to show we spend it on a transportation project.

Bill Straatmann-Well, the reason I brought it up is it was part of the tax increase proposal. Sure. Knowing that the cities and the counties were each going to get 15%, I think.

Darren Lamb-And that's what you're seeing on that graph. That's the reason why we included that.

Bill Straatmann-And it took a while for it to start flowing. And, in fact, that's why it started in, I guess, 23 and 23 is when it actually started showing up. So, that was the whole question. And that's important because people relied on that or used that to vote yes or no on the proposition of adding extra monies to the sales tax, gas tax.

Darren Lamb-I remember from previous meetings we had discussions and you were asking about it, and so we decided, let's put that on a graph for Bill. He'll like to see that.

Bill Straatman-Thank you. Well, I think it's important that people see it because it is a reflection of the gasoline tax increase. It's coming back to us, some of it correct. That's a good thing.

5. **MoDOT 50/50 Grants- Sal Maniaci**-No real update with the Oldenburg portion. That's actually 100% grant through MoDOT. We submitted our environmental findings to SHPO, I believe, two weeks ago, but there was no additional. SCI completed our Environmental, the Cultural Resources Survey had no additional actions, so no concerns with the environmental. We just have to get that reviewed and then hopefully we're good to go out to bid here in the next two weeks or so, or we get that release from MoDOT to prepare bids. So, we are moving forward.
6. **MoDOT Northeast District-Warren County- Bill Straatmann**-You've got some big things happening on the north end part of your county.

Joe Gildehaus-And with Interstate 70 going through. We're working on that on a regular basis. And we have a couple of meetings this week about that as well.

Bill Straatmann-And Union Electric with their plans to get a lot of energy out of those farm fields out of solar.

Joe Gildehaus-That's going well, too. Yeah, both of them are going, actually, both companies are involved. Both of them have started. So, one should be done hopefully fall of next year and the other one would be in 25.

Bill Straatmann-For us that don't follow it as well as we should. How many acres and how many are they talking about, just out of curiosity?

Joe Gildehaus-There's about 4000 acres that would be in fenced. I think they leased out about 6000, but about 4000 acres would be in fence.

Bill Straatmann-And that's going to be solar panels, 4000 acres of solar panels.

Joe Gildehaus-It's about 800,000 panels.
7. **Washington Special Road District**-No report.
8. **Old Hwy 100 Bridge- Stephen O'Connor**-Nothing to report.

Bill Straatmann-Is there any study? Is that progressing? Has anybody been identified?

Stephen O'Connor-It's in the system, but we've not got a solid year on it. But we've not added new projects at MoDOT in the last couple of years because of some of the costs of construction and some of the other big projects that are popping up. So it's still going to happen. We just don't know when. We probably want it to study. Get with Washington to figure out how we're going to do the funding. I know

I was talking to John Nilges just when he was here. They kind of want a larger bridge, bigger scale bridge than what we would plan to put in there. So we got to figure out that part.

Bill Straatmann-Bike path.

Stephen O'Connor-No, I mean, like, if we're going to add sidewalk, if we're going to do some of the stuff that we don't have on it now. So, we got to figure out how that bridge would be designed and we're going to build. It's just a matter of timing and whatever.

9. **Airport-Sal Maniaci**-So, the new hangers are substantially complete. We're just waiting on seed and straw for the spring to be able to close out that contract. We've begun to start requesting those reimbursements from the state on that. Still have people on the waitlist. So, we were able to move existing tenants over and then move new tenants in. And we still have plenty of people waiting. So, the demand is still there. And with the runway extension, we are working with FAA and MoDOT on the environmental portion, on the engineering and design. We had to go back out for RFQ for engineering services. That was not listed as a project the last time we hired an engineering consultant. And MoDOT and FAA require any project that's worked on to be specifically listed in your RFQ. So, we republished that RFQ. We didn't list it before because we didn't have the funding, the federal funding, so we weren't aware of that project. So, those are due this Friday, March 1. So we'll be able to select a new engineering consultant and go from there. And then Monday, the fourth Council should be voting on a contract to replace the fuel pump. So we've had that fuel pump out there for quite a while. It's pretty old, so we'll have a new one voted on Monday.

Bill Straatmann-Sal, as this study goes forward on the causeway, will the city be the contact then for talking about the airport? Because the airport, trying to tie that with that whole package could help us get something done faster. When you include the airport and getting it out of the floodplain somehow. Yeah.

Sal Maniaci-We'd be the point of contact.

Joe Holtmeier-Now on the airport. I didn't remember how many commercial accounts have our hangers and how many personal?

Sal Maniaci-I couldn't tell you off the top of my head.

Joe Holtmeier-There's more personal than commercial in there.

Sal Maniaci-For the hangers? Probably. We were looking at that at the last airport meeting. We definitely sell way more jet fuel than avgas. That continues to stay up. So, you see in gallons per month. We definitely have more of the commercial jet. They fly out commercial, but the hanger. we don't have climate controlled hangers and a lot of those jets have to be in climate controlled, especially in the winter. So, probably mostly more personal, but activity wise, definitely heavy on the commercial side.

Mayor Hagedorn-Can I talk about the airport? St. Louis Regional Freightway. They're starting to include air transportation in their focus, and they have a task force, and that task force will meet in May. And I'm trying to get Washington's name out there because the airspace and the facilities around Lambert are limited. Spirit is using us as an overflow. So, just to let them know that, hey, Washington would like to be considered for whatever is out there, and that task force will look at ways to grow our entire airport system in the St. Louis Region. And so that meeting, the next meeting happens in May. So, I'm trying to get my ducks in a row. So, when that happens, we can at least let them know that Washington's on the map. Here we are, and we have an airport that's growing. And any ideas from people in this room, I would more than welcome. Thanks.

10. **Team Track-Sal Maniaci**-No new report.

11. **East-West Parkway- Sal Maniaci**-That first leg has been poured and we have a contract to figure out design services for the next phase just to get a cost estimate of what it would take to design it a little bit further east. And then the roads coming off of it for about 84 homes were platted and approved to the north of East-West Parkway. So that was the whole idea of us participating in that first leg was to spur

additional development. So about 84 homes approved and the remainder of the land can fit well over 200.

12. Transportation- Teresa Lee-For public transportation. As you know, Booneslick Regional Planning manages the statewide MoRides and that's about the only statewide effort that there currently is on coordinating public transportation. So, I have been in some conversations, some of the other state agencies are actually taking an interest in the transportation issues. So, I've got several organizations that are working with MoDOT, the Health and Senior Services, Mental Health Division of Family Services. It's in discussion stages on what can we do statewide to help with the people who have barriers for transportation. So, what we do with MoRides, it's the first step, but there is more that can be done. So, I'm really excited to see that the state is looking at public transportation overall as something that needs more attention. Hopefully in the next several months we'll have more to report.

Bill Straatmann-Do you get funding from MoDOT for your busses and transportation equipment?

Teresa Lee-So MoRides doesn't operate any equipment. We are a connector, but it's statewide when people don't know who to contact for transportation in their area. We have a call in center and we have a website that covers the entire state that will help. We do a little investigation on what is your need. What sort of things do you have that might allow you to take advantage of different transportation sources and then give them those options. Here are some places for you to contact. That's where we stop, but it is funded by an 80/20 grant through Federal Highways, through MoDOT. So we're always looking for partners for that extra 20%. So if you have interest in putting in \$1,000 to help towards that, we'd certainly appreciate that as we're looking for funding partners for our fiscal year 25.

Bill Straatmann-Very good, Teresa. Anything else? Any questions for her? You actually do the work like East West Gateway does. Warren county is covered by the different Boonslick Regional. Are you saying the two could be working together with funding?

Teresa Lee-So MoRides is a program that Boonsick Regional Planning manages. And MoDOT has been our only state partner in that program. And there's a statewide transportation task force for public transit that is looking at it. Right. As you know, helping. What can we do to help people further? Because the people who are the users of MoDOT are a lot of senior citizens or people with disabilities, developmental disabilities, and they just can't jump in their car and go. So we're helping that population that has those barriers to transportation.

13. Other Business-Bill Straatmann- Lots of things are happening with the movement of freight. If you follow the news, big companies merging, Walmart, for one, is getting out of the trucking business, it appears. And JB Hunt, I think, is the one who they're going to have it all through them. And because they've got a better system of containers and boats and whatever, JB Hunt, they're going to sub it all out. So St. Louis, with freightways as active as they are, probably, I'm sure they are aware of it, but when you've got an outfit as big as Walmart subbing out all those Walmart, you won't see Walmart trucks anymore. That's how I envision it. You would see JB Hunt trucks moving all that freight. And so that was just in the paper this past weekend. But yes, Franklin County, Gasconade county, with the things that are going on, we're in the growth. We're in the growth circle. There's no question about it. It's happening around here. MoDOT just announced what a \$25 million study for expanding 44. Is that correct?

Stephen O'Connor-We're studying I 44. Gray Summit all the way to Oklahoma.

Bill Straatmann-And they said gray summit, which is where the three lanes starts to go into the same as. Will it be three lanes all the way to Oklahoma City. And of course, they've been talking about widening interstate 70 for a number of years now. And I think that's progressing, going to take a while. A lot of money. It is happening. It's happening in Warren county. I can tell you that first phase last Friday, yep. Just beginning. You'll see that all the way to at least Kansas City and then further.

Representative Marquart- I 70 is moving along like you said. They awarded the first phase contract. Regard to I 44, they have been studying and looking at that. They put some money toward the study of I 44. I think I 44 is a much bigger, more complicated project, it appears, than what the I 70 corridor would

be, but they are planning on getting I 70 done at the same time working on looking at the I 44 corridor for improvement. Those two things happen. We're sitting right in Washington, sitting right in the middle, so good things, hopefully, will come as things progress.

Bill Miller-Kyle. Are you on the House transportation committee?

Representative Marquart-Yes, actually, I'm on the House Transportation Committee, but I'm on the Appropriation Subcommittee for transportation as well. So, all those requests and the budget and things they look at, and I'm part of that committee that's looking at how those dollars are being spent.

Bill Miller-You're in a position to help us here?

Representative Marquart-We hope so. Yes. It's a big committee. There's a lot of things going on. And I'll tell you, I could talk to you about how the budget works in the government there and in the House. It would probably take about an hour and a half, 2 hours to kind of fully explain that to you, and maybe sometime we could do that. But I tell you, that budget is very complicated. One of the guys I share an office space with, he is on the full budget committee, and he has the budget books, and they literally stand as high as his podium. And that's just a portion of the explanation of each line item. The budget books for the state obviously are voluminous, but the procedures which money is allocated is long and arduous as well. And it's way too much to explain right now to you what I've found and what I've seen up there. But I can certainly sit down and try to explain that to you sometime.

Bill Miller-Well, we should be concerned about the growth in Washington and Union and Highway 47. That's a big priority.

Representative Marquart-Right. And I tell you one thing that I found on that Appropriation Subcommittee is Highway 47 types of projects are all over the state. I mean, there are highways that run that kind of volume, and probably the arteries are less than what the volume handles. It's all over the state, I'm going to say hundreds, but dozens and dozens and dozens of those types of projects. So, where this committee has gotten and MoDOT has gotten that project for 47 is very admirable because it's actually on the map and working toward getting done. They've got the intersection over there in Union being taken care of, and then we're going to be looking at doing 47 between Washington and Union. I tell you, it seems to me, anyway, and I've only been on this committee, actually, they put me on this committee last year at the beginning of this year. For that project to be where it is, is very good because it's looking like it's going to get done. And that's where hopefully I'll be able to contribute to sway some of the budget committee's decision making in helping MoDOT put money toward know. Of course, that committee doesn't control MoDOT, but it helps to make priorities for their funding.

Bill Straatmann-Thank you very much, guys.

Mayor Hagedorn-I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Kyle for all the things that he's done for Washington. By golly, we couldn't ask for a better rep. Please keep it up.

Stephen O'Connor-I can give you an update on 100, the construction in Washington. Yeah, I guess it's just a little bit west of 47 over to East Fifth street. And they're doing the concrete work now on the sidewalks and ADA ramps. And they are going to do the, I guess the resurfacing starting in the spring and supposed to be done early summer. So that project will move pretty quick. And if the weather stays good, we'll be able to knock it out fairly quick. I would think.

And overlay that stretch. That stretch from east Fifth I think it's just a little bit west of 47 on 100. So they're out there working now. They've been working I have seen for about a month, I think.

Bill Miller-I have a question for the city. When are they going to pave Second Street?

Mayor Hagedorn-As soon as the asphalt company opens.

14. Adjournment-Motion made and seconded to adjourn, passed without dissent at 8:40 a.m.