

**Minutes of Meeting
SATS POLICY COMMITTEE
July 14, 2016**

ATTENDANCE**Policy Committee Voting Members**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Bonnie Drew, Chair	City of Springfield
<input type="checkbox"/>	Brian McFadden, Vice Chair	Sangamon County
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tom Gray	Village of Chatham
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Eric Hansen	Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Jeff South*	Illinois Dept. of Transportation (IDOT): Region 4, District 6
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Frank Squires	Springfield Mass Transit District

* Represented by Sal Madonia

Policy Committee Non-Voting Members

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tom Kelso*	IDOT: Urban Program Planning
<input type="checkbox"/>	JD Stevenson	Federal Highway Administration (FHWA): Illinois Div. Office
<input type="checkbox"/>		Federal Transit Administration

* Represented by Chris Schmidt

Others

Dale Lael, Village of Jerome
 Chris Isbell – IDOT District 6 Local Roads and Streets
 Sue Graham – IDOT District 6 Local Roads and Streets
 Norm Sims – Regional Planning Commission
 Linda Wheeland – Regional Planning Commission
 Neha Soni – Regional Planning Commission
 Jason Sass – Regional Planning Commission
 Brian Sheehan – Regional Planning Commission

I. CALL TO ORDER

In the absence of Committee Chair Bonnie Drew, Acting Chair Tom Gray called the meeting of the SATS Policy Committee to order at 12:00 PM.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Gray asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes of the June 9, 2016, SATS Policy Committee meeting. Mr. Madonia noted that his name was misspelled within the minutes and asked that it be corrected. The correction was noted

Sal Madonia made a motion to approve the minutes. Frank Squires seconded the motion. The vote to approve was unanimous.

III. TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT

Ms. Wheeland told the Committee that there was no Technical Committee meeting for July, 2016 and no report was given.

IV. 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan

No Report was given.

V. 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program

No report was given

VI. TECHNICAL ADVISOR UPDATES

A. Illinois Dept. of Transportation: Central Bureau of Urban Program Planning

Chris Schmidt told the Committee that the ITEP application process had closed and the applications were being reviewed.

B. Federal Highway Administration: Illinois Division Office

No report was given.

VII. AGENCY UPDATES

A. Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission

Linda Wheeland told the committee that SSCRPC had received all its agreements with SATS members, except IDOT. Mr. Schmidt said that the agreement was in the process of being issued and all agreements from IDOT would be effective July 1, 2016. He said that the Governor's Office for Management and Budget had not finished the GATA (Grant Accountability and Transparency Act) portal. The portal was partially designed to manage and issue intergovernmental agreements, such as the SATS/IDOT agreement. Mr. Schmidt said that a draft copy of the agreement was sent to IDOT, but there were some discrepancies in the documents. IDOT was working to correct the documents and the agreement should be sent to SATS by the week of July 25. Mr. Schmidt assured the Committee that any expenditures incurred by SATS between July 1 and the receipt date of the agreement would be reimbursed by IDOT, as required by federal law.

B. Springfield Mass Transit District (SMTD)

Frank Squires requested that Bonnie Drew re-assume the role of Committee Chair after she arrived at the meeting. Mr. Gray and the Committee agreed, and Ms. Drew assumed the role of Committee Chair.

Mr. Squires told the Committee that SMTD was on schedule to begin Saturday evening bus service, beginning at the end of August or the beginning of September. He said the new service was approved in the SMTD budget and routes would be the same as Monday-Friday night service.

C. City of Springfield

Ms. Drew reported the following:

- Stanford Avenue - Fox Bridge to Taylor (**TIP # 02-2010-09**):
 - Construction had begun on the project. Crews were clearing land along the route.
- Carpenter Street underpass (**TIP # 02-2014-09**):
 - A ribbon cutting ceremony was scheduled for August 29, 2016 to officially open the Carpenter Street underpass.
- Downtown Streetscape
 - Construction continued between 2nd Street and 4th Street.
- Maintenance and Overlay Projects
 - Overlay work continued in the Northgate, Walnut Valley, Tara Hills, and other neighborhoods.
- Sidewalk Pedestrian Plan
 - Work started to improve sidewalks along MacArthur Boulevard and Carpenter Street.

Ms. Drew told the Committee that the City of Springfield's Bicycle Advisory Council planned to submit an application for Bicycle Friendly Community designation.

Regarding a previous topic, Mr. Schmidt asked Mr. Squires if SMTD was looking to increase its advertising and outreach in order to promote Saturday evening service. Mr. Squires said that SMTD would promote the new service through its own resources at a time closer to the beginning of service. Mr. Schmidt suggested that SMTD could coordinate Saturday evening service with other modes of evening transportation, including taxi and ride sharing services. Mr. Squires said that he would consult with his Planning and Marketing Specialist.

Mr. Squires asked Ms. Drew where the Stanford Avenue extension would be located. Ms. Wheeland said that the extension would connect the eastern terminus of the current Stanford Avenue with the western terminus of the portion of Stanford Avenue that connects Taylor Avenue to Dirksen Parkway. Mr. Sims said that the approximate alignment of the Stanford Avenue extension is in the Long-Range Transportation Plan.

D. Sangamon County

No report was given.

E. Illinois Department of Transportation: Region 4, District 6

Mr. Madonia reported the following:

- Dirksen Parkway widening – Clear Lake to Ridge (**TIP # 04-2012-09**):
 - Work was nearing completion on curbs and gutters, as well as areas that intersect with driveways and side streets. Pavement was expected to be complete in late August or early September.
- Wabash Avenue widening – Koke Mill to Village of Curran (**TIP # 04-2011-07**):
 - Work continued on the Hollis/Cockrell Lane connection. Utility relocation was delaying some construction work. The Archer Elevator Rd. and Wabash Ave intersection was set to begin construction. Mr. Madonia said there may be utility issues during construction as well. Final paving was scheduled to be completed in Fall, 2016, with some remaining small projects set to be completed in Spring, 2017.
- Wabash Ave at Robbins Rd and Wabash Ave at West White Oaks Dr. (TIP #04-2015-06):
 - Signals had been activated and miscellaneous work continued.
- Interstates 55/72 at Illinois Route 29 (South Grand) (**TIP # 04-2012-09**):
 - The first stage was completed, and the second stage, which includes joint replacements, should be completed by late August to early September.
- IL-97 – East of IL-125 to East of Koke Mill Road (**TIP # 04-2016-02**):
 - Work began on this stretch of highway on July 11, 2016. Pavement patching was completed, and structural work had begun.
- IL-29 (J. David Jones Parkway):
 - The lighting project was waiting for equipment before proceeding.
- Sixth-Street interchange at I-72 (**TIP# 04-2016-03**):
 - The project was awarded on the June, 2016 letting.

F. Village of Chatham

Mr. Gray told the Committee that the Village of Chatham started construction of the railroad crossing south of Chatham connecting the Village to Route 4.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There was no public comment.

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**A. Transportation for America – Membership****B. Transportation for America – Requested letter on Congestion Performance Measures**

Ms. Wheeland reminded the Committee that Vice-Chair McFadden requested that the Committee discuss possible membership with Transportation for America (T4A). Representatives from T4A made a presentation to the Policy Committee at the June, 2016 meeting. In addition to requesting that SATS join T4A, the representatives asked that SATS write a letter expressing concern with proposed Federal performance measures regarding traffic congestion management solutions. Ms. Wheeland told the Committee that membership to T4A would cost SATS \$1,250.

Ms. Drew told the Committee that the City of Springfield was a member of other organizations, and would like to take more time to consider membership, as funds available for professional group memberships were limited. Mr. Sims noted that it was unclear how SATS would pay for membership; whether it would be paid entirely by SATS or apportioned to different SATS constituent members. Membership could not be paid with federal planning funds.

Mr. Sims said that he has been contacted by T4A requesting that he, personally, contact members of Illinois' Congressional Delegation regarding policy issues. Mr. Sims said that he cannot personally lobby Members of Congress or other officials regarding policy issues, as he does not have an official capacity on the SATS Policy Committee. He explained that his input is limited to technical expertise and not guidance on policy.

Mr. Sims noted that there may be times when the official policies of SATS would be contrary to policies endorsed by T4A. He said that the letter regarding performance measures for traffic congestion strategies was an example. The letter requested that congestion be measured on a per-person basis, instead of a per-vehicle basis. He said that per-person performance measures may actually be a better way to measure congestions, but it could not be implemented by SATS because data for non-automobile riders (bus riders, bicyclists) is not available from IDOT at the MPA level. Data to measure congestion the way T4A supported would have to come from the local level. He wrote back to T4A that SATS could not support the performance measures endorsed by T4A because data collection would be too onerous. He asked that T4A reconsider its policy endorsement because he didn't believe that it would be of much help to many MPAs that don't have congestion problems, even if they managed to overcome the lack of data necessary to implement the performance measures.

Mr. Sims said that he could not either approve or disapprove membership with T4A. He did say that he would not recommend that SATS write a letter supporting T4A's performance measures for traffic congestion.

Mr. Schmidt asked what the Policy Committee saw as the benefits of joining T4A. Mr. Sims responded that the perceived benefits of membership were the benefits presented by T4A staff at the earlier meeting. He said that T4A is a lobbying group and their access to policy and decision making would keep SATS informed of changes to transportation policy and that T4A will contact SATS with new information if necessary. He said that T4A could provide SATS access to national policymaking, where current affiliations are more limited in scope.

Ms. Wheeland asked Mr. Schmidt if he knew of any other MPOs in Illinois who were members of Transportation for America. Mr. Schmidt did not think that Chicago's MPO was a member. He told Ms. Wheeland that he would look into the matter and report back to her.

Mr. Schmidt added that he agreed with Mr. Sims that it would be difficult to write a letter supporting T4A's congestion performance measures. He said that supporting performance measures that differ with the Federal standards would strain the working relationships between State and Federal agencies. Mr. Sims added that anybody could and should be able to comment on Federal performance measures during the comment period, but T4A is asking that SATS support T4A's preference, which may not be completely aligned with SATS' interests. He noted that the process the Federal government is using to implement performance measures is different from its original form. He noted that the proposed performance measures have been more fluid than originally conceived and that it is putting undue burden on local governments and MPOs. He said that Federal and State agencies are changing requirements and procedures without giving local agencies more resources to comply with the rules. In this case, T4A's performance measures would use data that is not available to SATS and would make SATS responsible for collecting the data because IDOT does not make it available. Data for vehicle trips is available, but data for non-motorized trips is not, and collecting the data would be problematic. As a result, Mr. Sims said that he would not send a letter supporting T4A's congestion performance measures to federal legislators in his capacity as Executive Director of SSCPRC. He also could not speak for SATS in the same capacity.

Mr. Sims said there were pros and cons to joining T4A, as SATS could have some influence on T4A's official positions. He said that SATS receives multiple requests to support T4A policy positions and that membership with T4A could carry more influence in the policymaking and allow SATS an opportunity to become more invested in the policymaking process.

Ms. Drew asked if T4A was requesting that SATS join as an entire organization or as a collection of individual members. Mr. Sims said that T4A was asking that SATS join as an entire organization. Mr. Squires asked if membership costs would be paid from normal constituent fees or would be an additional outlay for SATS members. Mr. Sims said membership fees would come from SATS matching fees, not Federal planning funds. He said that this was because SATS could not use Federal funds to lobby the Federal government.

Mr. Sims told the Committee that he did not have a strong opinion on what SATS should do regarding membership in T4A.

Ms. Drew said that she felt it was not in the Committee's interests to join Transportation for America at the time of the meeting. The Committee agreed through consensus. SATS would continue to review the necessity of membership in T4A and would be open to joining in the future if it would serve as an advantage. Mr. Sims said that he would communicate the Committee's wishes to T4A.

Ms. Drew asked if the Committee chose not to send a letter to Illinois' Congressional Delegation supporting Transportation for America's performance measures related to traffic congestion. Mr. Sims said that traffic congestion in the SATS planning area was not perceived as a problem and that it was not in SATS' interests to support the performance measures. The Committee agreed by consensus to not draft a letter supporting T4A's congestion performance measures.

Mr. Sims said that the Policy Committee should choose to stay informed as performance measures are adopted by FHWA and other Federal agencies. He said that performance measures were important and that SATS will continue to implement performance measures in its own planning area. He noted that he has seen numerous sets of performance measures adopted with little longevity as the composition of the Federal government changes from administration to administration. His wish was to see performance measures stabilize so local governments and MPOs could collect proper data that could be analyzed over a longer period without the data requirements changing frequently. He noted that Federal agencies have been looking to require smaller MPOs, such as SATS, to implement performance measures similar to larger MPOs. Smaller agencies have smaller funding budgets and less flexible staffing that would be required to report data in a similar fashion to a city like Chicago or a Federal agency, such as FHWA.

X. NEW BUSINESS

A. Next Meeting Date – August 4th, 2016

XI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Drew called for a motion to adjourn. Tom Gray made a motion to adjourn. Sal Madonia seconded the motion. The vote to adjourn was unanimous.

The regular meeting was adjourned at 12:29 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jason Sass
Recording Secretary