



Government Services

Planning & Project Committee Meeting via Zoom

July 16, 2020 – 3:30pm

MINUTES

Present: Dwight Stewart (Chairman), Laurie Funderburk, Jeffrey Graham, Jim McCain, Sammie Tucker, Will Wheeler, Chuck Wilson, Travis Windham

Not Present: Eugene Baten, Jay Davis, Joe McElveen

Guests: Ken Martin, Jerome Pearson, Bernard Amado, Jacob Meetze

Staff Present: Christopher McKinney (Executive Director), Dennis Cyphers (Government Services Chief), Jake Whitmire (Planner), Jeff Parkey (Regional Planner), Ashley Walker (Administrative Assistant I)

Call to Order: Mr. Dwight Stewart, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 3:38pm with a prayer and pledge of allegiance.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes: Mr. Jim McCain motioned for approval of meeting minutes, Mr. Wilson seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Methodologies to Minimize Risk on Major Road Projects

Mr. Chis McKinney began with a request for open dialog in relation to minimizing risk on major road projects. He stated that the Camden Truck Route has seen a lot of overrun cost (none to the COGs fault). We are looking to get \$3.2 million in Guidesare funds every year for a 7-year period. If there is an overrun, with having a small Guidesare amount, the impact of those overruns is huge. Currently, we are about 3-4 years in the hole when it comes to being able to start a fresh project and not owe money. He addressed the question of “how can we do business moving forward to get out of the hole and hopefully stay out of the hole.” SCDOT has included some processes and things are being done to prevent the cost overruns and there are things we can do internally as a COG Board to make better decisions moving forward.

Mr. Whitmire briefed the committee on the SCDOT Feasibility Studies. When we go through our processes and program a project on or before the TIP, it can be sent to SCDOT and they will do a more in-depth study and give a little more detail to the cost estimates, than what is done at the staff level. The goal is to have a better idea of any risks or concerns from an environmental or physical standpoint before starting the project and to get a better idea of what the cost would be for the projects and potential pitfalls. If an overrun is expected, we can see how much that would cost and what it would look like to better prepare and program the projects. Mr. McKinney elaborated by stating that staff does their best in giving the best estimates on the cost. Doing the feasibility study, it allows SCDOT's planning experts to give their thoughts at the beginning from a professional level on what the cost maybe, to hopeful prevent cost overruns down the road. This, however, is not 100% guaranteed. Mr. Jerome Pearson with SCDOT informed the committee of the feasibility process, which will give a more accurate price range for the projects before getting too deep into the planning of those projects.



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The cost of inflation is added depending on the amount of years it may take for a project to be completed. An item to encourage, is to have the COG and MPO involved the entire time of the feasibility study in case questions or concerns arise. This will eliminate any surprises on cost when getting too deep into the project. Mr. McKinney clarified by stating when we approved the Camden Truck Route it was 2010 when the engineering began. It was not let until 2015 and there was zero inflation built into that project. The moment the project began, even if no other right-of-way issues or other issues, we were already behind the power curve simply because of 5-years of inflation. If we do not take those things into account on the front end, the ripple effects on the back end are bigger due to pushing back other people's projects in other jurisdictions down the road. Mr. Sammie Tucker asked how long the feasibility study will last and how long we must use them before they expire or need to be updated? Mr. Pearson answered by stating that there is no time frame on how long the studies are good for and that it is not a long process and the studies have just begun. This process could take as long as it will take to get the most accurate price range. From a previous study, it has been about a 4-month process on estimate. The information is gained from the COG on when the project is expected to let, and SCDOT takes the information and uses it for calculation on the time frame of the project. As far as expiring, there is no expiration date. Mr. Pearson then stated that the feasibility reports will have inflation for each year it was completed to when it was projected to be let and that inflation cost would give the planners and COG an idea of how much it would cost X amount of years into the future. It would be recommended to use a higher-level inflation. Mr. Tucker pointed out on the TIP in 2023 & 2024 we have 8 feasibility studies. He noted to the committee and staff that we only receive about \$3.7 million and need to be careful on making sure that we schedule these studies according to projects so we are not too far out and all monies are going into feasibility studies and not projects. Mr. Jake Whitmire noted that the projects planned for the studies are physically constrained within the 7-year period based on our estimates. Even after the study is done, that money is part of that funding. Any money that goes into the feasibility study can be rolled over into the project itself. Mr. Tucker's point will be taken into consideration; wanting to get it started to get done as quickly as possible. The projects that are on the TIP currently are accounted for full cost with the amount of funding that we have through this TIP life cycle. Mr. Travis Windham mentioned that the inflation is a minor factor on the total cost. He pointed out going from \$17 million to \$27 million being a minor factor. The biggest problem is that there was an error in reference to infrastructure of what was under/over the ground and all utilities. Inflation is a factor, but not the biggest problem as to coming up with all the additional money. Mr. Graham stated that this discussion with transportation funding has been going on for a while. All projects have been overrun. Every project has cost more money and have not had estimates from the COG. SCSCDOT has been managing funds in a way that will not work. We have only gotten 3 projects going and we have exceeded every budgeted item every time with no recourse (15:12) to SCDOT. Mr. Windham noted again that inflation is a minor factor in these problems. Mr. McKinney noted that factors of cost overrun are just being noted so that everyone can be on the same page from the same reference as the board moves forward to make decisions. The main portion is how do we medicate cost? He gave a brief history of his knowledge of U.S. Highway 521. The projects that are Guidesare are relatively new work in rural communities. In relation to U.S. Highway 521, SCDOT did a 27/7. They did 27 projects within 7 years and gave us a loan upfront to complete U.S. Highway 521. We paid that back over a number of years at about \$600,000 a year. We took Guidesare dollars and paid that \$600,000 to get the project paid off due to SCDOT fronting the money on that project. We did not have the long-term ripple effect on that project.



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The Camden Truck route was where issues began with cost overruns. It is not all inflation; there has been a lot of right-of-way and other issues related to construction that we ran into. Currently, we have issues with the construction company on things they said was paid for but being disputed by SCDOT. There is about \$14 million overrun on the Camden Truck Route. If you take our \$3.2 million that we get every year and absorb that \$14 million overrun, it can be seen how quickly the math does not add up. Now there is a negative balance 3-5 years down the road. Current with the Black River Road Truck Route, the board approved \$6.2 million. The highest cost is up to about \$9.8 million. We have already had \$14 million overrun on the Camden Truck Route. This is how this negatively impacts our Guideshare funds. Mr. McKinney suggested something for the committee to consider, with the 2020 Census, it will take a year or 2 to get the info collected. Camden will potentially be absorbed into the urbanized area of Columbia. If Camden gets absorbed, we lose Guideshare funds. Those funds would go to the urbanized area and we get a smaller number. That number is unknown. If we lose funds, there will be less money for projects on our end. Staff is suggesting finding a way to mitigate risks. If we take on a big project, the committee and board must address associated risk. Mr. McKinney notes that staff is proposing the suggestion of adding inflation. From the time a project is programed, to the time estimated competition, there needs to be associated inflation with that project. The price tag then becomes bigger. Mr. Dennis Cyphers stated that looking at a project like the Bishopville Truck Route at \$17 million initially and we add 3% inflation for 10 years, that pushes the total price point to over \$22 million. Mr. McKinney then stated adding in the inflation piece to mitigate in case something comes up. Hopefully, the new feasibility process will help mitigate cost overruns and we will have extra money left over on projects based on padding it with the inflation. We are also proposing, if we get \$3.2 million presently, how do we mitigate that risk? Staff is proposing, if a jurisdiction wants to do a major project, that there be an associated agreement and if there is a cost overrun, that city or county will absorb some of that cost overrun due to only having limited Guideshare funds. If we already have \$14 million overrun, and looking at \$6.2 million going to \$9.8 million, that means about \$17 million over. We are potentially in the hole for the next 50 years. Mr. McCain expressed his disagreement and concern as to why the municipality or county absorb cost overruns. Mr. Graham pointed out miss management of funds by SCDOT. Mr. McKinney addressed that he agreed and have had conversations with the federal highway administration and with the senior planner at SCDOT. He concurs with Mr. McCain and Mr. Graham's sentiments and states that he was told once we take the project, we own the project and all associated costs. Mr. Graham questioned what the other COGs transportation funds look like and if they are borrowing the money or do, they have deficits in their funding when looking at COG transportations. Mr. McKinney answered by stating that it is the same situation with other COGs however, some get more money due to being bigger. He stated that BCD COG has ran into a similar challenge and noted Mr. Ron Mitchum, Executive Director started getting engaged in the planning process and they also started padding their numbers by adding in the inflation to make sure their projects would not be over budgeted by the time they were completed. The cost overruns are a problem that all COGs and MPOs are dealing with. Mr. Will Wheeler stated that adding in some index of inflation is a good protective measure and we probably should look at other protective measures. The biggest of his concerns is, when looking at the current TIP sheet along with the sheet with proposed changes, it's fine to look at changing some of the policies but suggest changing with regard to any projects planned beyond what's already planned. (23:32) Do not know how to apply with what's already in. Mr. McKinney stated that he is not advocating for anything now but bringing the conversation to the committee



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to have much needed conversation. Mr. Wheeler mentioned the conversation probably provides a level of comfort, however, if no changes are made beyond what is on the sheet, we are looking at about 50 years' worth of problems; but not necessarily for what's planned right now. Mr. Graham commented on the debt services that we have out, and stated that he assumes SCDOT are ultimately responsible for the money if we were to continue down the same path and fund all projects to these non-accurate numbers and assume SCDOT is going to have to take the bill regardless. Mr. Pearson stated that it seems that debt is at \$583,000 for 2021 and mentioned that debt services are paid back through the \$3.7 million that is received every year from the SCDOT to the COG. Mr. Graham stated for clarification that with us funding all the projects listed, SCDOT is responsible for the money and not the COG. Mr. Amado from SCDOT stated that the COG has the option of choosing to apply for an advancement in Guideshares or a project can be built in 2 phases. The COG can also choose a no build option for a project. (26:30) Mr. Graham questioned, when all projects will be done and giving SCDOT authority to do the projects and their partners, who will be responsible for the money gone over budget that doesn't exist in the COG at \$3 million a year and overages have expended the amount of projects approved? (26:59) Mr. Amado answered by stating for the change orders, unfortunately SCDOT is unable to absorb that cost. A better job of estimating the contingencies needs to be done upfront for the project cost. (27:16) Mr. Meetze with SCDOT then joined in by stating that right now with the contingencies, the widening projects with utilities, rights-of-way and sometimes bad pavement or poor souls that are ran into a combination, unfortunately all in Camden, should have looked at the widening projects because it seems to have gotten all of the COGs run over budget. It is suggested to come up with a larger contingency; only been factoring in 5% of a low bid for any overruns. Probably should have at least looked at 10% because that is what most are averaging higher than that if looking across the board. So that could be looked at to have more of an upfront anticipated overrun, but we must look at possibly looking at something different for widening projects for how much built up front contingencies. Mr. Tucker addressed SCDOT with the question of why is there not any feedback being given? The list given was a great list, however given after the fact versus when the factors occurred. He stated his understanding of what is being done but asked why an update as these problems occurred was not given to the COG or mentioned during meetings SCDOT attended. There could have been other discussions or meaningful ways that the committee could have done something. He expressed his concern of lack of good communication and relationship. Mr. Amado stated that SCDOT updates the COG of any change orders done on any project, but not asking the COG to approve the change order just notifying of the budget not allowing to do future projects. Mr. Tucker mentioned not hearing about a water line being a problem and that he did hear about somethings, but a lot of the problems have been first time mentioned when the packet was received. There was no discussion during meetings SCDOT attended and no attention from COG staff and it is unfair to who is supposed to be looked after which is the COG. If there is responsibility of paying for the projects, communication must be given of the problems versus letting them build up and giving a list that was not authorized. Mr. Amado mention that SCDOT does let the COG know of the change orders and the document received was not provided at the last minute. It was a combination of change orders that was provided along the project. Mr. Tucker expressed wanting all communication to be clear and more in depth as we do projects and when there is so much overrun and problems. He mentioned that he was not stating SCDOT was the cause of the problems, but the problems were not communicated well and now looking to have debt into the COG TIP that was not foreseen when doing it. Communication needs to be better and a better understanding is needed if wanting his support. Mr. Graham addressed a question about the debt service and who makes the



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decision on when we borrow the money and who borrows the money. Mr. Amado answered by stating there is an application process. The COG applies to the planning department and then it goes to the assistant secretary of transportation. That is how the decision is made. Mr. Graham then asks if it is the SCDOT or Federal SCDOT? Mr. Amado confirmed that it is SCDOT and that they look at cash flows and if every COG were to apply for an advancement, there would be a problem. So that is why the COG must apply for the advancement. Mr. Graham then asks does SCDOT make the decision to apply for funds based off projects in which we deem appropriate, we give the go, and they can expend the amount of money and borrow more money at their digression. Mr. Amado answers by saying the COG must apply to borrow more money. Mr. Graham asks if SCDOT makes the decision to borrow the money after permission is given and SCDOT spends it without oversight from the COG. Mr. Amado answers by saying it is done with oversight. Mr. Graham mentions being told from SCDOT that the COG does not get to decide if anything done about the overages other than paying the bill and not being able to hold the contractors accountable. Mr. Amado states not being able to let a project unless the COG is on board with the cost estimates. Once they let the project and the COG allows the project to be let, then the COG takes ownership and must cover the overruns. Mr. Graham then asks if a terrible contractor is hired and does terrible work and they do not complete the job, the COG not only has to pay the terrible contractor, but also the new contractor that comes in to do the work and the COG is responsible and does not get to make the decision of who we hire nor does the COG get to make sure the work is done up to SCDOT standards. (34:18_cannot understand part of statement) Mr. Amado states that the contractor can always be gone after if it is not a good contractor. Mr. Graham then goes into stating that SCDOT makes those decisions and they make the decision of who they hire and the decision of how to keep them accountable, but ultimately the COG is responsible for an endless amount of money. Mr. Amado responds by stating that the process is, the lowest bidder gets the project. Mr. Graham points out the lowest bidder is chosen then the change order comes in to double or triple the amounts, but the COG still is responsible for it. Mr. Amado states that there is possibly some errors or omissions in the plans and that is potentially why some of the change orders happen. However, if we are not paying extra quantities, we could put those quantities upfront and the original bid what was going to be a little bit higher. (35:35) Mr. Tucker expressed his concern of having to go after the municipalities and counties to contribute into the transportation funding. More money is being requested from us, however there is not being more input allowed on the process of holding the contractors accountable. There is a lot of work that needs to be done. Mr. Windham mentioned that this conversation has been had before. There is one side standing and a different side providing the money. Going back to the Highway 521 project, going from Sumter to Manning, he stated from his memory the cost originally being \$30 million but looking at the sheet, it started out at \$47.6 million Guidesshare funds and the whole project was \$60 million. In his opinion, he stated what should have been done is waited to start the Black River project until we got closer to the end of the Camden Truck Route and there would be money for the overrun. He then asked the staff, could we have done that or were we obligated to move forward on the Black River Project? Mr. McKinney answered by stating there are no projects that moves forward without the board's vote and that the board could have said no. Mr. Windham then asked could the board have said no, and hold the Guidesshares due to not knowing what the Camden Truck Route would cost? Mr. McKinney confirmed that could have been done and money could have been saved over time until one was completely done. He went back to Highway 521 and stated that was not a cost overrun and that it was known how much it would cost upfront. It was a SCDOT program that tried to get all the projects done in 7 years. Ours was one of the 27 that SCDOT wanted



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to complete. They fronted the money because that was the program at the time. Mr. Windham then stated that these overruns are known about and despite the conversation, this probably will not change. In the future, no additional projects need to be started until what is started has been completed. Mr. Tucker addressed being against adding anymore projects until it is figured out how what is already started will be paid for moving forward and how can we do more with the little money that we are receiving. There needs to be more of an in-depth discussion with the board and with staff. Mr. Windham agreed and stated that was the point he was trying to make and voted in favor of the Black River Project along with still supporting it.

Mr. McKinney noted these conversations being the point of bringing to the committees' attention. Going back to the TIP, if there is no conversation and communication, the numbers in red continues to grow. Mr. Graham adds that there is no accountability to the red which is the problem. He is all for not funding new projects and focusing on what is already funded, but still does not deal with the issue that the funds are being spent with no accountability. He is not for continuing to not fund projects and mentioned taking this matter to another level due to being responsible for every dollar being taken out of the committee due to being on the committee and voted for every project done thus far. Which means he along with SCDOT and the committee are all accountable. If accountability cannot be shown, Mr. Graham mentioned that he along with the board will have to take the matter to a higher level and accountability will come through legal action. He expresses his concern of having the same conversation and not being able to fund projects in the jurisdiction he was placed to represent. We cannot continue to move forward when we budget for an amount based on all the recommendations and thoughts and we get misinformation or double the overruns. It is not acceptable and Mr. Graham along with the group will hold SCDOT accountable. He has voted for the project and will continue to vote from them, however, if SCDOT does not show better management of the money, it has been recommended to have other actions to look at SCDOT and how the money is being spent. Mr. Dwight Stewart, going through some of the issues, addressed an issue with a borderline conflict. He stated that this is what stopped the Project at Chestnut Fairy Bridge. An unknown water line discovered on the bridge could not be seen until demolition began. The city of Camden did not know where it came from or who serviced it. The critical path was delayed. In the Town of Summerton, some of the sewer lines were put in the 40s across people's yards and unknown that they are there until there is a break. For situations like these, the question is, how do we budget for these situations. Do we let a \$6 million project and cut it back to \$4 million to have \$2 million in contingencies? How do we deal with something like that? Mr. McKinney pointed out that this is the point of the discussion to figure out what do we do. You could risk inverse and do no big projects, which is not necessarily the right thing to do, but if you take on the bigger projects, you assume the risk until you find out how we get better accuracy and more accountability from the contractor. Mr. Graham pointed out that the city has spent millions of dollars on the truck route as well. It has not just been the COG or SCDOT's funds that have had to pay the money. If they find a water line, the city has had to come in and move it and has put a lot of money into this project that should not have been responsible for. He expressed not agreeing with them doing so. Mr. Stewart agreed and questioned are we building enough contingencies especially when going around old infrastructure and changes. For instance, with Highway 521 going from Manning to Greeleyville, widening that was low risk due to mostly being woodland areas. Other locations, however, have underlying structures that people knew about generations ago. He questioned how do we build more contingencies in to account for unknown factors? Mr. Windham agreed and stated that because of the unknown, there is going to



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have to be a lot of contingencies. We own the projects and must be resolved one way or the other, but we cannot start any other projects in the future until we can see the end of what we have already started, otherwise these numbers are only going to continue to rise because of the unknown.

Camden Truck Route

Mr. McKinney refers to the enclosure in the agenda packet that relates to the Camden Truck Route. Due to previous discussion, he only pointed out how it gives the details of cost overruns being looked at. On the low end, we are looking at \$1.5 million and on the high end, we are looking at \$1.7 million. This will come up later in the TIP approval. The options were given to strike the one-line item and approve the rest of the TIP or approve the whole TIP as is, or table that part from the TIP. These options are left to the committee as we move forward.

Black River Road Corridor Improvements

Mr. Martin with SCDOT informed the committee of a stakeholders meeting coming on July 22nd with more detail of the Black River Road Corridor Improvements. He spoke on more of the financial portion of it. When looking at the initial cost estimates, part of the feasibility processes, to get more accurate cost estimates in line, it is known that there has been a problem for a lot of the COGs. When going for the Black River Corridor Improvements initially, when the funds were programmed, it was something more in line of cost per mileage. There were other similar projects looked at and they saw certain cost per mileage and applied that to the 1.7-mile corridor that was proposed on Black River Road. Since more investigation was done, the number of potential utility conflict have been seen, the cost has gone up. This is indicative of other projects. SCDOT feels as though today's number is pretty accurate and accounts for all the risk that were seen along the corridor. It may not be reflective of what the TIP or STIP (49:39) says, but it is a conservative number that SCDOT feels like there will not be getting into overruns at this time with what is known and what they've investigated. Mr. Graham asked if that was the \$9 million or the \$8 million being accurate? Mr. Martin noted looking at the bottom of alternative #3 and Mr. Graham address it being \$8,456,852. Mr. Wheeler address from the TIP sheet with the changes. He mentioned that the Black River Road project is \$9 million, but there is less than \$6 million proposed for. He asked are we not coming up short doing so. Mr. McKinney answers by stating, the initial \$6.2 million that the board approved was prior to SCDOT digging in and we did not have the feasibility study in process when the TIP and LRT was originally approved. After the board approved the \$6.2 million, SCDOT got involved and they got their consultant involved and this is the new number. So, there is a deficit. Mr. Whitmire pointed out that this is the purpose of the feasibility study. This estimate that SCDOT gave for the Black River project what is similar to what they will be giving the feasibility process. It is more in-depth and designed to help prevent these situations in the future. Mr. Meetze gave a little background history of Black River Road. There was a lot of stakeholder meetings and the Black River was initially programmed into phase 1 and phase 2. Phase 1 took us a little bit from Highway 521 to a little past the connector road. Phase 2 went all the way to Steeple Chase or maybe further. The decision was made right after being programmed in the TIP to hire an engineer to design up to Steeple Chase if money became available to do so or if estimates came back, an engineer was already on board. The engineer can be told not to design but to a certain point that physically(53:08) constrained or to try to get the project let in phases when more funding is available and develop the plans for the whole thing while having the engineer already on board. Those are some discussions



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had with Mr. Kyle Kelly when he was still working at the COG. Mr. Graham states that yes there was an engineer hired because real numbers were needed for accuracy. There was wanting to be known of the cost of the project so we would not run into the same issue we ran into with the bypass. We want a full price of the full project and we want the full project to be funded but wanting to know a real number so pushed for an engineer up front so that this kind of leadership does not have to make the decision about guestimates. Mr. Windham asked if we have authority at this point to move any TIP money from the Black River Road up to the Camden Truck Routes? Mr. McKinney confirmed that a recommendation can be made to the board. Mr. Windham stated his concern of if there could be discussion of any monies that could be moved as far as the original compared to the preferred to help finish the Camden Truck Route. Mr. McKinney asked if he is advocating taking \$1.5 million or \$1.7 million from the Black River Road that is projected and use that towards the overruns currently on Camden Truck Route. Mr. Windham asked is there authority to make that decision at this time and Mr. McKinney confirmed yes. Mr. Tucker addressed to Mr. Windham that the Black River project has already been started and one of those that are ongoing. He stated that he is not for pulling money from this project that is already short about \$4 million from being completed. There are other projects in the list that will not be ready until 2023. If there is to be discussion, he suggests discussing the full TIP and not just the Black River Road. Mr. Windham referred to the original Black River Road Project which stated \$6.4 million. He then asked what is the preferred alternative from the original? Mr. Graham answered by stating the preferred alternatives are sidewalks and better turning lanes. Mr. Ken added that when this was initially scoped, it was scoped as a 5-lane section and for about ½ a mile. A 5-lane section is a wider imprint and on top of that there were sidewalks on both ends of the street that were reduced to a 3-lane section with sidewalk on one side of the street through that half mile section. It was also carried down to the neighborhood per traffic recommendation of 3-lane section and the benefit is tremendous from a safety and operational perspective of the corridor. It allows those turning vehicles to get out of the way and not impede traffic. Mr. McKinney directed the board members not familiar with the Black River Road Project to page 9 of the enclosure that showed a map. He stated that the original project was scoped from 521 to the road that intersects with Black River Road. From there, it got scoped to go where it is now past Industrial Blvd. Mr. Martin pointed out the cost estimate of \$8.45 million includes right away acquisition, contingency, roadway construction, utility relocation, and does not include design services. the total out of the door price of everything needs to add another \$1.2 million to that total for PE. Mr. Windham clarifies that he is not picking out the Black River Project and just talking about the problem at hand. The Black River was approved going up to the Cottage and then got changed to going to the subdivision. Mr. Graham corrected in saying that it is the industrial park and not the subdivision. Mr. Windham then goes on to state that it was approved for one point and that he is glad it was able to go forward if it can be afforded and just wanted clarification. Mr. Graham mentioned that it was approved for the \$6.5 million and that was what was approved based on preliminary plans and numbers. Mr. Windham pointed out that due to this change, the cost is up to \$8.4 million which is \$2 million more which is great if it can be afforded. Mr. Graham stated that it goes back to the challenges stated before. The \$6.5 million is not really a real number because it did not have engineering numbers added either. (1:00:31) So it takes it to \$8 million and now trying to add \$2 more to that. Mr. Whitmire added in that for this project, the number I very hard to get accurate when we did not have the full scope in front of us. The scope of the project has changed a good bit with the multiuse path and carrying those lanes that additional 1.2 miles. Mr. Wheeler questioned that if those were not in the initial scope, how did they get to be there now? If it was approved for



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\$6.2 million without that, how did we get to add the additional mileage. Mr. Mets stated that when it was first programmed in the TIP, it was for phase 1. At the point, there was communication to hire an engineer to aware of how far the money could take us into building the project. At the time, there was no knowledge of how far the money would take us. There were logical termini (1:02:10) to take it past the school at the first road as mentioned that comes off Highway 521 off Black River. The \$9 million is the total cost to get project done all the way to the industrial park. There was a lot of due diligence but only through hiring an engineer that there could be determination of how far the \$6 million would take and how much it would cost for getting it done in one phase. It can still be phased out in 2 phases based on what decisions are made financially. Mr. Graham mentioned that what was approved was the amount of money. The project was not studied or looked into. Kershaw county questioned SCDOT about their plans because they had no plans for a traffic light, pedestrian walkways for the 2,000 students that leave the school. He also mentioned that SCDOT at the time said if something is not in existence, they do not plan for it. That is why Kershaw County felt it was not appropriate not to plan for the future. They wanted to build a 5-lane road right outside of the school instead of going to the industrial park which would have been a mistake. Kershaw County paid for the initial beginning of getting the engineers to start conversating with SCDOT not only on the COG level but also the state level. They have been dealing with SCDOT directly and have put a traffic light in at Black River Road because SCDOT said they were not going to plan for a traffic light. The traffic light has been installed at the expense of Kershaw County and SCDOT for the expansion of what must happen. Mr. Whitmire addressed that this is the perfect example of why the feasibility study could come in handy. When these projects are being programmed in the LRTP, it is done through surveys and outreach through the staff level from the people who live in the county and the municipality of what they are seeing. There is understanding that there is need for improvements along the Black River Road Corridor. From staff level, best estimates are made and that is where that initial estimate comes in and the number that is initially brought to the committee is from staff recommendation based on that. That is why this is a perfect example of once the engineer gets on the ground, it becomes a little clearer of what is expected. Mr. Graham joins in by stating this project is done differently and that we hired an engineer to give us real numbers up from versus the project starting and then having the problems like was had on 521. He expresses that this is the right course of action for future projects just like the bypass in Bishopville so that we do not get caught like the Camden Truck Route. Only way to do so is keep SCDOT accountable for the numbers that they give us. Mr. Whitmire added in that with the feasibility study, all that we are hoping for is committing the funds for the study. No programming any funds before that being required, and we do not have to program anymore funds other than the cost of the study until getting that report back. Mr. Wheeler expressed his concern of making a motion to approve the TIP and approving \$5.6 million knowing its only half of what it will take. Mr. McKinney mentioned that the TIP did not have to be approved today. Items could be tabled if agreed upon. A vote to not approve in the committee is an option as well. (1:07:51) could not understand Mr. Wheelers statement). Mr. Graham agreed by stating that every project seen is a lot more money than seen on the TIP. Mr. Whitmire mentioned that what is seen on the sheet is just what is allocated. The cost estimates are not reflected in the TIP itself. Mr. McKinney noted that he was not aware of the additional funds that Mr. Martin spoke of. The full number can be figured out and brought back to the committee so that the whole number can be seen versus doing the math individually. Mr. Graham stated that when the Bishopville Truck Route is funded with the \$14 million it says it's going to cost, whatever that number is, the committee will have to fund it regardless unless the committee changes what SCDOT does. He mentioned that all may agree that



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the projects that are on the TIP should be moved forward with and no other projects should be funded. That way there could be a better understanding of how SCDOT is going to manage money and hold SCDOT more accountable for the money they were given. Mr. Wheeler expresses his agreeance and suggest focusing on the items on the TIP and before planning whatever is not on the TIP, there is going to have to be different planning. Mr. Tucker noted that the TIP was already approved on May 4th. He addressed for confirmation that an action did not have to be taken if chosen not to or an amendment could be made to what is recommended. Mr. McKinney confirmed that being correct. Mr. Tucker also stated that he was not willing to make any motion due to the memorandum that was given back from SCDOT on the report stating that there's been a count and we "think" they're going to settle for \$1.5 million but not being sure. He is concerned if they come back saying that they want the \$1.7 million and will stipulate that everyone will be settled and will not be any litigation moving forward. (1:11:44) Then you will then have to come back saying another \$200,000 is needed to wrap it up. He suggested that it is in best interest that it will allow us to think on what line item to pull the money out of to recommend back to the full board and have a concrete number by the time the committee meets again and Chairman Stewart will call a meeting when necessary or needed. He suggested tabling the motion to approve the new TIP. Mr. Pearson stated that an extension memo was received for the TIP update window and the deadline to update the new TIP is in October. He asked if there was going to be another policy meeting prior to October if the TIP is decided to not be approved. Mr. Tucker answered by stating that the chairman or staff can call a meeting. Mr. Pearson addressed not wanting to miss the deadline to approve the new TIP. Mr. McKinney asked why SCDOT wants the committee to approve the TIP before October and what needs to be approved so that it can be included. Mr. Pearson answered by stating all the projects from 21-27 (1:13:22) are going to have to be approved by October. That date was extended to October and was initially July but since COVID-19, there has been a lot of delays in policy meetings with different COGs and MPOs and they were not able to approve those projects prior to July. That is why it has been extended out until October and for COGs and MPOs that do not approve by October, there could be issues with future funding for those 21-27 projects. Mr. McKinney stated that the TIP has already been approved and this will be an amendment. He asked if the TIP that was already approved will surface for what SCDOT is needing in October. Mr. Pearson answered by confirming it would since the TIP has already been approved. Amendments can always be amended even after the extension date. Mr. McKinney addressed with the committee that the Black River Road projects have not be let. There is still time for the committee and the board to have conversation with SCDOT on process and accountability before letting the project.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) 2021-2027

Mr. Tucker made a motion to table item 3D for TIP 2021-2027. Mr. McCain seconded the motion and the motion was passed unanimously.

New Business

Kershaw County Urbanized Area

Mr. McKinney informed the committee that every time we have a census, they look at the population growth. In the last Census, there were parts of Kershaw County, Lugoff & Elgin that were absorbed into the Columbia MPOs area. That means Columbia gets the funding for transportation and roads for that particular area. With



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the growth patterns where they currently are, it is likely they will try to absorb Camden. There has been talk with Kershaw County and the City of Camden elected officials and staff and we are trying to get ahead. Potentially will not happen until after the census so about 2022, but we are trying to get ahead of things to prevent the absorption of Camden into that area. That will produce 2 negative impacts; Kershaw County will get less service being a small county compared to Lexington and Columbia and the COG will lose money for projects. Mr. Graham stated that from the City of Camden's standpoint, there is no desire to participate with Columbia, Richland County, Lexington COG and there is hope that this COG will join with us and we would potentially write a resolution together in telling how our four counties need to stay intact as we are. Likewise, would be done in Kershaw and the city of Camden in support of the same efforts. It is a federal decision so there has been in contact with Congressman Clyburn (1:18:07) through the COG and had meeting already and addressing no desire to leave the COG partnership. He asked for full support to stay in Santee-Lynches and fully support their efforts.

Commissioner Meeting

Mr. Tucker asked Mr. McKinney to remind and inform the committee on the business about the commissioner meeting next week. Mr. McKinney stated that he arranged a meeting for Kershaw County and the City of Camden to meet with the SCDOT commissioner for our region, Dean Branham. The purpose is to give the elected official a chance to meet with someone senior at SCDOT the displeasure of the overruns with the Camden Truck Route and give a chance to directly express the lack of accountability. That will take place on Tuesday, July 21st. The COG is actively doing everything possible to facilitate conversations that will lead to better outcomes.

Old Business

The next full board meeting will be the on August 10th. Mr. Stewart asked if at that meeting the committee will report out results of the committee and the recommendations to the board. Mr. McKinney confirmed unless there is another meeting prior.

Adjourn

Mr. Wilson made the motioned to adjourn, Mr. McCain seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dennis Cyphers

Dennis Cyphers
Chief, Government Services