

Michigan
State Transportation Innovation Council
Meeting Minutes
March 26, 2021, 10:30 p.m. – 11:15 p.m.
Teams Virtual Meeting

Attendance

Present: Monica Ackerson (MRPA), Carol Aldrich (MDOT), Lisa Branch (MDOT), Gregg Brunner (MDOT), Ted Burch (FHWA), Eric Chappell (House of Representatives), Matt Chynoweth (MDOT), Tim Colling (MTU-LTAP), Daniel DeGraaf (MCA), Andrea Dewey (FHWA), Denise Donohue (CRA of MI), Wayne Harrall (Kent County), Tony Kratofil (MDOT), Chuck Mills (APAM), Doug Needham (MAA), Jack O'Malley (House of Representatives), Andy Pickard (FHWA), Steve Puuri (CRA of MI), Jean Ruestman (MDOT), Christine Simon (Senate), Brett Stanton (APAM), Brad Wieferich (MDOT)

Absent: Paul Ajegba (MDOT), Tom Barrett (Senate), Ron Brenke (ACEC), Ryan Buck (WATS), Glenn Bukoski (MITA), Mary Hoffmeyer (MDOT), Russell Jorgenson (FHWA), Bob Lindbeck (Alger County), Laura Mester (MDOT), Wayne Schoonover (GTCRC), Todd White (MDOT)

Guests: Tim Langholz (MI State Senate)

1) Welcome – Tony Kratofil and Ted Burch

Ted opened the meeting with a welcome statement and discussed the virtual public involvement (VPI), specifically the Innovator Magazine that featured the Michigan Department of Transportation's (MDOT) use of VPI and encourage attendees to check it out.

Tony thanked the attendees for their work and encouraged the continuous submission of innovative ideas to the Innovator Magazine, with a special focus on the Every Day Counts initiative.

2) March 17, 2021 STIC Highlights Presentations Follow-up – Brad Wieferich

- There was a good balance of attendees (approximately 100), topics, and content
- The big takeaway is how we market these meetings
- The next meeting will be in September 2021
- Attendees are encouraged to spread the word about these meetings to both the private and public sectors

Dan DeGraaf – Market the meetings with a virtual component by recording the meetings for publication on YouTube. We live in a society of “quick access” and this would garner more views over time.

Jean Ruestman – Communicate to expand focus to multi-modal innovations (rail, aeronautics, etc.) and not just on highways.

Denise Donahue – Participation in virtual meetings is decreasing as folks are eager to get back to work where there is more face-to-face interaction. Virtual meetings tend to be flat, go long, make it more difficult to read non-verbal communication and there is less engagement and focus.

Tim Colling – Agrees with Denise and prefers person-to-person contact.

Brad – Will consider the format for future meetings. Official call for submission of ideas will occur in June, but ideas can be submitted at any time. The final agenda should be completed in August.

Ted – Would like to see a marketing or communication representative in the State Transportation Innovation Council (STIC) membership.

Tony – Our current members represent a constituency and are highly encouraged to share within their own networks.

Carol Aldrich – There has been low attendance by folks outside of MDOT and she would like to see members forwarding the meeting notices on to others to help increase attendance.

Andy Pickard – The topic of marketing has come up considerably over the past two years. He connected Carol to a marketing contact at Turner Fairbanks and encouraged her to keep that relationship going.

Wayne Harrell – There have been a lot of conflicting priorities and virtual meetings are getting overlooked.

Christine Simon – Seconds Dan's comments. Much of the time, the legislature is in session when these meetings are scheduled. Bite-sized video clips would be very beneficial and a good resource.

Tony – Each individual presentation can be broken down into smaller topics and made searchable for viewing.

Carol – MDOT Research Administration is currently working on some research videos, but there is a lot of work involved and things to consider such as the Americans with Disabilities Act and accessibility when creating a video for posting online. We love our videos, but they can be challenging.

Action Item(s): *Brad will reach out to MDOT's Communications staff to discuss what would be involved in posting videos to YouTube.*

Brad will expand his calendar search and take into consideration those times when more folks are available for future meetings.

3) Existing STIC Project Statuses – Carol Aldrich

Carol – Shared project spreadsheet with attendees and gave status updates on projects along with help from Steve Puuri and Tim Colling.

- 2018 Local Warranty – Final report has been completed by the Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) and submitted to MDOT Local Agency Programs.
- 2019 Virtual Public Involvement Best Practices – Kim Zimmer received a draft guidebook (user friendly, plenty of resources) from HNTB. The book is being reviewed and the final document will be ready in a few weeks.
- 2019 Cone Penetration Testing (CPT) Equipment – The equipment has been purchased and was presented at the STIC Highlights Workshop. They have used at 12 different sites around Michigan over the past year and have seen time and personnel savings.
- 2020 CPT Training and Peer Exchange – MDOT would like to have a face-to-face training and peer exchange so they are planning for 2022 or if things open up earlier in Michigan, they will proceed with it in 2021.
- 2020 Local Roads Research Board Peer Exchange – Steve Puuri would like to see a live event. The desired date would be in July, with a late summer backup. Venues are being explored, and once obligated, let him know and he will move forward. Denise is researching venues in Grand Rapids as the hotels and airport selections are more abundant. Once dates are confirmed, Tim will send out invites.
- 2020 UAS Program – Currently vendors are being scored and the project will be obligated soon so equipment and guidelines can proceed forward.
- 2021 Local Emergency Response Playbook – Steve is ready to obligate and hopes to move forward soon. Item is currently on the back burner, but he has an action plan. Looking at a fall timeline. Denise – Eager to move ahead and has discussed this with the legislature on three occasions. Looking at the holistic picture. Gregg Brunner – Currently working on coordinating things.

Ted – Approximately \$53,000 has been awarded thus far, and there is still plenty of money left to award. It is a good idea to submit ideas now.

Action Item(s): *Carol to share the VPI report at a future STIC meeting.*

Carol to post the final reports to the website.

Denise to instruct Tim to send out invites once she receives confirmed dates.

4) Open Discussion

None.