

DCTA MEMBERSHIP MEETING Minutes
September 22, 2021
Via zoom

Towns Present: Berry, Black Earth, Blue Mounds, Bristol, Cottage Grove, Dane, Dunkirk, Middleton, Oregon, Primrose, Springfield, Verona, Westport.

Also Present: Representative Will Penterman - 37th District, Dane County Supervisor Melissa Ratcliff, Colleen Hoesly, MPO, and Renee Lauber, DCTA Executive Director.

Meeting called to order 7:04 pm by DCTA President Derr.

Approval of May 19, 2021 Annual Meeting minutes

Motion: Gibson/Olson. Approve minutes. Carried.

Greater Madison Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) presentation/discussion

Colleen Hoesly, MPO Transportation Planner, gave a detailed presentation the MPO's transportation planning work. 85% of their budget is covered by Federal and State funding requiring a 15% local match. The last MPO request for local municipal funding was sent in 2012. One factor behind the recent request was that the MPO couldn't use all of its federal match recently because of lack of local matching funds.

Q: Will the MPO boundaries change with the 2020 census data?

A: We are not expecting that much of a change.

Q: What kind of local contribution does the MPO expect?

A: For most of the towns the amount is from mid hundreds to low thousands.

Q: The Policy Board recently made comments regarding staff obligations to contributing versus non-contributing municipalities. Will non contributing towns be "out on the doorstep"?

A: Some MPO programs do look at funding. Currently our MPO has no requirement. Not paying is not weighted against an application. Other MPOs are set up so that non paying municipalities are not allowed a seat on the policy board or allowed certain services. That is not being considered at this time.

Q: Does the MPO provide any services to local communities like CARPC does?

A: We have not done much of that in the past but we have talked about it. If that is an area you are interested in we can look at our work program. I can communicate that to our executive director.

Q: Has the MPO done any studies in the last 12 to 18 months regarding working from home.

A: We have conducted 2 telework studies. We see a big desire still for telework. We also see a hybrid where people are working from home 2 to 4 days a week. Now what we are seeing with hybrid working they are trying to cluster their other errands around the trip to work so we are hoping to see lessening of congestion and air pollution as a result of that.

Discussion and Q and A led by Attorney Joe Ruth, Wisconsin Towns Association (WTA), on the WTA legislative agenda and ARPA funding.

Attorney Ruth gave a presentation on ARPA funding. [Link to presentation.](#) Targeted patience – describes how WTA would like towns to respond to this funding opportunity. It is not like the CARES Act where towns had a short window of time to use it. Slow down, be diligent, have listening sessions or discussions to figure out your priorities and are those uses eligible.

The opportunity to replace lost public sector revenue is likely going to be the most important category for towns. It isn't as simple as did you lose money this year. Instead, the federal government has a formula of what they say lost revenue is. You are comparing actual revenue to what they call "counterfactual revenue". The formula for this and links to spreadsheets that help calculate this is detailed in the presentation.

Q: Are towns allowed to go back and award premium pay?

A: For premium pay this is retrospective going back to March 2020. You can give pay for previous elections. For other categories it is prospective only.

WTA has asked for clarification regarding allowed investment in water and sewer. The rural equivalent of some systems needs to be clarified. Work on culverts and ditches are not clear at this point

Broadband to unserved and underserved households and businesses are eligible. Many towns are thinking of this for a use of the money. If you think broadband is going to be the way you spend the money. I would start the conversation with others and try to collaborate. Start the conversation with providers and the county and neighboring municipalities. Combine efforts in a grant application. You can use this money to be a local cost share in a Federal or state grant application (usually you could not do that). WI is currently doing a program to help subsidize broadband service costs – towns could spend money on that. Dane County currently has a Broadband Task Force working on exactly this. Supervisor Melissa Ratcliff spoke about the initiative and a letter that should go out to towns next month talking about the work of the Task Force and asking municipalities to set aside some ARPA funding for broadband use.

The narrative on how towns report expenditures was discussed. It is going to be very important because many people in Washington don't understand local governments. Documentation with a good narrative will also help with town memory regarding why/how expenditures were justified. If there is an audit, (seen as unlikely) towns will need to justify their reasoning. Get that all in writing. The board meeting minutes would be a good place to add the rationale for approval.

Once a year in October towns will have to submit an expenditure report. We don't know if that will be scrutinized at all. Audits are not required unless to receive a total of \$750,000 in total federal aid.

Q: Is federal bridge aid included in the \$750,000?

A: I believe that federal bridge aid is included in the \$750,000

WTA expects the final rule out to be out in the next few weeks.

Towns have until the end of 2024 to obligate the money and 2026 to spend it.

If you need help you can use the money for administrative costs to help make sure the money is spent correctly or other outside oversight costs.

Updates from DCTA appointees on: Redistricting Commission, Broad Band Task Force, CARPC, Lakes and Watershed, DaneCom, Yahara Clean Compact and MMSD.

Redistricting Commission: Tom Wilson reported that the Commission will be recommending 3 maps to the County Board soon. Most of the comments on the website are from towns. Kudos to the DCTA for getting the word out and the comments in. There will be a virtual public hearing at 7 pm tomorrow night. It is not clear what will happen at the state legislative level with the maps.

Q: What is the rationale of using school district lines.

A: School districts are usually a community of interest as people gather and identify around sports and schools. And because of school district elections and to make it easier on clerks administrating elections.

Broadband Task Force – Supervisor Ratcliff noted and that Dane County has set aside 5 million for Broadband. A joint letter from the Task Force, DCTA and DCCVA will hopefully be going out next month asking towns to set aside money for broadband. Jerry noted that towns in Dane County have a total of \$7.5 million in ARPA funding. Q: What is being done to get accurate coverage maps? A: That topic is on the next Task Force meeting agenda.

DaneCom Governing Board – Supervisor Ratcliff is on the Governing Board. They have not met in quite some time. There have been no complaints – nothing to report.

Yahara Clean Compact: Tom Wilson reported that the last meeting talked about actions for agriculture and developers. There is still a good amount of work to do on this. Overall recommendations need to be better organized and prioritized and reworded. I think they will take this all to heart and hopefully there will be a document that is sensical and worded properly and hopefully people will want to try to create these programs.

MMSD – Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District: Tom Wilson reported on equipment and construction improvement needs and a corresponding need to increase rates. The Commission can't do 10 to 20% rate increase to cover costs. It plans to increase the rates for new development and development fees, use reserves and have a 6% general rate increase. There is a budget hearing next month and info is on the MMSD website. Tom praised adaptive management's work on phosphorus reduction that is helping to keep rates down.

Motion: Wilson/Gibson. To adjourn. Carried.