

MINUTES
TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE
October 5, 2021

The meeting was called to order by LMPO Director Richard Rogalski at 10:00 A.M. in the 3rd Floor Conference Room, City Hall, 212 SW 9th Street, Lawton, Oklahoma. Meeting notice and agenda were posted on the City Hall notice board as required by State Law.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Richard Rogalski, LMPO Director
Joseph Painter, City Engineer, City of Lawton
Tom Zigler, ASCOG
Jay Earp, ODOT Division VII Engineer
Barbara McNally, Lawton Fort Sill Regional Airport
Joseph Painter, City Engineer, City of Lawton
Ryan Landers, General Manager, LATS
Cynthia Williams, Deputy Public Works Director, City of Lawton
Randy Butler, Fort Sill Public Works

MEMBERS ABSENT: Tom Simpson, Hwy Engineer Anadarko Area, BIA*
Sarah McElroy, ODOT MPO Coordinator**
Adrian Tehauno, Comanche Nation*
Ronald C. Ahtone, Apache Tribe*
Chuck Tsoodle, Kiowa Tribe*
Pearlie Tiggs, FTA Community Planner*
Shivani Rani, City of Lawton Engineering
Krista Ratliff, Lawton Fort Sill Chamber of Commerce
Isaac Akem, FHWA*

ALSO PRESENT: Stanley Booker, Mayor
Tammy Anderson, Recording Secretary
Jonathan Stone, Transportation Planner**

*Non-Voting **attended via conference call

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 21, 2021 MEETING.

MOTION by McNally, SECOND by Butler, to approve the minutes of the June 21, 2021 meeting.

AYES: Unanimous. NAYS: None. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION TO APPROVE SWITCHING THE ORDER OF ITEMS #3 AND #4 ON THE AGENDA.

MOTION by Earp, SECOND by Butler, to approve switching the order of items #3 and #4 on the agenda.

AYES: Unanimous. NAYS: None. MOTION CARRIED.

4. CONSIDER RECOMMENDING TO THE TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD

APPROVAL OF THE REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR A ZERO-EMISSION BUS ANALYSIS AND ROLLOUT PLAN FOR THE LAWTON AREA TRANSIT SYSTEM AND FORM A COMMITTEE OF STAFF AND TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS TO REVIEW RESPONSES TO THE RFQ.

Stone stated if you can remember recently we had a natural gas study done for LATS. We also had an analysis done for zero-emission vehicles to get electrical busses.

Rogalski stated so again, I keep seeing a lot of things move to electrical and electrical busses are one of those things that are possible as well. We are even putting in a grant for electrical police cars. So this RFQ is to really look at the viability of a zero-emission bus system. Do we know what the budget is for this one?

Stone responded the budget is \$100,000, but it shouldn't cost that much.

Rogalski stated okay, what do you all think?

Landers stated I would vote yes.

Rogalski stated what does LATS think about this?

Landers responded obviously, from what everyone has heard through the infrastructure bill, the industry is moving toward mass transit electrical vehicles. You can get a lot of federal money for these vehicles and it will help to coincide with our Master Plan that we are developing at the moment as well. Zero-emissions make a whole lot of sense and I think there is a mandate with this administration that either by 2035 or 2040 mass transit has to be electrical. The biggest concern is always going to be the infrastructure with how to charge the vehicles, maintenance etc., but I don't foresee it being a huge issue.

Butler asked how is this going to tie in with the hub stations and where those were going to be? Are we going to re-look at that in reference to the infrastructure bill or is that going to be the base for which this study will use?

Rogalski responded obviously they do go together, and we are going to have to look at the range of these busses, if they just need to charge at night and they run all day then it wouldn't make any difference where the hubs are really. But if these busses need to stop at a hub and charge then that will be a different story.

Landers stated and that will be a part of this process. So right now, we're in the beginning stages of finalizing everything for where it's actually going to be. The next phase in the process of the facilities would be design and all of that good stuff. The design part will correlate with this study as well, so again, it's perfect timing for all of this. Once the batteries get better, the range gets a lot better and every year the busses continue to improve. The other factor with that is we can structure the routes with how long the batteries will last so we are pretty excited about that.

Butler stated we need to make sure that that's included in the study and scope so that way we get that synergy of what was going to be done, does it need to be modified etc. We also have to

consider where our existing lines are from PSO and whether or not we will need to run new lines etc., to accommodate these new busses.

Landers responded so about 3 or 4 years back we had a company called Proterra, they are one of the largest electrical bus manufacturers in the US, come do a presentation for us. One of the unique things they mentioned is that they actually had the city's partner with the local electric companies to pay for the infrastructure and those types of things because they knew they were going to get the money back through the use of electricity etc. That's one thing we wanted to make sure of in the RFQ, is that we want that collaboration. Anything they approve or do will be outlines in the study.

Rogalski stated that does bring up the fact that LEDA does own the property down there in the downtown area and maybe we could put charging stations on that land if we need somewhere with a lot of power capability.

Zigler asked Ryan how many busses do we have now?

Landers responded we have a fleet of 13 fixed-route vehicles and 6 or 7 for paratransit shuttles etc.

Zigler asked so the initial cost would be about what?

Landers responded so the initial purchase will be the first part of our fleet, which is about 7 busses. Depending on what we decide to do with the Master Plan for more on demand support, that would be another 5 to 6 vehicles roughly.

Zigler asked and how much do these cost?

Landers responded the electric vehicles are more than the diesel busses so probably closer to about \$200,000 more.

Zigler stated I remember a couple years ago we were trying to figure out how to have a bus system period because the fleet had gone down and we were buying used busses and we're talking about a pretty big investment here.

Landers stated so the initial purchase that we did was from the 2016 CIP bond and that as all local money. This particular investment would be a majority of federal funds that we get so that's the bonus.

Rogalski stated and just to be clear, we're not looking of getting rid of diesel busses that are in good shape. We are looking at coming up with replacements for the one's that aren't in good shape and so we would have to buy a new bus anyway and this is really looking at the ROI for these busses and figuring out whether or not the additional \$200,000 will pay for itself in the long run. That's also another big question.

Zigler stated so is the study going to look at the strain these electric busses and cars are going to put on PSO's infrastructure and the quality of service that they're going to be able to

provide to the other customer's of Lawton?

Rogalski stated I don't think the study is going to provide the load on PSO.

Stone stated that part of the study is in there. The scope includes gaining input from PSO regarding how much electricity will be needed etc.

Rogalski stated I can tell you though in speaking with PSO, their plant here in town, they run the risk of not running it enough and so they need to sell more electricity in order to keep that plant open. So, I believe PSO has the generational capacity, it's just where we send it to after that.

Zigler asked and where are we going to dispose of these batteries once they are used up, do we have a place for that because I understand that is an issue?

Rogalski stated now that is in the study, because that is a cost, and that is something we want to look at. Those are all very good points when trying to decide where to go with these things. This electric vehicle train is certainly moving awfully fast.

Zigler stated and I understand that, but looking at the big picture, I see a lot of expense and I just don't know if it's going to be beneficial. I just don't trust this electric thing as being the end all, be all of what we need to have as for transportation.

Landers stated there are still concerns and I don't want to say it's a new technology because it's been around for a number of years. One concern is what happens if we have another February and the power grid goes down because of weather? So there are definitely going to need to be contingency plans and I think with any new technology there is always a little bit of worry about how it will function etc. I wish I was 100% versed in all of this, but I'm not.

Zigler stated well, you're not experienced with it yet and I think that's what the point of this study is and I just want to make sure that we get everything we need to make the best decision.

Landers responded absolutely and I think doing this study will give some peace of mind with the switch over.

McNally stated with the federal mandate of 20 years, I mean that is going to be gone like that, so we really need to jump on this.

Rogalski stated and yes, the majority of our funding is federal funding and we don't want to miss out on that.

McNally stated with the funding available now, since there is a mandate, do you think there will be more in the future as we get closer to that date?

Landers responded it's hard to say, but I do think there will be more federal money available in the next few years.

Rogalski stated we also need to come up with the review committee so who would like to be on

that to review the RFQ's when we get them in? Would you mind being on the committee Tom and Barbara?

Zigler stated I wouldn't mind.

McNally stated sure, I can do that.

Rogalski stated is that enough members of the body? Or do we need more?

Landers stated I could be a non-voting member and help review them that would be fine with me also.

Painter stated before we go through the roll call, I have one question. Do you anticipate it being a one to one ratio of replacing the diesel busses with electric busses or do you think we will need more because of charging throughout the day etc.?

Landers responded the zero-emissions study will check for those things and analyze all of the routes to determine how many busses we need to run specific routes etc. It just depends on the route schedules and how often they are running, the time of year etc.

Painter stated my second question was is there a city that's already gone to this that we could study to see what's working and what isn't?

Landers stated I'd have to do more research on this and see, but I will look into that more.

Stone stated I think Seattle has moved to this about a decade ago and I'm pretty sure they charge mid route.

MOTION by McNally, SECOND by Zigler, to recommend to the Transportation Policy Board approval of the Request for Qualifications for a Zero-Emission Bus Analysis and Rollout Plan for the Lawton Area Transit System and form a committee of Staff and Technical Committee members to review responses to the RFQ.

AYES: Unanimous. NAYS: None. MOTION CARRIED.

3. RECEIVE A PRESENTATION FROM EST, INC. OF THE DRAFT FINAL REPORT FOR THE GOODYEAR BLVD. EXTENSION PROJECT AND PROVIDE A RECOMMENDATION TO THE TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD.

Amanda Newberry of EST, Inc. gave a PowerPoint presentation on the different traffic alternatives available for the Goodyear Blvd Project and the preferences of ODOT and the Goodyear Stakeholders.

Earp asked do we know what kind of slope that is between the ramp and the main line to Goodyear?

Newberry responded yes, we have 6 to 1 with a small v in between the two.

Earp stated we just want to make sure that's mowable with the slope.

Rogalski stated yes, now we have 2 issues, we have a weird area of grass and then you also have not being able to make a left turn across it. I'm not sure what it's saving, is it saving that slope?

Newberry responded basically if I was to make this a parallel ramp and it needed to connect in at this point, I don't have the distance to get on US-62. It's at an 11% grade and too steep. So in order to be able to get this ramp, we have to put it on the other side.

Rogalski stated oh okay, I see now what's happening.

Landers asked so what is the recommendation that we would be giving?

Rogalski stated are we expecting the Technical Committee to take action today?

Stone stated the Policy Board will be forwarding it to City Council.

MOTION by Painter, SECOND by McNally, to recommend that the Transportation Policy Board approve the Draft Final Report for the Goodyear Blvd. Extension Project.
AYES: Unanimous. NAYS: None. MOTION CARRIED.

5. CONSIDER RECOMMENDING TO THE TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD APPROVAL OF A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE FEDERAL FISCAL YEARS 2022, 2023, 2024, AND 2025 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FOR THE LAWTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY AREA.

Rogalski stated is there anything that we should focus on here Jonathan?

Stone responded the only change between this and the last TIP was the addition of the Lee Blvd Project. There will also be an amendment when we move forward with the Goodyear Blvd Project as well.

Rogalski asked is there anymore discussion?

MOTION by Zigler, SECOND by Painter, to recommend that the Transportation Policy Board approve a resolution adopting the Federal Fiscal Years 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025 Transportation Improvement Program for the Lawton Metropolitan Area Transportation Study area.
AYES: Unanimous. NAYS: None. MOTION CARRIED.

6. REPORTS.

Barbara McNally for Lawton Regional Airport – We are weeks away from opening up the new baggage claim area. The next phase will be the terminal and it will go out for bids by November. We'll bring the recommendation before the board in December and then we'll start construction for the new boarding gate area next year.

Randy Butler for Fort Sill – We are upgrading Curry Road, but we just also began a full replacement of Ferguson Road. In the near future, about the March/April time frame of 2022, we are going to begin some security improvements to our access control points. More to come as we get into all of the security things.

Joe Painter for City of Lawton Engineering – the pedestrian bridge over I-44 is currently being worked on. The Gore Blvd one is under construction and getting ready to start the new utility location. Also, our Lee Blvd Project is finished.

Tom Zigler for ASCOG – we’re extremely busy over at ASCOG, we’re going through our Rural Economic Action Plan grants and reviewing them to make sure we have all the information we need to bring it before the executive committee. We do have a new executive director at ASCOG and we’re just getting lined up, lined out and staying busy.

Jay Earp for ODOT – I am pleased to inform you all that the Transportation Commission approved the 2022-2029 construction work plan. In that, the most relevant for this area is, we’ve added an overlay project to US-62 from State Highway 115 going east 7 miles to the ramps to the flyover bridge. We also have a placeholder for the Goodyear Blvd project and ODOT’s part in that is slotted for 2025. Another project of note is the 2027 Rogers Lane safety upgrade project. We will have public involvement in the next few months for that.

Ryan Landers for LATS – There aren’t any huge updates, but back in June/July timeframe we started to add more service and we saw a little bit of an increase once the LPS students were able to come back and that contract got renewed again. We’re struggling a little bit to hire, but other than that, nothing else major is happening at LATS. The Master Plan is focused heavily on service and we’ve completed most of that Plan. One of the big things we are going to be looking at is transit to Industrial Park and figuring out the logistics for that.

7. COMMENTS.

None.

8. ADJOURNMENT.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:58 a.m.

RICHARD ROGALSKI, CHAIRMAN