

45 **3. Action:** Approve minutes from June 27, 2013 Meeting.

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47 Reading of the minutes was waived. No changes were noted.

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49 **Motion** was made by Mr. Drew Havens to accept the minutes as presented. Mr. Don
50 Baumgardener seconded the motion. Minutes were unanimously approved.

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52 **4. Presentation:** Merger Process – Mr. Robert Hanson, NCDOT

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54 Mr. Ruggieri introduced Mr. Robert Hanson with the North Carolina Department of
55 Transportation. Mr. Ruggieri advised the group that Mr. Hanson would be presenting
56 information to assist the newly formed MPO become familiar with their placement in the Region
57 and decision making process within the State level.

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59 Mr. Hanson provided details of his background and knowledge base. Topics discussed included:

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- 61 ▪ Long-range planning
- 62 ▪ Programming (funding)
- 63 ▪ Design
- 64 ▪ Right of Way
- 65 ▪ Construction

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67 With a focus on NEPA/SEPA (Planning/Environmental)

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69 Mr. Hanson explained the old merger process (mid-90's) utilizing a map for Cumberland County
70 as an example of two routes that were created, one of which was never completed. The DOT
71 original location was not utilized due to permitting conflicts. He also provided an example of the
72 old process by utilizing a map for Sampson County (NC 24), which was a vital route for Clinton,
73 NC, and which did not receive a permit after years of data compilation. An alternative route was
74 eventually created, which after 8 years of process, will be completed within one month. Due to
75 these issues, the merger process was created in an effort to work with the resource agencies from
76 inception of a project to eliminate the apply and deny permitting process.

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78 The NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) and the Clean Water Act (Section 404) merged
79 to streamline the process.

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81 Examples of NEPA works include documents proposing the Neuse River Bridges, the Havelock
82 Bypass, and a series of interchanges on US 70 towards Raleigh. While NEPA's end result was
83 the creation of these documents, the process taken included collaboration with Engineering,
84 Environmental, Public Involvement and Project Management.

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86 Engineering provides a footprint that predicts what the environmental impacts will be for
87 proposed projects.

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90 Environmental issues must be considered and addressed for all proposed projects, which include
91 community impact with special considerations given to lower income properties, noise impact,
92 land use, air and water quality, wildlife and soil among others. Any of these could derail a
93 project if not considered and adjustments made as necessary.

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95 Public Involvement is vital as well. Informal workshops, locations, hearings are all considered.
96 Social media is beginning to play a role in this as well.

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98 Project Management ensures coordination of all facets of each project, including timeline and
99 task delineation.

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101 The Clean Water Act (Section 404) - Protection of Waters of the US plus associated wetlands.
102 Three areas of concentration include Avoid, Minimize and Mitigate. When all aspects have been
103 satisfied, the US Army Corps of Engineers signs off and provides a Section 404 Permit.

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105 The participants in the process include North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT),
106 Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), North Carolina Department of Natural Resources
107 (NCDENR) and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE). Other team members
108 include the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), US Fish & Wildlife Service, NC Wildlife
109 Resources Commission and the State Historic Preservation Office, MPO's, and RPO's.

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111 Points that are discussed among the participants are:

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113 Point #1: Purpose and need (topics discussed include: capacity, safety, economic
114 development, truck traffic, strategic corridors, hurricane evacuation)

115 Point #2: Alternatives to be studied (start with broad options and narrow down to viable
116 alternatives)

117 Point #2A: Bridging Decisions (topic added after four years as some decisions in retrospect
118 could have been decided differently – driven by length and cost)

119 Point #3: Selection; Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA)

120 Point #4: Avoidance and Minimization

121 Point #4A: Alignment

122 4B: 30% Hydraulic Design (detailed designs include ditch designs, pipe designs, etc.)

123 4C: Permit Drawing

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125 Dispute Resolutions are not needed often but at times are necessary. There are two steps to the
126 process that include upper management then the Chief Engineer, and if no resolution is still
127 found it is put in front of a review board. Issues that have been brought in front of the review
128 board include a project that was in a national wildlife refuge. Another pertained to the Maysville
129 Bypass.

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131 The Merger Management Team oversees projects and assists with resolutions when necessary.

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135 **5. Action: Review & Approve Regional Transportation Model – Ivo Dernev**
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137 Mr. Ruggieri advised this is a standing item that has been presented and time provided for all
138 members to review
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140 Mr. Dernev advised the information provided is used as a tool to study traffic in the future,
141 acquired through the MPO. The model is based off employee data as well as traffic projections
142 for traffic flow in the future.
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144 Mr. Ruggieri advised this would need to be put forth for an approval vote at some point in time.
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146 Mr. Gene Hodges questions if this would impact Mr. Terry Jordon's needs with the CARTS
147 system and transit funds. Mr. Dernev advised it would not impact him.
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149 **Motion** made by Mr. Gene Hodges to approve the Regional Transportation Model and
150 boundary to be presented to the TAC for approval. Mr. Don Baumgardner seconded.
151 Motion was unanimously approved by all TCC members.
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153 **6. Action: Discussion regarding NBAMPO Project List – Jeff Ruggieri**
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155 Mr. Ruggieri discussed the project list included in each member's packet. He advised initially
156 there was a strong urgency to approve this project list, but that has subsided. Ms. Jill Stark
157 advised due to some changes made by new NC Governor, the urgency has diminished somewhat.
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159 Mr. Ivo Dernev provided comment that was not discernible to this listener.
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161 Ms. Stark advised the project list being reviewed is the five-year list. She recommended each
162 member review the projects to ensure all projects they would like considered within the
163 upcoming five years are included in the list. She advised if there are missing projects, each
164 member should provide the project information to Mr. Ruggieri. He will add it to the project list
165 to be presented to the group for consideration.
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167 **7. Other Business: Pedestrian Safety - Jill Stark, FHWA**
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169 Ms. Stark advised she received a question regarding pedestrian traffic in the area. She spoke
170 with the FHWA Safety advisor. While looking at our area, specifically Neuse Blvd., she noticed
171 in some areas there were no sidewalks, therefore pedestrian traffic created one by the need to
172 walk alongside the road. Transit stops and shopping centers create pedestrian traffic.
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174 NC ranks #11 in the nation for pedestrian accidents. Included in this information are data
175 showing 1% of pedestrian crashes happen in Craven County, 2% fatalities in Craven County
176 along with 1% injury accidents. Craven County is ranked #7 in the state for bicycle/pedestrian
177 crashes. With this information, the idea that additional pedestrian paths are needed is reiterated
178 and should be considered for future projects. She provided a handout of website listings each
179 member can use to obtain additional information.

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The NCDOT dashboard information was provided as well. Ms. Stark advised with this information, each member may be able to better ascertain what the pedestrian needs in our area are.

Ms. Stark advised she has a 2011 study NC Crash Types, which is a detailed study put together by NCDOT. She provided that to Mr. Ruggieri for future reference. She noted if needed, a more area-detailed study could be done.

8. Public Comment: N/A

9. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.



Jeff Ruggieri, Acting Chairman



Kim Langley, Secretary

