

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING NOVEMBER 10, 2020 ZOOM CONFERENCE CALL

****MINUTES****

ATTENDEES:

Sara Baker, Commissioner, Ada County Highway District, via telephone
Elaine Clegg, Councilmember, City of Boise, **Chair**, via telephone
Jay Gibbons, Commissioner, Canyon Highway District #4, via telephone
Kendra Kenyon, Commissioner, Ada County, via telephone
Debbie Kling, Mayor, City of Nampa, **Secretary-Treasurer**, via telephone
Garret Nancolas, Mayor, City of Caldwell, **Chair Elect**, via telephone
Robert Simison, Mayor, City of Meridian, via telephone
Joe Stear, Mayor, City of Kuna, **Vice Chair**, via telephone

MEMBERS ABSENT: Tom Dale, Commissioner, Canyon County
Jason Pierce, Mayor, City of Eagle
Steve Rule, Mayor, City of Middleton

OTHERS PRESENT: Ken Burgess, Veritas Advisors, via telephone
Brent Moore, Ada County, via telephone
Meg Larsen, Community Planning Association, via telephone
Amy Luft, Community Planning Association, via telephone
Matt Stoll, Executive Director, Community Planning Association, via telephone
Toni Tisdale, Community Planning Association, via telephone
Hailey Townsend, Community Planning Association, via telephone
Dave Wallace, Ada County Highway District, via telephone

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Elaine Clegg called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m.

OPEN DISCUSSION/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Stear announced that Jace Hellman will be the Interim Planning and Zoning Director for the City of Kuna. Matt Stoll announced that the COMPASS BUILD Grant application for US 20/26 did not get chosen for funding this year; COMPASS will reapply in 2021.

CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approve October 13, 2020, Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Sara Baker moved and Joe Stear seconded approval of the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS

A. Establish December 21, 2020, COMPASS Board Annual Meeting Agenda

Matt Stoll presented staff proposed Agenda Items 1-20 for the December 21, 2020, COMPASS Board of Directors' meeting.

After discussion, **Joe Stear moved and Debbie Kling seconded approval of Agenda Items 1-20 for the December 21, 2020, COMPASS Board of Directors' meeting as presented, with the edit of a Transportation Improvement Program amendment to be added to the final agenda. Matt Stoll has the latitude to amend the agenda as necessary. Motion passed unanimously.**

B. Recommend COMPASS Board Officer Slate for Annual Meeting

Matt Stoll reviewed the nomination received for the position of Secretary-Treasurer and the recommended 2021 COMPASS Board officers slate for approval at the December 21, 2020, COMPASS Board annual meeting:

Garret Nancolas, Chair; Joe Stear, Chair Elect; Debbie Kling, Vice Chair; Mary May, Secretary/Treasurer; and Elaine Clegg, Immediate Past Chair.

After discussion, **Sara Baker moved and Garret Nancolas seconded to recommend the 2021 COMPASS Board officer slate as presented for COMPASS Board approval. Motion passed unanimously.**

C. Adopt Amendment to the FY2020-2026 and FY2021-2027 Regional Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs)

Toni Tisdale presented a resolution amending the FY2020-2026 and FY2021-2027 TIPs to add a project for Valley Regional Transit (VRT), increase a project for VRT, and increase a project for the Ada County Highway District.

After discussion, **Garret Nancolas moved and Joe Stear seconded adoption of Resolution 04-2021 amending the FY2020-2026 and FY2021-2027 TIPs as presented. Motion passed unanimously.**

D. Recommend 2021 Federal Transportation Policy Positions for COMPASS Board Approval

Ken Burgess presented proposed 2021 federal transportation policy positions for COMPASS Board approval.

COMPASS encourages long-term reauthorization of the FAST Act.

The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act has been extended by Congress and expires September 30, 2021. Consistent federal investment through a new long-term surface transportation reauthorization, developed in consultation with federal, state, and local partners, would allow local governments to address much-needed infrastructure improvements. Any new reauthorization must adequately reflect the role local governments play in the national transportation network.

- Provide more direct funding to local governments and increase local decision-making authority: The FAST Act made some progress toward more direct funding to local governments, while placing greater responsibility on those entities to develop and meet

system performance goals. COMPASS encourages more direct allocation and flexibility to regions, MPOs, cities, and counties with transportation infrastructure responsibilities.

- Maintain and increase set-aside for off-system bridges: Nearly eighty percent of the nation's bridges are the responsibility of local entities (not on the federal-aid highway system). This funding is needed for local entities to safely operate and maintain these bridge structures.
- Streamline the federal permitting process (One Federal Decision): COMPASS supports the streamlining of the federal transportation project delivery process to facilitate timely construction of federally funded projects and reduce project delays and expense.
- Increase federal funding for public transportation: Public transportation providers in both urban and rural areas of Idaho operate on very limited funding. Congress should provide more robust growth in federal public transportation programs to help public transportation systems meet the needs of their communities.
- Maintain federal support for non-motorized transportation options: Encouragement to participate in, and incentives to provide safe bicycle and pedestrian mobility options should remain a priority for Congress. Federally funded transportation projects should incorporate safe bicycle and pedestrian pathways.
- Support maintaining fiscal constraint requirement on long-range plans: Long range transportation plans are required to be limited to projects that can be completed with the level of funding reasonably expected to be available. This is a responsible approach to transportation planning, and mitigates unreasonable expectations that projects could be completed when funding is inadequate. COMPASS opposes eliminating the fiscal restraint requirements for long-range plans.

Congress must solve the perennial Highway Trust Fund funding problem in a permanent, meaningful way, eliminating the need for short-term infusion of general fund dollars. Reauthorization proposals must address HTF funding to meet national transportation demands.

- Support federal fuel excise tax increase: The federal fuel tax has not been increased since 1993 (27 years), and remains the most readily available "user-pay" solution to stabilizing the Highway Trust Fund.
- Index federal fuel tax to rate of inflation: Indexing the motor fuels tax to rate of inflation will mitigate many of the political challenges associated with funding the Highway Trust Fund into the future.
- Add additional Road User Charge concepts: Improvements in fuel efficiency and development of alternative fuel vehicles have a negative effect on the Highway Trust Fund. Additional user fee concepts such as a mileage-based user fees, are necessary to capture evolving trends and changes in relation to transportation infrastructure funding.
- Rail Corridor Use: **COMPASS urges Congress and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to ensure the expectations set in the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970 (RPSA) for reasonable cooperation between intercity passenger rail providers and railroad companies is upheld.** Agreements for local use of rail owned by rail companies should not be subjected to unreasonable compensation requests and unjustifiable delay, and the FRA should utilize their authority to achieve the intent of law.

- Resume Amtrak Passenger Rail Service: COMPASS encourages Congress to provide the necessary tools and funding to study the feasibility of resuming AMTRAK's "Pioneer Route" passenger rail service to the Treasure Valley. The Pioneer Route provided varying service from Seattle to Denver, through Portland, Boise, and Salt Lake City for twenty years until it was discontinued in 1997. Given the recent economic and population growth of these areas of the Northwest, it is reasonable to study the feasibility of resuming the Pioneer Line passenger rail service.

After discussion, **Debbie Kling moved and Kendra Kenyon seconded to recommend the 2021 federal transportation policy positions for the COMPASS Board of Directors' approval at the December 21, 2020, meeting.**

E. Recommend 2021 State Legislative Policy Positions for COMPASS Board Approval

Ken Burgess presented 2021 Idaho legislative session position statements for COMPASS Board approval.

COMPASS supports increasing state and local transportation revenue.

Idaho's current transportation funding level remains inadequate to address the state's needs. State and local transportation entities still face critical funding shortfalls for maintenance and expansion projects.

- Increase state motor fuels excise tax: The state fuel excise tax is currently the most effective "user-fee" mechanism available to secure additional adequate funding for state and local transportation needs. COMPASS supports increasing the state fuel excise tax to meet the infrastructure needs of Idahoans, reduce congestion, increase safety, and improve the flow of freight.
- Index state fuels excise tax to rate of inflation: Indexing the state fuels tax to rate of inflation would mitigate the challenges of increasing costs of construction over time, and the perceived political risk of active rate changes on the part of the legislature.
- Consider alternative user-charge concepts: New automotive technologies and increased fuel efficiency necessitate expanding transportation user-fee concepts beyond fuel excise tax and automobile registration. A mileage-based user fee is reasonable to ensure all users of Idaho's roads and bridges pay a share of those costs.
- Reinstitute Strategic Initiatives "surplus eliminator" provision for transportation: The Strategic Initiatives funding mechanism proved to be a useful mechanism for state and local maintenance projects. COMPASS supports reinstating this transportation funding mechanism and maintaining a 60-40 state/local share of those funds.

Support Local Option Sales Tax Authority.

Local Option Sales Tax Authority legislation could provide local units of government a tool to request supplemental infrastructure revenue for specific projects as approved by voters. COMPASS recognizes the value of such a tool to enhance roadway and/or transit projects to the benefit of our region.

Support dedicated funding source for public transportation.

Idaho is one of few states in the country that does not provide a dedicated funding source for public transportation needs. As the population of the state and region continues to grow and diversify, both urban and rural public transportation entities struggle to meet the mobility needs of their communities.

Support statutory authority to implement High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes.

Current statutory language restricts locations in which HOV lanes may be utilized.

Support dedicated funding for safe, community-oriented bicycle and pedestrian options.

Safe community and neighborhood-oriented bicycle and pedestrian options should be a priority for the state.

Support implementation of a weight/distance fee for heavy commercial and farm vehicles.

COMPASS supports implementation of a mileage-based fee structure for heavy vehicles travelling on state and local roadways to include out-of-state vehicles travelling through the state. Heavier axle weights exert proportionately more wear on Idaho roadways. An updated fee structure for heavier vehicles should account for the maintenance costs of such wear.

COMPASS supports realistic, sustainable homeowner property tax relief that still allows local taxing districts the ability to deliver services the community needs and expects. COMPASS recognizes that recent property tax increases have placed a burden on homeowners in the region. Any potential property tax relief measures should strike a reasonable balance between limiting property owners' taxes and providing local taxing districts the ability to deliver infrastructure and services the community expects and needs.

After discussion, **Debbie Kling moved and Garret Nancolas seconded to amend the position, "COMPASS supports realistic, sustainable homeowner property tax relief that still allows local taxing districts the ability to deliver services the community needs and expects."** The changes included:

Remove the second two sentences and change the position to read, "COMPASS supports realistic, sustainable property tax reform that still allows local taxing districts the ability to deliver infrastructure and services the community needs and expects."

A substitute motion was made; Sara Baker moved and Joe Stear seconded to amend the position to say:

"COMPASS supports realistic, sustainable homeowner property tax reform that still allows local taxing districts the ability to deliver infrastructure and services the community needs and expects."

The substitute motion failed. The original motion to amend the position passed unanimously.

Sara Baker moved and Debbie Kling seconded to recommend the proposed 2021 Idaho legislative session position statements for COMPASS Board approval as presented with the changes to the final position statement. Motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Status Report – Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (Memo Only)

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Elaine Clegg adjourned the meeting at 2:23 p.m.

Approved this 9th day of February 2021.

By: _____
Garret Nancolas, Chair
Community Planning Association of
Southwest Idaho

Attest:

By: _____
Matthew J. Stoll, Executive Director
Community Planning Association of
Southwest Idaho

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