



Richland County
Transportation Ad Hoc Committee
February 23, 2021 – 2:00 PM
Zoom Meeting
2020 Hampton Street, Columbia, SC 29201

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Bill Malinowski, Yvonne McBride, Paul Livingston, and Jesica Mackey

OTHERS PRESENT: Joe Walker, Gretchen Barron, Cheryl English, Michelle Onley, Angela Weathersby, Kyle Holsclaw, Tamar Black, Ashiya Myers, John Thompson, Elizabeth McLean, Leonardo Brown, Jennifer Wladischkin, Lauren Hogan, Lori Thomas, Nathaniel Miller, Mohammed Al-Tofan, Alexander Burton, Jeff McNesby, Michael Niermeier, Aimee Saito, Virginia Goodson, Allison Steele, Kimberly Toney, Rasheed Muwwakkil, Alicia Pearson, Jeff McNesby, Michael Maloney, Dante Roberts, Elizabeth McLean, and Tanner Threatt.

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Mr. Livingston called the meeting to order at approximately 2:00 PM.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - a. **Regular Session: December 15, 2020** – Ms. McBride moved, seconded by Mr. Malinowski, to approve the minutes as distributed.

In Favor: Malinowski, McBride, Livingston, and Mackey

Not Present: O. Walker

The vote in favor was unanimous.

3. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA** – Ms. McBride moved, seconded by Mr. Malinowski to approve the agenda as published.

In Favor: Malinowski, McBride, Livingston, and Mackey

Not Present: O. Walker

The vote in favor was unanimous.

4. **ELECTION OF THE CHAIR** – Ms. McBride moved, seconded by Mr. Malinowski, to nominate Mr. O. Walker as Chair.

Mr. Malinowski moved, seconded by Ms. McBride, to close nominations.

In Favor: Malinowski, McBride, Livingston and Mackey

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Not Present: O. Walker

The vote in favor of closing nominations was unanimous.

In Favor: Malinowski, McBride, Livingston, and Mackey

Not Present: O. Walker

The vote in favor was unanimous

Mr. Livingston noted Mr. O Walker was in Federal Court today and unable to attend today's meeting.

5. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

- a. **Gills Creek Greenway Public Meeting** – Mr. Niermeier stated this meeting came up within the last couple weeks. It was spurred by some concerned citizens in the Gills Creek area after a meeting with the City of Columbia, County and the design team. Based on the discussion with the Administrator, Mr. J. Walker and Ms. Terracio, they believe it is in the best interest to hold a public information meeting within the next month. It will coordinated extensively with The City of Columbia, Columbia Police Department, and stakeholders groups such as River Alliance. It would be a very inclusive presentation, not only Gills Creek Greenway information, but also primary addressing the City of Columbia's promise through the agreement for security and maintenance of the greenway, as well as providing the benefits of greenways. Since the first public meeting was held there has overwhelming support for this greenway. Since it has been a while the intent is to provide more information of what is being looked at now. We already have designs for two of the primary segments of the greenway and the final one is being worked on now. We are working to get the City and Ms. Terracio to assist with getting information together. They are also looking to include Planning and Development due to their reforestation project in that area.

Ms. McBride noted there has been a lot of work done on this greenway. She inquired if this meeting will impact the work that has already be done, or are we looking to develop a new plan.

Mr. Niermeier responded the County has a mandate and made promises to the residents to build this greenway. This project will move forward and are making sure that people are aware of what we are doing and where we are doing it. It is our job to understand their concerns and try to address them.

Ms. McBride inquired is there will be a change in the amount budgeted.

Mr. Niermeier responded there will not be a change.

- b. **Transportation Signage and Mailings** – Mr. Niermeier credited Ms. McBride for being a constant advocate for highlighting the good work the Penny has done. Mr. Niermeier worked with Operational Services, PIO and Administration to develop some signage. Currently we have placed some smaller (18 x 24) signage on a few of the projects. He has also spoken with staff about producing some larger signs to put on the projects to let the taxpayers and residents know this is your Penny at work. He noted they are not using Penny funds since they are not allowed to do so. Since he came to the program, there has been concern with not pushing information out. It is easy in today's digital age to miss a large part of the population. We have the urban/rural mix within this area, so a simple way going back to basics is a postcard.

Ms. McBride thanked Mr. Niermeier and staff for working to keep the citizens informed about what is going on with the resources that we have and their tax dollars, and for them to have the opportunity to have input.

Mr. Malinowski noted when the Penny Projects started, there were signs. He inquired why they stopped posting those signs.

Mr. Livingston responded a previous Administrator suggested that it would not be a good idea and Council stopped posting the signs.

Ms. Mackey suggested staff consider having a separate logo for Penny Projects to differentiate projects. This will help citizens understand what is a Penny Project, a Transportation Project or a SCDOT Project.

Mr. Livingston responded, in the past, the signage had a penny to indicate it was a Penny Project.

Ms. McBride noted she wanted the signage to stress the projects are Richland County projects.

Mr. Niermeier responded he would work with PIO to improve the graphics.

Ms. Mackey stated it would be good if the citizens could easily find the Penny website because it is difficult for the average user to get to. She suggested adding a shortened URL that take the user directly to the Penny page, it would be easier than using the generic website page.

Mr. Niermeier agreed with Ms. Mackey. This has been a discussion point because the Penny URL is too long.

5. **ITEMS FOR ACTION**

- a. **Resurfacing Package R** – Mr. Niermeier stated that staff requests Council approve the award of the Resurfacing Package R Project to Palmetto Corp. of Conway in the amount of \$3,390,951.94 and a 10% construction contingency of \$339,095.19, for a total budget of \$3,730,047.13.

Mr. McBride moved, seconded by Mr. Malinowski, to approve staff's recommendation.

Mr. Livingston inquired if the company is from Conway.

Mr. Niermeier responded their headquarters is in Conway, but they have a lot of work in the Midlands.

Mr. Livingston noted one of the concerns when the Penny was passed was to work with SBLEs as much as possible. He noted CR Jackson and Sloan are both local firms. He inquired, when we do the bidding, is there anything in the bid that gives an advantage to a SLBE.

Ms. Wladischkin responded, when they are soliciting for these projects, we submit the information to the Office of Small Business Opportunities. They examine the list of registered SLBE for Richland County and they determine a goal for the project, which is included in the solicitation documents. For this project, there was not a SLBE goal, so we did not include any information relation to that. She noted they do have a local preference, but there are certain limitations to when it may be used and the dollar amount of a project is one of the considerations. This project would have been higher

than dollar amount allowed, as called for in the Local Preference Ordinance.

Ms. McBride inquired if the limitation is a Richland County or State policy.

Ms. Wladischkin responded it is a Richland County policy.

Ms. McBride inquired why the SLBE was not a part of the bidding package.

Ms. Wladischkin responded the standard practice would be that there were not enough SLBEs that could perform work. If there are enough SLBEs to perform the work that section or work is segregated for SLBEs.

Ms. McBride stated, based on the information, we do not have the SLBEs that could perform that type of work.

Ms. Wladischkin responded that would be her assumption, but she did not come up the goal, that would be the Office of Small Business Opportunity.

Ms. McBride inquired if any of these companies are minority-owned.

Ms. Wladischkin responded CR Jackson is a woman-owned business.

In Favor: Malinowski, McBride, Livingston, and Mackey.

Not Present: O. Walker

The vote in favor was unanimous.

- b. **Garner's Ferry\Harmon Intersection** – Ms. Steele stated this project was part of the de-scoping plan last year when we reviewed and re-evaluated all the projects that had not moved to construction. This one was currently under its referendum amount of \$2.6M. The rough estimate last year was \$1.5M. Based on the criteria, to look at capacity, safety issues, the same criteria we used across the board, we evaluated this intersection and noticed the design did not improve the intersection a whole lot. It improved the Garner's Ferry road traffic, but it did not do a lot for Harmon Road, especially the southbound traffic. What we presented and approved by Council was to take a step back until we had a chance to meet with the OETs and go over the design to see if there is something we can add to it to address and improve it. Unfortunately, when we meet with the OET, we went through all of the traffic data, and there is not a whole lot that can be done at this intersection and keep it an intersection project. To get a bigger improvement it would need to be widening Harmon to two (2) through traffic lanes, which would require more right-of-way, going to the south side of the intersection. Harmon Road to the north and south would have to be widened for a certain portion of the roadways. When you look at what would need to be done to improve this intersection, we are talking about tripling or quadrupling the original cost estimate of this project. The cost estimate we had from the PDT is a couple years old, so it is likely in the \$2M range due to inflation. At this time, we recommend taking this project back to the original design.

Ms. McBride moved, seconded by Mr. Livingston, to approve staff's recommendation.

Mr. Malinowski inquired if tables 3A and 3B projects were listed in priority order.

Ms. Steele responded they are not.

Mr. Malinowski inquired if tables 4A and 4B were the only ones listed in priority order.

Ms. Steele responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Malinowski inquired if there is going to be any public hearings for this project, since there has not been any to-date.

Ms. Steele responded they would want to have a public input meeting to let them know what the proposal is. For an intersection improvement, we are not adding bikeways, sidewalks, or anything like that. We would rely on the design by the OET, and not take suggestions from the public on how to make the intersection better.

Mr. Malinowski noted, it states the right-of-ways obtained to-date and the amount, and then it says expended to-date. He inquired what the expenses are for because when the Penny Tax items were started we were told we were not going to spend money to obtain right-of-ways.

Ms. Steele responded it was only on the dirt roads. Those have to be voluntarily given.

Mr. Livingston inquired if the dollar amount increase would affect the other de-scoped projects.

Ms. Steele responded the funds will come from the amount approved in the referendum.

In Favor: McBride, Livingston, and Mackey

Opposed: Malinowski

Not Present: O. Walker

The vote was in favor.

- c. **Transportation Budget Submission and Approval Process** – Mr. Niermeier stated this stems from the arduous budget process last year. Transportation staff is requesting Council to only require new budget money to be presented to Council, which would align with all the other departments in the County. During the approval in June, you were presented with our three general ledgers, which we intend to continue to do. We are also required to present all of our estimated funding that is already encumbered on purchase orders, as well as our unencumbered funding that was aligned against projects. We did that simply because we knew we were going to BAN/Bond again this year. We are in a position where we would have achieved a plateau for work and our ability to manage said work. This was the rebase line going into FY22 for budgets where we will be moving forward with what we know we need, as opposed to what we think we need. This request comes from a place looking for economy, better alignment with the rest of the County, and how their budgets are presented. We cannot spend any more money than we will get in revenue.

Mr. Malinowski noted he had a hard time understanding the information for this item. He is not sure what they are trying to do. He noted Mr. Niermeier ended his comments by saying they cannot ask for any more money than what is anticipated they will get in revenue. That being said, on p. 46, it states, "The anticipated revenue is \$69M." From the vote that was taken, that \$69M, along with the rollover, to give a total of \$85M, so he does not know how you could get more, if you cannot ask for

more than anticipated revenue.

Mr. Niermeier responded the \$85M projected for FY21 was based off of an anticipated revenue stream of \$69M and the additional \$16M from savings. This is similar to what we are doing with the bond funding.

Ms. McBride stated she also did not understand the reason for the request or the full implications.

Mr. Livingston stated, for clarification, they are requesting to be treated the same way as other departments by submitting new funds to Council for an annual budget.

Mr. Niermeier responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Malinowski requested Mr. Hayes to be present at the next Transportation Ad Hoc Committee and to include language that would be easily understood by Council and the constituents.

Ms. McBride moved, seconded by Mr. Malinowski, to defer this until the next Transportation Ad Hoc Committee meeting.

In Favor: Malinowski, McBride, Livingston, Mackey

Not Present: O. Walker

The vote in favor was unanimous.

6. **ADJOURNMENT** – The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:44 PM.