

MINUTES
MICHIGAN STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MEETING
May 31, 2007
Lansing, Michigan

Meeting noticed in accordance with Open Meetings Act, Public Act 267 of 1976.

Present: Ted B. Wahby, Chair
 Linda Miller Atkinson, Vice Chair
 James S. Scalici, Commissioner
 Maureen Miller Brosnan, Commissioner
 James R. Rosendall, Commissioner

Also Present: Jackie Shinn, Chief Deputy Director
 Larry Tibbits, Chief Operations Officer
 Frank E. Kelley, Commission Advisor
 Marneta Griffin, Commission Executive Assistant
 Jerry Jones, Commission Auditor, Office of Commission Audit
 Patrick Isom, Attorney General's Office, Transportation Division
 John Friend, Bureau Director, Highway Delivery
 John Polasek, Bureau Director, Highway Development
 Susan Mortel, Bureau Director, Transportation Planning
 Myron Frierson, Bureau Director, Finance and Administration
 Bill Shreck, Director, Office of Communications
 Tim Hoeffner, Administrator, Intermodal Policy
 Carmine Palombo, Transportation Asset Management

Excused: Kirk Steudle, Director

A list of those people who attended the meeting is attached to the official minutes.

Chair Wahby called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. in the Bureau of Aeronautics Auditorium in Lansing, Michigan.

I. COMMISSION BUSINESS

Commission Minutes

Chair Wahby entertained a motion for approval of the minutes from the State Transportation Commission meeting of April 26, 2007.

Moved by Commissioner Atkinson, with support from Commissioner Rosendall, to approve the minutes of the Commission meeting of April 26, 2007. Motion carried.

II. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT – CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER, LARRY TIBBITS**

Chief Deputy Director, Jacqueline Shinn, announced that Director Steudle was in Mackinac Island at the Detroit Chamber meeting, therefore Larry Tibbits would be giving the Report. Mr. Tibbits' presentation focused on:

Michigan Safety Partners

Some time ago Michigan adopted the actual goal of decreasing fatalities to 1.0 fatality per 100 million vehicle miles traveled—one state at a time. The national rate was 1.47 in 2005. Michigan will be redefining the goal this summer in terms of reduction in the number of fatalities (e.g. from 1084 in 2006 to below 800 by 2010). Michigan's 2006 rate was 1.05.

On September 19, 2006, MSNBC reported that a serious E. coli outbreak linked to spinach had occurred in the United States. The report indicated that one (possibly two) deaths were being investigated by federal officials. Ultimately, 3 unfortunate souls succumbed to the E. coli bacteria, an event that was covered by all of the major media outlets. During the two-month period that the "spinach problem" was receiving elevated attention, approximately 7,200 individuals died in automobile accidents within the U.S. and 200,000 died worldwide without any media attention. Have we become desensitized to automobile fatalities since they are so frequent?

These are the four essential elements required to improve Traffic Safety: 1) "Effective partnerships" is the starting point and must involve all 4 elements; 2) The partnership must then develop and be committed to a Strategic Highway Safety Plan; 3) Legislation is key to affecting driver behavior (seat belts, child passenger safety, DUI legislation, graduated driver's licensing, work zone legislation, and motorcycle helmets are in effect in Michigan); and, 4) Safety Funding must be made a priority to achieve results. Michigan has increased the Safety Funding from \$50 million in 2003 to \$63 million currently.

MDOT has 8% of the roads under their jurisdiction; cities and counties have 92%. However, 54% of the traffic volume occurs on the state trunk line system (8% of roads), as well as 70% of all commercial traffic.

The city and county system has 61% of the 350,838 crashes (fender benders to more serious), while we have 39%. Any attempt to improve safety must also focus on the local system and that takes commitment by all partners. In Michigan 60% of the fatalities (1,129 in 2005) occur on the local system. This is generally true in other states as well.

Michigan's total crash trends show a consistent decline from 2000 through 2006. We still have a lot of work to do—315,322 total crashes in 2006—but we are headed in the right direction. There has been a consistent decline in Michigan's fatalities from 1999 through 2006 (1,084 in 2006). Michigan's trend also shows a significant decline in serious injuries (11,956 in 2000 to 7,618 in 2006), which is reflective of improvements in passenger safety, engineering measures to limit impact affects (e.g., guard rail and attenuators) and improvements in Emergency Medical Services and response time.

University of Michigan conducted a study to look at the cost to society for: traffic crashes—just over \$12 million in 2004; index crimes (all crimes except for arson)—\$5 million in 2004; and, alcohol involved traffic crash casualties—just over \$2 million in 2004.

Michigan's Road to Safety

This partnership is probably the single factor most responsible for Michigan's sustained reduction in crashes, injuries and deaths. An all inclusive partnership is essential to success. This partnership identifies the State's most significant safety focus areas.

There is a long-term history of safety partnerships in Michigan. The Michigan State Safety Commission was created in 1941 by the legislature to address the "crisis in traffic safety". In 1944, there were 1,034 fatalities for 72,013 crashes. Michigan's high point was in 1969, with 2,487 fatalities for 331,223 crashes. In 1995 Federal mandate created Michigan's Safety Management System. The 2002 Governor's Traffic Safety Advisory Commission (GTSAC) is our current partnership and includes active participation by all parties in Michigan's safety community. Collectively, they developed the Michigan Strategic Highway Safety Plan in 2005. This plan has since been approved by FHWA in compliance with their new mandate. We have probably saved the lives of 6,000 citizens through Michigan's efforts and all the state departments in the counties.

The GTSAC development of the Strategic Highway Safety Plan has 12 focus areas: 1) Traffic Records and Information Systems (you need to be data driven); 2) Lane Departures (account for 45% of the fatalities, includes both roadway departure and median cross-over crashes); 3) Intersection Safety (26% of fatalities occur at intersections); 4) Work Zone Safety (1% of fatalities occur in work zones, but 90% of all work zone fatalities are motorist); 5) Commercial Vehicle Safety (10% of fatalities involve trucks); 6) Occupant Protection (46% of Michigan's fatalities were not wearing seat belts). Seat belt use is not the only factor in reducing the fatality rate, but it is a major factor. There is a correlation between the steady decline in fatalities in 1985 (passing of Seat Belt Law – Secondary Enforcement) and in 2000 (Primary Enforcement Law). Michigan's seatbelt use increased to 94.3% in 2006.

Continuing with the 12 focus areas: 7) Alcohol/Drug Impaired Driving (38% of the fatalities involved impaired drivers); 8) Driver Behavior and Awareness (includes aggressive drivers, distracted drivers (cell phones, etc.), drowsy drivers, confused drivers (signing)); 9) Elderly Mobility and Safety "AASHTO Lead State" (21% of the fatalities involved drivers 65 or older—50% of elder fatalities occur at intersections); 10) Drivers Age 24 and Younger (23% of fatalities involve drivers 24 or younger—this percent dropped significantly after Graduated Driver's Licensing became law in Michigan); 11) Motorcycle Safety (6% of the fatalities were cyclist. Motorcycle fatalities are on the increase nationwide. Mandatory helmet law saves lives. If this law were to be repealed, the state should expect to see an annual increase of at least 22 fatalities, 132 incapacitating injuries, 610 other injuries, and \$140 million in economic costs), and ; 12) Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety (17% of fatalities involved pedestrians or bicyclist. Detroit is in the top 5 cities in the country for pedestrian fatalities).

No one group can be effective acting alone. Engineering, Enforcement, Education, and Emergency Medical Services are all essential. Partnership is the key to success.

Mr. Tibbits asked for questions.

Commissioner Brosnan asked what the significance was of drivers' attention in the data.

Mr. Tibbits answered that he didn't know of any national study that could pin that down due to so many other factors. The latest discussion centers on cell phones—hands free or not, but before that is was McDonald's and children in the back seat. One thing we believe is that there are a lot of lane departures to the right or across centerlines. We are adopting a policy on non-freeway rural state trunklines where we can put in centerline and edge-line rumbles to either wake people up or get their attention.

Commissioner Brosnan asked, regarding the list of partners which shows the involvement of insurance companies, what their role was.

Mr. Tibbits answered that on any national committee that is multi-disciplinary you will have local/state agencies and insurance companies at the table. AAA is very active on all national committees to try and find ways to save lives and decrease their exposure.

Commissioner Brosnan asked, regarding the rumble strips, if there were any other specific engineering ideas we would begin to see to help deal with safety issues.

Mr. Tibbits answered that some of the things we would have seen new in the last 1½-2 years (that MDOT has done) would be the change in font (clear view font) on the freeway and non-freeway signing, back lights on stationary traffic signals, adopted count-down pedestrian signals, sign sheeting is much more reflectorized, among other things.

Commissioner Atkinson commented that among the 12 focus areas, intersectional safety is the only one that might also contain statistics for vehicle-train collisions, and asked if the 26% includes these collisions.

Mr. Tibbits answered yes. These collisions will get media attention—not only in Michigan but nationally.

Commissioner Atkinson commented that the opening remark about the E. coli and spinach was interesting, and thought maybe the 3 fatalities received so much more attention than the 7,200 was because they might have been perceived as preventable. She further commented that in 1941 the Federal DOT said that the three parts of the equation are the highway, driver, and vehicle, and that attention had to be devoted to all three in order to reduce it to that kind of goal.

Mr. Tibbits responded that the decline in fatalities is not all attributed to seat belt usage. Automobiles that you buy today are equipped with side and front airbags. Also, technology exists today where that you can blow into a small device and if you've had alcohol beyond whatever limit is acceptable to drive, you can't start your car.

Ms. Shinn stated that we are in the full swing of the construction season, and asked what the accident rates have been so far.

Mr. Tibbits answered that last month our work zone crashes were down a thousand last year from where they are now.

Ms. Shinn announced that she has given all the Commissioners a “Giv’em a Brake” bumper sticker and has placed some on the back table. This is a reminder that there are workers out on our roads and city streets so give’em a brake.

No other questions were forthcoming.

III. OVERSIGHT

Commission Agreements (Exhibit A) – Myron Frierson

Mr. Frierson stated that information on 51 agreements has been given for review. Pending any questions, Mr. Frierson asked for approval of Exhibit A.

Commissioner Atkinson asked, regarding Item #20 (contract 2006-5449—...roadway improvements along Bristol Road from Highway I-69 to North Torrey Road); #23 (contract 2007-5121—reconstruction work along Gee Drive from Alder Nash Road easterly approximately 1780 feet); #38 (contract 2007-5236—...resurfacing work along No. 2 Road from Blackman Road...and pavement marking work), which are all listed as local agency participation contracts, why the county’s funding is listed as zero.

Mr. Frierson answered that in local Jobs Today project and there is no local money because the state is providing the Jobs Today grant to match federal aid.

No other questions were forthcoming.

Chair Wahby entertained a motion. Motion was made by Commissioner Atkinson and supported by Commissioner Brosnan to approve Exhibit A. Motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

Bid Letting Pre-Approvals (Exhibit A-1) – Myron Frierson

Mr. Frierson gave a brief re-cap of the May 2007 bid letting activities: 21 State projects with total engineers’ estimates of \$69.1 million were let. The low bids announced on these projects totaled \$59.7 million. A special letting occurred on May 18 with two State items let, with total engineers’ estimates of \$30.2 million and total low bids of \$24.1 million. The average low bid of all 21 State projects was \$2.8 million. There is one State project classified as TBA, with the low bid of \$0.6 million. All bids were rejected on one State project with the engineers’ estimate of \$0.5 million and low bid of \$0.7 million. Nine of the State projects let had warranties, with low bids totaling \$29.1 million. Electronic proposals were provided for the 21 State projects let. In May 2006, 24 State projects were let with low bids totaling \$35.6 million, an average of \$1.5 million.

The State low bids for year to date FY 2007 totaled \$681.2 million compared to \$620.0 million for the same period in FY 2006.

As of October 23, 2006, it was estimated that 407 State projects with construction costs totaling \$905.8 million would be let during the 2007 fiscal year. Through May of this year, 321 State projects with engineers' estimates of \$703.6 million were let, representing 77.7% of the total amount projected to be let this fiscal year. In comparison, through May 2006, 348 projects with total engineers' estimates of \$648.2 million were let, representing 58.6% of the FY 2006 projection. The department's letting schedule is proceeding as planned. Through May 2007, 88.1% of the construction cost estimate of projects scheduled for the first eight months of the year was let. In comparison through May 2006, 98.5% of the construction cost estimate of projects scheduled for the first eight months of the year was let.

The total number of bids submitted for the May lettings was 415, of which 91 were submitted for State projects. There was an average of 5.4 bids submitted for each project that was let, and an average of 4.3 bids for each State project. Of the 439 contractors eligible to submit bids, 157, or 35.8%, submitted bids for these lettings.

In addition to the State projects let, 22 of the Local program area items let included projects in the Jobs Today, Jobs Tomorrow program.

There are 19 State projects with engineers' estimates totaling \$10.6 million scheduled to be let on June 1, 2007. Four of these items have warranties. Of all the items scheduled to be let, fifteen include work in the Jobs Today, Jobs Tomorrow program. A special letting is scheduled for June 8, 2007 where one State project with the \$161.8 million engineers' estimate and includes two warranties will be let.

Pending any questions, Mr. Frierson asked for approval of Exhibit A-1.

No questions were forthcoming.

Chair Wahby entertained a motion. Motion was made by Commissioner Brosnan and supported by Commissioner Scalici to approve the May bid letting. Motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

Bid Letting Pre-Approvals (Exhibit A-1 Supplemental) – Myron Frierson

Mr. Frierson reported on 1 State project added to the agenda as a supplemental item to exhibit A-1. Pending any questions, Mr. Frierson asked for approval of Supplemental Exhibit A-1.

No questions were forthcoming.

Chair Wahby entertained a motion. Motion was made by Commissioner Brosnan and supported by Commissioner Scalici to approve Supplemental Exhibit A-1. Motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

Letting Exceptions Agenda (Exhibit A-2) – John Polasek

Mr. Polasek reported on 2 projects (1 State, 1 Local) that were at least 10% over/under the engineers' estimates which are accompanied by justification memos. Pending any

questions, Mr. Polasek asked for approval of Exhibit A-2.

No questions were forthcoming.

Chair Wahby entertained a motion. Motion was made by Commissioner Atkinson and supported by Commissioner Brosnan to approve Exhibit A-2. Motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

Contract Adjustments (Exhibit B) – John Friend

Mr. Friend has 5 MDOT projects and 4 Local Agency projects before the Commission. Pending any questions, Mr. Friend asked for approval of Exhibit B.

Commissioner Atkinson commented, regarding Extra 2007-75 (Bridge rehabilitation on 7 structures on I-94...I-75...I-375...in the cities of Detroit, Taylor, Madison Heights, and Troy, Wayne and Oakland Counties), that this looks like internal oversight.

Mr. Friend responded that he did not disagree. There are a number of examples on both sides (MDOT and Local Agency) where we need to refine our quality assurance process to make sure that items in the design are included in the contract documents.

Commissioner Atkinson stated that this is not the first time the Commission has asked this question. She also had the same question for Extra 2007-85 (0.74 kilometers of railroad grade separation...on Sheldon Road...in the city of Detroit, Wayne County).

Mr. Friend deferred to Mr. Polasek to respond regarding the quality assurance process.

Mr. Polasek stated that there were two elements to the quality assurance process. When a consultant does a project, there is a quality assurance process that they put together as part of their proposal. It is submitted to the region first; then it's submitted to the department in the central office. Their quality assurance process checks to make sure that everything is there. This was a large project with many items. Sometimes things get missed. Out of the 700-800 projects each year that pass through this quality assurance process, the Commission is seeing less than 8% of those projects—the other 92% don't have these types of errors. After the central office, they go to letting where, if things are found, there is an addendum put out.

Commissioner Rosendall interjected that, unfortunately in the business world if he bids a job and misses something, he eats it. There should be something in place to penalize them for mistakes—all that happens is they re-design the project and charge us more.

Mr. Polasek responded that one of the issues that we do have is the omissions sections in the consultant contracts. If that error cost us more money, even if there was a quantity increase that was missed, we would go back on the consultant for reimbursement. If it is an item that created a delay for the contractor and the contractor claims it, we go back on the consultant and recuperate that cost.

Commissioner Atkinson asked for clarification, if with Extra 2007-85 and the omission of the cast-in-place concrete for the pump house, we do have some recourse.

Mr. Polasek answered that it would have to be determined. If that would have been in the contract, would it have been a cheaper price. Having determined that it is going to become a cheaper price (this is a particular one where it's done by force account), where it's going to be the actual cost of what it is—the materials, equipment and labor cost. That's how it's going to be administered to make sure that we're not getting some exorbitant price.

Mr. Friend added that there is a consultant review process. If a consultant continues to have quality control issues with their plans, it is reflected through our evaluations and can reflect on their ability to work with us.

Commissioner Atkinson asked if it were fair to say, as they review these exhibits in the future, that they might see the extras and overruns and not know that at some future time the costs may be recouped.

Mr. Friend answered that that is quite possible. Cost recovery can take some time.

Commissioner Atkinson asked about Extra 2007-81 (Bridge removal and replacement...in the city of Flint, Genesee County).

Mr. Friend, after momentarily reviewing the write-up, answered that they found some saturated soils when they dug up the water main. It is hard for him to know what the unsuitable material was—clay, etc.

Commissioner Rosendall, regarding the cost recovery issue, asked if it were possible that something could be pulled together that shows how many projects were looked at for cost recovery, and how much money was actually recovered for 2006.

Mr. Friend inquired if it's on the MDOT system or the Local Agency system as well.

Commissioner Rosendall answered both.

Mr. Friend answered that the MDOT information would be available; the Local Agency information might be a little tougher, but he would get a report to him.

No other questions were forthcoming.

Chair Wahby entertained a motion. Motion was made by Commissioner Rosendall and supported by Commissioner Scalici to approve Exhibit B. Motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

Auditor's Report, MDOT Bureau of Aeronautics and Freight Services, Freight Services and Safety Division (Exhibit C) – Jerry Jones

Jerry Jones reported that the purpose of the audit was to provide an independent evaluation of the Freight Services and Safety Division's inspection processes, as further defined within the scope of the Audit. For the internal controls reviewed, we determined that the Division operated in substantial compliance with policies, procedures, and

applicable regulations. It is believed that the recommendations contained in this report will strengthen internal control, improve administrative practices, and strengthen compliance with applicable policies, procedures, and regulations. The Department concurred with the recommendations made, and that response is attached to the Report.

Mr. Jones recommended that the Commission accept the report and the response; then called on Commissioner Brosnan for her response.

Commissioner Brosnan stated she reviewed the audit report, discussed it with Mr. Jones, and is pleased to see that the department is in the process of implementing the recommendations. She recommended that the Commission accept the report and the response.

Chair Wahby entertained a motion. Motion was made by Commissioner Brosnan and supported by Commissioner Scalici to approve Exhibit C. Motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

Commissioner Atkinson stated that within the report are some deadlines/projections, and asked if there was a way for us to place those into a calendar so that we would know that this actually happens.

Mr. Jones responded that in the follow-up process they will report back to the Commission on the outstanding audits over the next six months and any open audit recommendations will be referred back to the original response from the Department and report on whether or not they accomplished them. Further, it has been discussed extensively with the Department to make sure that the projected dates they've provided can be lived up to.

Commissioner Brosnan interjected that this is standard procedure with any audit we have. Whenever there are dates off in the future, the Audit department keeps track of whether or not those dates are being met and whether or not the new methods are being implemented.

Chair Wahby added that this procedure that was established three or four years ago has worked very well.

No other questions were forthcoming.

IV. **PRESENTATIONS**

Asset Management Council 2006 Annual Report/Recommendations – Carmine Palombo

Mr. Palombo introduced members of the Council that were present. His presentation focused on:

Accomplishments

After 4 full years of activity we believe we have made good progress. We have established a central data repository, established a uniform condition rating scale, established working relationships with MPO/RPO, developed procedures and tools to implement asset management, established sound management principles (mission

statement, goals and objectives, three-year work program), developed a spirit of cooperation, a single database (47,000 miles), Investment Reporting Tool, RoadSoft, Pavement Condition Forecasting System (PCFS), Bridge Condition Forecasting System (BCFS), educational/training program, improved working relationships, and recognized nationally/internationally (we are being featured at this year's National Asset Management Conference in November).

In 2003, 99 agencies had some form of asset management. Today (2007), there are 260 agencies have implemented some form of this concept. In 2006, Legislature passed Act 338 which gives flexibility in use of funds for cities/villages that have an asset management process in place—9 cities currently have approved plans, 2 dozen more are in the process.

Partnerships

We have established a number of critical partnerships with cities, County Road Commissions, MDOT, townships, MPO's (generally enthusiastic and cooperative, very difficult to have done this without them, potential new roles), regions, and universities (Michigan Tech—expanding and evolving role, training local agencies; Michigan State University/NCPP—training only, role could be expanded, Midwest Pavement Preservation Partnership, Foundation for Pavement Preservation video; and, MRUTC-University of Wisconsin—\$20,000 for pooled fund study on training). At the end of September they lose their designation.

Education and Training

We have held about 115 types of training activities over the last 4 years and are planning on doing even more in the future. Over 1000 individuals have attended these training sessions and over 240 agencies. While we think that is good, it is important to note that represents only 39% of all the road agencies in the state.

PASER Collection

We are in the 5th year of collecting data on the federal-aid system and we can now do some trend analyses. We are also beginning to gather data on the local roads. We have a program where agencies collect the data themselves...following guideline we've developed...and then we reimburse them for part of the costs. We don't have very much data yet; only about 11% of the more than 80,000 local roads in the state.

Quality Control

According to the PASER condition data for 2006, there are 21,828 lane miles needing routine maintenance, 49,777 lane miles needing capital preventive maintenance, and 21,222 lane miles needing structural improvement. Our concern here is that we have as many miles in poor condition as we do in good condition. Further, in 2004 we had 11,499 lane miles in poor condition. That number has nearly doubled by 2006 (86% increase). Clearly, the overall condition of the federal-aid system is getting significantly worse.

Investment Reporting

Section 7 of the law establishing the Council requires all agencies to report on the work they have done in the past year and what they intend to do in the next three years. To

help agencies comply with this requirement the Council had the Center for Geographic Information develop an internet reporting tool. Last year was the first year it was in operation and compliance was not very good, even after we held 13 training sessions around the state (44% registered and reported data, 28% registered but no data was reported, 28% did not register or report data). Some agencies had difficulties submitting data; some modified it based on user input.

Because we did not get good compliance through the investment reporting tool, we decided to use the May 2005 Act 51 reports (MDOT and local roads): \$2.829 billion invested for routine maintenance (\$553.7 million), CPM (\$1,019.7 million), structural improvement (\$938.4 million), bridges (\$210.9 million), traffic and safety (\$106.4 million).

Strategic Models

The Council this last year tested 3 different strategic models—computerized models that will allow us to project future condition:

RoadSoft – is a powerful tool if you have all the data. It is valuable for local agencies, very data intensive for statewide network analysis, and very “work type” oriented. We don’t have all the data we need, but are working with local agencies to get better data. We have run the model but just on the state trunkline and it does seem to work well. One of the challenges we will face with this tool is being able to sustain quality data over time, especially on a voluntary basis.

Pavement Condition Forecasting System – staff developed this System because of the limitations with RoadSoft right now. This is a model that runs on the same principles as MDOT’s Bridge Condition Forecasting System. It isn’t as data intensive as RoadSoft. It uses a process that is easy to understand. The premise is simply: what is the probability that a road with a PASER rating of 8 will remain an 8 next year or drop to a 7? It is a good interim model until RoadSoft can get up and running on the entire federal aid network.

Using the 2005 PASER ratings and investment information, we ran this model. The results show that given the current levels of funding the federal aid system will decline from around 87% good/fair to just over 70% good/fair by 2016. Last year we reported to the Commission that in 2005 some 17,000 lane miles were improved...that is, their PASER ratings increased. By 2015, the projected total of lane miles that can be improved drops to 11,500. We project that by 2015 that 22,731 lane miles will need major rehabilitation or reconstruction; however we are only able to repair 876 lane miles.

Bridge Condition Forecasting System – this is the model that MDOT has used for a number of years (you have seen the results of that model when it comes to the state trunkline bridges). In our report we show both trunkline and non-trunkline bridges because they are funded differently.

The projected condition of the trunkline bridges is that they are increasing in good and fair condition. MDOT attributes this increase to a strong capital preventive maintenance program. The local bridges are projected to decline. It is believed that one of the reasons

for this is most local agencies do not engage in preventive maintenance, but wait until a bridge has to be replaced before they do work on it.

Challenges

As we look at the next several years there are a number of challenges facing the Council and asset management in Michigan: 1) We need to simplify (tried some things; didn't work like we thought they would, no template; first time in nation); 2) Provide additional training (develop video/DVD); 3) data collection (more efficient and reliable); and, 4) investment data (important for all projections).

Recommended Strategy

Act 499 of 2002 requires the Council to recommend a statewide asset management strategy to the Commission. We are prepared to recommend for approval two aspects of that strategy. Countries around the world that have implemented successful asset management programs have found that until they began providing teaching materials to local agencies, asset management was nothing more than an interesting theory. Once they began to distribute educational materials and trained agency personnel in how to do asset management they saw a difference in the overall condition of their systems.

We are asking approval of the following strategic element: That an on-going, comprehensive educational and training program is conducted that provides local and state agencies with the information needed for them to develop and implement their own asset management programs.

Chair Wahby entertained a motion. Motion was made by Commissioner Brosnan and supported by Commissioner Scalici to approve the aforementioned strategic element in the 2006 Annual Report. Motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

As we noted, many local agencies do not practice preventive maintenance when it comes to their bridges. The Local Bridge Program does accept projects that deal with preventive maintenance but few agencies submit such projects. We would work with the staff of the Local Bridge Program to develop training programs that will educate agencies on the benefits of preventive maintenance.

We are asking that you approve the following recommendation as part of our overall asset management strategy: That local agencies be encouraged to implement capital preventive maintenance activities for the bridges under their jurisdiction.

Commissioner Brosnan asked what the tangibles are in the second element.

Mr. Palombo answered that the second component is the training. In some instances we have local communities that don't yet know that preventive maintenance is now an eligible federal expense. We want to make sure that they understand that. The Local Bridge Program is set to allow that to occur. The other thing that we need to enforce is the concept that communities aren't waiting for their local bridges to fail before we improve them; as some people might think. The problem that we have there is the concept of taking the dollars we can get right now and being able to do preventive maintenance early in that process on the bridge. A lot of times in a local community

bridge funding is completely separated from road funding—they are considered to be separate entities. The education process is really part of getting them to think of this as one system. I envision that we will work with universities, etc. to try and put some of this together.

Commissioner Brosnan commented that federal money is available—we just need to better educate local units of government in how to obtain that money.

Mr. Palombo responded that that is part of it. Federal money is not just sitting there that isn't being spent. Federal money is there that is available for roads, but it is also available now to improve the condition of bridges. This is a decision that local communities need to make. They need to know that they have the ability to make that decision in order to even make the decision. Right now a lot of them don't even know that the decision is theirs.

Chair Wahby commented that this money is all in the same pot, and in effect, they have to determine how they want to spend it.

Mr. Palombo responded yes. The other issue is that there is such a back-log of old bridges that need to be improved with such a relatively speaking small amount of money. The decision has to be made to either spend the money to try and prolong bridges that are there, realizing that you will only be able to improve a small number of bridges entirely, or do you take that money and spread it over more bridges and do more good. It is a very difficult decision for local communities to make.

Chair Wahby asked if this is what they would be training them to do.

Mr. Palombo answered yes.

Commissioner Rosendall asked where the funding was coming from for the training.

Mr. Palombo answered that the Councils' budget comes from the Michigan Transportation fund. Our budget is in the neighborhood of \$1.5 million per year. It is used to do the data collection as well as education/training.

No other questions were forthcoming.

Chair Wahby entertained a motion. Motion was made by Commissioner Brosnan and supported by Commissioner Atkinson to approve the aforementioned recommendation in the 2006 Annual Report. Motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Wahby asked if any member of the audience wanted to address the Commission; none were forthcoming.

Chair Wahby asked if any Commissioner wanted to address the Commission; none were forthcoming.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Wahby declared the meeting adjourned at 10:23 a.m. for a 5-minute break to prepare for the Commission Workshop.

The next full meeting of the Michigan State Transportation Commission will be held on June 28, 2007, in the 1st floor Bureau of Aeronautics Auditorium in Lansing, Michigan, beginning at the hour of 9:00 a.m.

Frank E. Kelley
Commission Advisor