

**NCC Transportation Advisory Committee
NCC Conference Room, Mt. Eustis Commons, Littleton, NH
Meeting Minutes
January 19, 2017**

Members Present: Doug Grant (Randolph), Frank Claffey (Bethlehem), Carl Martland (Sugar Hill), Shawn White (Whitefield), Mark Decoteau (Waterville Valley), Ray Gorman (Colebrook), Tim Brown (Lancaster), Dick Hamilton (Littleton)

Staff: Ben Gaetjens-Oleson, Planner; Kaela Gray, Planner; Barbara Robinson, Executive Director and Nick Altonaga, Planner

NHDOT: William Rose

Guests: Liz Strachan (NH DES), Tim White (NH DES), Joe Elgosin (Whitefield), Brian Bresnahan (Congresswoman Kuster's Office), Paul Beroney (TCCAP), Allen Brooks (NH DOJ) and Chuck Henderson (Senator Shaheen's Office)

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Doug Grant at 1:05 PM. A roundtable of introductions was completed.

Approve Minutes of September 15, 2016:

A motion was made by Frank Claffey and seconded by Dick Hamilton to approve the minutes of the September 15, 2016 meeting as written. A vote was taken and the motion carried.

Approve Minutes of October 13, 2016:

A motion was made by Frank Claffey and seconded by Mark Decoteau to approve the minutes of the October 13, 2016 meeting as written. A vote was taken and the motion carried.

Chairman Doug Grant commented on the recent TAP awards by stating it appeared the ones awarded from the North Country Council region had their match committed at the time of application. He recommended that communities keep this in mind during the next process.

Presentation: Tim White introduced himself as well as Liz Strachan from NH DES's Air Resources Division and Allen Brooks from the Attorney General's Office. He explained they were present to inform the TAC of the recent Volkswagen (VW) settlement due to their issue with vehicle emissions. Today's presentation will be a brief overview of the problem causing the settlement and the terms of that settlement. The deadline to submit comment on the proposal for the use of the settlement money is February 10, 2017. Mr. White explained more specific information can be found on DES's website. VW's problem concerned their emissions software. The software enabled the emissions control system when being tested but did not turn it on when operating on the road. This caused NOx emissions to be

released into the air, violating the Clean Air Act. The United States won a settlement from VW that had 3 major components.

1. VW would either buy back or complete emissions modifications on 85% of the vehicles affected.
2. Invest \$2 billion to promote zero emissions vehicles and infrastructure.
3. Provide \$2.7 billion to fully remediate the excess NOx emissions from the subject vehicles.

Component 3 is the issue of interest to NH communities. NH stands to receive \$30 million from the remediation fund with details outlined in appendix D of the settlement. The settlement funds are based on the number of 2 liter VW diesels registered in NH-approximately 5,000 to 6,000.

NH will have 60 days from the date the trustee of the settlement trust is chosen to become a beneficiary. Once they become a beneficiary NH will have another 90 days to submit their Mitigation Plan to the trustee. Mitigation projects can only be used for items listed in appendix D of the settlement and only 15% can be used for administration. It is hoped that moneys will be available by the middle of 2017.

DES plans to include any eligible mitigation strategy. Developing the state's EV charging station infrastructure will be a priority but only 15% of funds can be used for that strategy. Kaela Gray asked how far we can get with those funds in expanding the infrastructure. Mr. White answered that it was not yet clear but DES was developing a plan to give stakeholders guidance. Mr. Grant asked if the money for EV charging stations will be available for both public and private entities. Mr. White answered both would be allowed.

Criteria for project selection is still being developed but there will be a minimum project cost of \$300,000.00 to \$500,000.00 in order to maximize projects with administration costs. There will be a focus on upgrading or replacing public vehicle fleets to improve emissions. It is not determined yet whether matching funds will be required. There is also thought of expanding the DERA program and allowing some projects with cross-border elements.

There are still questions on how to determine the air pollution burden for projects. Ideas being discussed are traffic volume, demographics, population density, minorities, economic data and sensitivity to receptors. Barbara Robinson asked if effects on the environment would be considered as that would have a lot of relevance to the North Country Council region. Mr. White explained it would be discussed with the others. Allen Brooks from the Attorney General's office explained the settlement money will be spread throughout the state, including underserved areas and not just the population centers.

Mr. Decoteau asked if projects to create new public transit systems would be considered. It was answered that only replacement of existing fleets with cleaner diesel engines would be allowed. Mr. Decoteau stated that local transit companies and school bus companies should be informed and targeted for project development.

Carl Martland explained this settlement has the potential for the creation of a large EV charging station system throughout the state but the limit on the administration fees could make it difficult to develop a project. Any project would need to be big to maximize the impact while minimizing the administrative costs. Mr. White admitted more conversation is needed on how the administrative costs could impact a project.

Mr. White outlined the tentative timeline for the settlement. Project surveys and comment are due by the beginning of February, DES's mitigation plan draft is due for comment in March/April and by May/June the final plan will be submitted to the trustee for approval. He also stated there is more information on DES's website or at www.vwcourtsettlement.com. Ms. Gray asked if the news that other auto companies were also being held liable was true. Mr. Brooks confirmed others have been identified but nothing's confirmed yet.

Mr. Decoteau proposed North Country Council submit a large proposal with several projects within their region. This would give each proposal better chances of being approved and better utilize the

administration allowance. Ben Gaetjens-Oleson stated NCC would reach out to the communities to poll them on their needs as related to the qualifying settlement projects.

TIP & TYP: Ms. Gray explained she sent out requests to Selectboards for new projects to include in the TYP/TIP. New projects will be due to NCC by March 3 to allow time for TAC review before scoring at the March meeting. Only new projects will be scored this time around. In upcoming years older projects may be re-ranked. Ms. Gray explained the scoring criteria and the weighting system. She read the past criteria weighting and explained it was created 2 years ago using DOT's Decision Lens software. She asked if the committee wanted to create a different weighting on their own at the meeting, use the previous one or create a new one using Decision Lens again.

There was some discussion on the need for weighting and it was explained it was to incorporate the region's priorities into the process. William Rose recommended the TAC utilize DOT's Decision Lens software to set the weight. A meeting in February could be arranged to do this. Mr. Grant asked if the committee wanted to meet in February.

A motion was made by Dick Hamilton and seconded by Mark Decoteau to meet in February. There was discussion that the motion did not include the purpose of the meeting. Dick Hamilton removed his motion from consideration.

A motion was made by Mark Decoteau and seconded by Dick Hamilton to hold a TAC meeting in February to create criteria weighting for new TIP/TYP projects and conduct any other relevant business. A vote was taken and the motion carried.

Ms. Gray will coordinate with DOT on potential dates and inform the TAC when scheduled.

North Country Transit: No Report.

RCC: Mr. Grant explained the annual meeting for regional public transit agencies will be held soon. The 3 agencies will present their arguments for their share of decreasing funds. Mr. Grant will present for the RCC. Ms. Gray advised the committee they should be advocating for more public transit money to their representatives.

Scenic Byways: Mr. Martland stated the next meeting will follow the TAC meeting. There will be a vote to amend their bylaws making the committee a subcommittee of NCC much like the TAC. They will also be discussing the Mount Prospect scenic byway and how to keep it designated as such. There will be some byway route changes throughout the region to be considered this spring. The committee is also searching for funding to enhance the byways with signs and possibly pull-offs. Mr. Martland encourages everyone to drive the byways, acting as stewards and taking pictures for posting to share with others. Mr. Hamilton asked where the committee is looking for funding. Mr. Martland explained there may be possibilities through Northern Borders (NBRC) or the Charitable Foundation (NHCF).

Other Business: Ms. Gray will work with Mr. Rose to coordinate a February date for TAC to meet to use Decision Lens.

Mr. Rose wanted to clarify to the TAC that DOT receives no administrative funds through Federal Highways for administering the TAP. He also explained the reason for the minimum project amount in the TAP was due to a request from the towns. This was because the higher cost projects had a lower percentage of administrative cost than lower cost projects. This way more construction is completed with a higher cost project.

Ms. Gray informed the committee the year's meeting schedule was in their meeting packet. It does not include the soon to be scheduled February meeting. She also stated she would like to update the TAC's member list and include what role they play in their community. This may help her identify relevant

speakers. She also stated that if anyone present was not on the TAC but wished to be they needed to speak with their Selectboard.

Adjourn:

With nothing further to discuss a motion was made by Frank Claffey and seconded by Mark Decoteau to adjourn. A vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 2:55 PM

Next Meeting: February, 2016-Exact date to be confirmed later.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Benjamin S. Gaetjens-Oleson