

Kendall County – Boerne – Fair Oaks Transportation Committee Minutes

**04 May 2021
2:00 – 3:57 p.m.**

The Kendall County – Boerne – Fair Oaks Transportation Committee convened in the City of Boerne City Hall 1st Floor Staff Training Room.

In Attendance:

Bob Manning, Ben Eldredge, Bryce Boddie, John Kight, Jonah Evans, Northern Hendricks, Rich Sena, Steve Sharma, Rankin D’Spain, Henry Acosta, Bitsy Pratt, Jeff Carroll and Erika Yount.

Not in Attendance:

Don Durden, Josh Limmer, Kim Blohm, Marcus Garcia, Mark Stahl, Stephen Zoeller, Tim Bannwolf.

I. OPENING REMARKS

- Bob Manning begins the meeting exactly at 2 p.m. He discusses the recent success in filling some of the vacant seats on the committee. He introduces Henry Acosta, who has taken the spot to represent the County Commissioner position on the committee. He also notes that there are two seats still available to fill.
- Jeff Carroll introduces some members on his staff, Cheryl Rogers and Melissa Eckert, who will occasionally be sitting in on the meetings when Carroll is unable to make it.

II. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Manning mentions the last meeting’s minutes and opens the floor for a motion to approve. Rankin D’Spain makes a motion to approve the minutes; Bryce Boddie seconds the motion. Unanimous vote to approve the minutes.

III. UPDATE ON COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

- Two guests from the public were present, one of them being Denise Deavor. She begins discussing her concerns about the major thoroughfare plan the City is creating. Like many in her shoes, she is concerned about how it will affect her property.
- Carroll chimes in and explains that the City has reached out to 8 or 9 engineering firms to have the plan created.
- Deavor responds saying the latest thoroughfare plan that was created some many years ago was not functional.
- Carroll mentions the plan for the ETJ to expand from 1 mile to 2 miles.
- She says the current major thoroughfare plan cuts through her yard, taking out her water well. She is interested in finding out how the new plan will affect the people of the county and their properties.
- Carroll responds saying that the concept of the plan is to have more connection to get people from point A to point B more efficiently. He explains that the north west side of town is evolving, but they are currently deciding what they would like to see happen.
- Manning chimes in to say that the committee aims to be the voice of the community. Their goal is to build, fund, and service, but also not to impose on others' properties. He hopes a consultant will work with and engage with the committee and their thoughts.
- Carroll then says that a contract with a consultant would be about 12-15 months, he explains that the City will not be off

making plans of their own, but that they plan to coordinate with the committee.

- Boddie mentions that Don Durden wanted to have the County Commissioner involved.
- Deavor says she plans to be at the next Commissioner's Court meeting. As budget season will begin in 3 weeks, they will be looking at piling in money. She says the City is ahead of the County.
- Carroll says as far as hiring a consultant, that task is being added to next year's fiscal budget.
- Bitsy Pratt chimes in, saying she is neighbors with Deavor, and has been interested in transportation issues since the 2000s. She is happy to see an opportunity to sit in with the committee. Pratt replaces Bob Hartwick.
- Acosta chimes in as well saying he got on with the school district right in the middle of the COVID crisis. He says he has 34 years of experience in facilities management overseeing and providing for operational division.
- Eldredge makes mention of the school district bond. He says its very presence impacts the use and need of roads. He directs his next question to Acosta: is there any role that the school board can play in funding road projects?
- Acosta replies that that is a discussion he would have to bring to the school board, but he is happy for now to be playing an active role within the committee.
- Steve Sharma introduces himself next, saying he represents the EDC. He has lived in Boerne since 2005, owns an engineering company, and has been a traffic engineer for 25 years.

V. REVIEW WHERE WE WERE WHEN ACTIVITY WAS SUSPENDED

- Manning says he wants to spend some time discussing the mission and status of existing subcommittees. He says there are two subcommittees that face the same issues: the public outreach subcommittee and the GIS subcommittee. He explains that there is a mountain of data related to public input that has not yet been deciphered.
- Northern Hendricks chimes in with a question: what format is the data in?
- Boddie says he has put the data into spreadsheets to get an idea of where people stand and where the projects are in the process, but it was very difficult to interpret.
- Jonah Evans suggests having AAMPO translate the information and send the information to the committee in a way that is easy to understand—like an Excel spreadsheet. When Manning asks if Evans thinks he could do something with it, Evans responds saying that when time permits, he would be able to look and see what the problem is.
- Manning asks if Evans could formalize the steps. Evans replies yes, saying that the first step is to get all the data, then go and identify every project. Look at comments and support, likes and opposition and put them into categories.
- Manning says the committee can make reaching out to AAMPO Step 1.
- When Eldredge brings up that the committee should take ownership of this process, Evans suggests placing the data on the website. Manning says he will get the request with AAMPO made.
- Evans asks what the committee's role is regarding Carroll's comments about hiring a consultant and the other efforts being made in moving the project along.
- Carroll mentions RFQ qualifications. He says the City will hire a consultant. He explains that there are 12 different road categories some that are never used at all. The plan is to

look at multimodal sidewalks and bike lanes, and to evaluate where the roads could go. He says there are several engineering firms that have been tracking the area.

- John Kight chimes in and suggests looking at where the direction is first—is the City looking at a grid network? Are they looking at how to get rid of thru traffic?
- Carroll says the intent was always to work closely with whomever the City hires for consulting.
- Then Kight says the projects the committee has are good, but they do not consider Boerne and the County's future and growth. He explains that the committee needs to consider what the long-term objectives are.
- Rich Sena chimes in and circles back around to placing public input into categories. He explains that this could be a good way to find commonalities between the data.
- Pratt suggests looking at the relativity of impacts. How many cars do the current roadways move? Should the City consider adding another North-South flow of traffic? East-West? She suggests letting someone else consider the costs.
- Evans chimes in saying therefore it is important to know exactly what the role of the committee is. What are the boundaries of responsibilities of the committee?
- Manning reiterates that the work coming out of this committee should never be all funded. There should be a pool of community ideas and wants that anyone can look at and see what the committee offered. They were never asked to worry about cost and funding, only to come up with the ideas for how to make transportation within the City/County more efficient.
- Hendricks asks if there is an available model that would tell them how many people a particular idea will move. Pratt responds yes.

- Kight chimes in and says that it is important to remember visitors that come to town as well. People will come whether the transportation needs are met, and he begs the question “What’s a reasonable way to take care of this traffic?” He also talks about user costs regarding TxDOT.
- Pratt responds and says her concerns were more about the impact. How much has TxDOT done to move cars more efficiently? She suggests talking about impacts before discussing costs. She then moves the discussion to other subcommittees.
- Manning says the next subcommittee is Subject Matter Experts that bring in speakers for topics the committee to be educated on. Also says final subcommittee was the Past Studies Committee.
- Evans suggests combining GIS’ work with the Public Outreach Committee. He says that the Public Outreach Committee could help with the information AAMPO provides. Hendricks concurs as the head of that committee.
- Kight circles back to finding commonalities between the data of the public outreach attempt.
- Pratt chimes in saying that she thinks one of the missing pieces is looking at projected growth and future needs. Where is the growth happening? What will be needed for the projected future growth?
- Sena agrees it is a good point and goes on to say that TxDOT puts together estimates, but it is difficult to judge the accuracy of the results. Demographers project as well, and those can be helpful. He says it is a good thing for the committee to know where the projected growth is for schools and homes in order to make suggestions in looking at which road projects to prioritize.
- Pratt respond back saying the committee was at that point when everything got shut down and she thought they had

come up with a good list of projects throughout the county, but maybe they should be morphed for future needs.

- Sena says the whole committee should weigh in. More surveys in the future will be done, and he notes that it is important to educate people. He also notes that every major developer has an eye on this town and suggests doing a refresher on projected developments that could spur discussion on which projects make the most sense to move forward on.
- Manning agrees that the projects recommended by the committee should have polls that allow the public to weigh in, but also projected demographics for the future.
- Sena suggests that newer members of the committee can help kickstart ideas for solutions. He notes that there are projects in the Interim Report that are non-controversial, but there are some projects that cannot be escaped.
- Manning opens the floor for combing the subcommittees. Evans makes a motion to approve. Eldredge seconds the motion. All in favor.
- Some discussion takes place on how the committee makes decisions and committee member attendance. Evans inquires about the quorum method. Sena makes a point that committee members should do their best to attend meetings so that an accurate consensus can be made.
- Manning encourages newest committee members to join a subcommittee where they think they could be of the most help.
- Manning asks about the roles of the subcommittees. Pratt chimes in a suggests bringing in historical information in terms of getting a full scope of all projects before whittling down and making decisions on which projects need the most attention. This would help new members to see where the committee stands. She looks forward to using the BISD information and projected growth.

- Sena clarifies with Pratt on her point: that it would be the subcommittee's job to consolidate the data and present it to the committee. She felt as though they had gotten there already.
- Eldredge says he sees this subcommittee as the feasibility study committee—looking at the feasibility of a project based on data collected in studies.
- Pratt explains that they had looked at the connection through town more toward the north end of downtown and felt that there was a fair amount of growth on John's Road.
- Sena chimes in and says he thinks every member of the committee should be well-versed on where upcoming developments will be.
- Eldredge discusses using the GIS public feedback data to help make collective decisions.
- Sena agrees saying that maybe having a more detailed review of the projects would be helpful. He also notes that having people from the public coming to these meetings to give their input is important because these are regional decisions being made.
- Carroll chimes in and says the district studies were sent to AAMPO and there is a draft of their own demographic study being finalized and soon to be released. He explains that their projections are higher than the School District's projections.
- Hendricks inquires about mapping and projected growth—is there a map of pipelines?
- Carroll explains that there is a pipeline that goes down to the Southglen subdivision, and that there is a water main on almost every street within the city. He is unsure about the system for Kendall West Utilities, but they have a rough idea. He also notes that the City is very protective of their mains systems.

- Manning makes a request, that the newest members of the Past Studies subcommittee bring a revised Mission Statement to the next meeting.
- Evans chimes in saying that one of the challenges with this subcommittee is that started out as a “past studies” subcommittee but morphed into a subcommittee where proposition of projects came about as well. Proposition and decision-making of projects should include the entire committee.
- Manning suggests writing down and determining what the boundaries and responsibilities of a subcommittee are and are not. Pratt agrees with clarification—it is a gathering committee, not an action committee.
- Eldredge says he could see the subcommittee morphing into a “feasibility” committee, as he mentioned earlier.
- Kight speaks up and notes that decision-making on projects should also surround the goals of health, safety, and welfare, not user costs alone.
- Manning moves on to a different subcommittee: The Subject Matter Expert Subcommittee. This one only includes Ben Eldredge and Tim Bannwolf.
- Eldredge explains that they brought in a man from Indiana and Minnesota to talk about a multimodal approach that pilot self-driving—like microbuses.
- Manning notes that the committee is in dire need of innovative ideas.
- Eldredge goes on to say that he attended an AAMPO conference in San Antonio where he had a chance to speak with some transportation experts, including TxDOT, and says even they were getting exposure to new ideas just from having conversations with others interested in the topic. He notes that it is important to be innovative because the transportation issue has never been solved anywhere.

- Acosta chimes in saying that one big fight the School District has is getting kids to school on time. He suggests using his Transportation Director as a resource to come in and speak at one of these meetings. He is interested in discussing other safe routes for kids to get to school, even walking. He also notes that the anticipation for growth will require the committee to be a resource over the next 10 years.
- Eldredge asks about adopting models and spreading schools out.
- Sena intercedes saying that as the population increases there will be more localized schools.
- Eldredge notes that while the committee cannot interact too much about the sites of new schools, it could play a valuable role in determining how the committee makes decisions.
- Evans asks Acosta to explain the problem areas around town and asks if his suggested resource could come and speak.
- Henricks wonders if he would have a rough idea of communities that could bike or walk to school but are not currently able to do so in a safe way.
- Acosta responds saying the man's name is John Ramirez, and he reiterates that he would be a great person to gain insight on this subject matters.
- Manning moves on to the last subcommittee of discussion: The Appropriate Economic Development Subcommittee. Manning's concern is that having more roads built could potentially mean more congestion, and that would conflict with preserving economic resources. He mentions that he asked Kim Blohm if she would be willing to survey their membership on mobility solutions that would also support economic development.

- Eldredge circles back to walkability, noting that ensuring walkability would attract good, quality businesses for greater access to their stores.
- Evans notes that a bus route or a trolley route could be a good proposal. It could be one that fits within that subcommittee.
- Kight asks what is considered a walkable distance for school? Acosta responds and says, “2 miles”.
- Evans begs another question: “What determines a safe route?”
- Sena agrees on Evans’ point, and suggests placing crossing guards.
- Manning mentions that when he thinks “projects” as far as the committee goes, he does not just think of automobile projects. He thinks much broader than that. He later notes that it would be helpful if each subcommittee could have offline conversation because it is important to get moving. He also asked Eldredge to bring a list of speakers to the next meeting. He notes that the 1st Floor Staff Training Room at City Hall is their new permanent meeting space.

VI. NEXT STEPS

- See below in PUBLIC COMMENT section.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

- Deavor explains that she saw two holes. One hole being the demographics. The Kendall County Commissioners Court pre-development developers say it is important to bring developers into this. She explains that she saw hand-drawn maps for 9 developments that have approached the county, but nothing official. She asks for a report. The other hole was regarding input. She explained that she barely had her comment/input card in hand before the COVID shutdown, and she asks if they got all the input that was needed.

- Evans responds saying the website and opportunity for public input was open for several weeks, and says it is still open for comment. Carroll confirms that.
- Deavor then mentions that newer members would not know about unofficial subcommittees and that the EDC put out a recent brochure. She suggested having it brought to the committee. Manning thanks her for her input.
- Kight asks what the next step is. Manning replies saying that they need a longer list of projects. Acosta offers some spreadsheets he can contribute.
- Pratt asks about discussing impact of these projects as well. She has questions about some of the current projects on the list. Manning says either he or Don can answer her questions. He says there will be an action-oriented agenda that will go out.
- Evans notes that a big action item is getting the data from AAMPO. He says that he and Marcus can get an idea and a plan on what to do with it once received.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

- 3:57 p.m.