

Kendall County - Boerne - Fair Oaks
Transportation Committee Minutes

04 February 2020

2:00 – 3:59 p.m.

The Kendall County - Boerne - Fair Oaks Transportation Committee convened in the Boerne Independent School Board administrative building's training wing.

In Attendance:

Co-chairs Don Durden and Bob Manning, as well as Jonah Evans, Ben Eldredge, Bryce Boddie, Ben Bunker, Bob Hartwig, Gary Louie, Marcus Garcia, Northern Hendricks, Rich Sena, Tim Bannwolf, Dan Banks, David Anderson, Rankin D'Spain, and scrivener Elaine Maltzberger

Not in Attendance: Kim Blohm, Mark Stahl, John Kight, Stephen Zoeller

Visitors: Approximately 20 visitors were in attendance

Item 1: Opening comments and Introductory Business

Item 2: Public comments

There were no public comments.

Item 3: Approval of 21 January 2020 minutes

Minutes were unanimously approved following a motion by Rich Sena and a second by Bob Hartwig

Item 4: Discussion regarding ‘low hanging fruit’ recommendations/schedule

Don Durden presented a spreadsheet-format schedule for “low hanging fruit” proceedings.

(link)

When Bob Hartwig asked if Durden was asking the group to adopt the schedule, Durden replied that it was important to have “a target to shoot at.” Durden continued, “This is what’s required in order to deliver to the context that I’ve described.”

Bob Manning clarified that although the schedule might seem to be fitted around a November bond election, the committee needn’t make only bond recommendations. “I don’t think we need to lose sleep over which bucket it goes in,” Manning said.

Visitor Seth Mitchell asked how the “no brainer” “low hanging fruit” referenced by Durden, would be identified.

Manning answered that it's a "no brainer" if the committee votes overwhelmingly to recommend a project. The recommendations aren't necessarily intended to please the ultimate decision makers, Manning added. "(We're) not asking for pre-approval."

"My thought is that it's really up to the City Council or the Commissioners' Court to determine what items on that list make it to the bond issue," Durden said. "They'll be influenced by their sense of public support, their sense of how much money is available relative to other needs in the community. I don't think we know enough to prioritize at this point."

Bannwolf said, "There still needs to be sufficient data to support the recommendations. We still need to have data-driven decisions."

Hartwig said, "Our decisions need to be made based on this group saying, 'This needs to move forward.' Not much more than that."

"Outcry" regarding any specific projects "will certainly influence our decisions," Durden said.

Mitchell then asked if the term "general public consensus" would be evidenced by a "lack of general public opposition," to which Durden responded that that would be one of the criteria.

Evans said that the GIS tools would be really useful in gauging public opinion.

Banks agreed with Bannwolf that data is "going to drive this whole thing."

"We have to first of all take our existing road system and determine what it's capacity is," Banks continued, "and then take the traffic counts and apply those counts on top of our capacity to see what our utilization

is. And once we've done that, we've identified our choke points. So the committee is working toward that." Data presented to citizens is "critical," Banks said, "based upon numbers, not just somebody's supposition."

Bannwolf noted the existence of two constituencies – city and county leaders as well as the citizens – which Bannwolf identified as being "the most important." He also said that his Subject Matter subcommittee has reached out to Carmel, Indiana because it has more than 100 roundabouts, "more than any city by far," in trying to get someone to Boerne to talk about them.

Evans said that roundabouts result in 90 percent fewer fatalities.

Tom Adelstein offered the opinion that experts should speak to area leaders, not solely to the committee.

Hartwig moved to accept Durden's schedule proposal with Gary Louie offering a second. The schedule was unanimously approved.

Item 5: Subcommittee updates

- a. The Past, Present, and Future Studies subcommittee was introduced by Manning who said it was "for the last time," henceforth to be called the Projects subcommittee. "We need to be looking forward and producing results," Manning said regarding the decision made by both himself and Durden. He reminded the committee as a whole to continue thinking about non-road options.

Banks began his presentation with a list of 11 potential projects. (link). The subcommittee will continue trying to utilize AMPO data, applying traffic counts, freight data, crash data, environmental data, and possible funding sources.

Evans inquired if the numerical order of the projects indicated any sort of priority to which Banks responded in the negative. Evans then asked if - when the subcommittee makes an initial approach to city and county leaders/staff regarding the potential projects - whether such a step will affect the committee process. Durden answered that the step would simply be an effort to gather more information. "Before any decision is made, it will come back to this committee with any additional or corrected information," Durden said.

Bannwolf said that he felt comfortable enough with City and County leaders/staff being approached as long as it is clear that "these are some things we're considering." All projects can be funneled through those channels, "but then ultimately (they should) come back to us as a committee and respond project by project," Bannwolf said. "They might suggest some refinements."

Banks expressed his opinion that all of the potential projects should be sent to the committee members' "sponsors" who appointed them.

Evans again wondered if such actions would fit into the committee process. He mentioned that other committees might also be working on projects.

"If there are any projects being proposed, I need to know about those," Banks said. "They need to be on our list."

Evans then asked if the newly named Projects subcommittee was to be the only entity considering projects, then he stated that was "fundamentally different" to the process as he'd understood it to be. "That requires a little bit of discussion about how that's going to work."

Manning observed that the subcommittee in question has been talking about “proposed projects for quite a while.” Manning said that they’d observed that the subcommittee was primarily dealing with roads, so by renaming it and encouraging people to gravitate to that committee, he hoped that non-road projects would also come to the fore.

Banks said that only five of the potential projects came from old studies.

Evans continued asking about the process, stating that according to his understanding, all of the subcommittees were generating projects.

Durden clarified that different sources will all be contributing, and Banks added that the list of potential projects is still in its very early stages.

Eldredge expressed his desire for “time and space” to throw ideas “at the wall” rather than relegating that task to one committee

Louie said that while some deadlines will inevitably affect the committee’s work, he also said that “the outreach process is an evergreen process for getting input” and that ideas will continue to come in. “We have to respect what Dan and his committee are doing and try to keep moving forward to get these obvious projects put before the decision makers.”

Hendricks expressed that technology should be used to share ideas as they are conceived.

Evans proposed that one crowdsourcing map could be used to combine committee ideas.

Manning thanked the committee for the “terrific ideas,” once again encouraging everyone to keep gathering “road as well as non-road” ideas.

Banks said that David Anderson had agreed to head up a project idea expanding the scope of the Old Number Nine trail.

Banks presented all of the 11 potential projects.

Manning thanked him for the format. “It’s powerful and easy to follow,” Manning said.

Bitsy Pratt said that the information can be viewed on the website but that it can’t be commented on.

Durden cautioned that the presentation should be visibly labeled as a draft, “that it’s all subject to revision.”

Durden also asked that the subcommittee look at Methodist ER access once I-10 frontage roads are finalized.

Banks finished by saying that next week his subcommittee will begin discussing rights-of-way which in Kendall County only need to be 110 feet wide.

- b. The Public Outreach subcommittee presentation was made by Louie who began by saying that its next meeting would be on Friday, 07 February at 2:00 p.m. in the Chamber Office. (link) Louie said that the subcommittee is meeting with different groups, but he again emphasized to committee members that they need to meet with their constituents. Louie said that the subcommittee is stressing transparency, its interest in Kendall County, that “nothing is too small,” that they’re developing a mailer to target residents 65 years of age and above, and that they’re working on educating regarding non-traditional transportation solutions “such as walkways and bicycle paths.”
- c. Evans (link) led the GIS subcommittee presentation with a demonstration of what the proposed entry to the CrowdSource map will look like, and by stating that perhaps a separate committee map may be developed in addition to the one for public access. “This tool is strictly for gathering information, not presenting information,” Evans said.

In response to a query by Eldredge, Evans said that the subcommittee had considered a button saying, “Learn more (about each category).”

Durden urged the subcommittee to go live as soon as possible.

“I hope you’re able to present this Monday at the Commissioners’ Court,” Durden said. Louie agreed, saying that the sooner the Public Outreach can provide the CrowdSource tool, the better.

www.maphere.org will redirect people to the tool.

Durden stated that five minutes of detailed discussion regarding each of the 11 potential projects will result in “some lengthy meetings,” and he noted that such discussion should likely take place during the upcoming meeting.

Bunker asked a question about how citizens who requested that they be contacted would be contacted.

Louie said that comments would be reviewed by the outreach committee for routing.

Marcus stated that the website was not requesting personal information in order to generate more feedback.

Evans said that people should be encouraged to submit an email to avoid short, unpleasant commentary.

Bunker again asked how people could request a return comment. (I don’t think he really got an answer....?)

Bannwolf then asked how local leaders/staff feedback would be managed, and Durden responded that the subcommittee should ask for that in writing.

Marcus said that perhaps leader/staff input could be rolled into a workshop.

Manning said, “I don’t want to stray into having City Council tell us what projects they like and don’t like.” Sena agreed, expressing his feeling that this could be a hazard in the context of longer-term projects. Bannwolf offered his support to the idea of a workshop involving all parties.

Item 6: Public comments

Pratt said that she would like to hear Jeanne Geiger’s reaction to the proposed projects. Geiger responded that “this is a grassroots process and it’s a great one,” to which Pratt then asked if AMPO has tools available that can help validate or invalidate potential projects.

Geiger said, “that is something that’s still in the works” and that will probably be available “for the longer effort.”

Item 7: Adjournment

Durden adjourned the meeting at 3:59.