

Brandi Robertson
TAC Chair

Beth Bucksot
TCC Chair



Chadwick Howard
TAC Vice-Chair

Chad Strawn
TCC Vice-Chair

DERPO TAC Meeting, January 30, 2023; 10:00am

Attendance:

Councilman Bill Taylor – Town of Morehead City
Commissioner Candy Bohmert – Pamlico County
Commissioner James Harper – Jones County
Merrie Jo Alcoke – NC Board of Transportation
Commissioner Chadwick Howard – Craven County, Vice Chair

Becca Eversole – Eastern Carolina Council Senior Transportation Planner
Len White – NCDOT Division 2 Planning Engineer
Amanda Killian – NCDOT Transportation Planning Division
Kim Nguyen – NCDOT Integrated Mobility Division
Stephanie Ayers – N.C. State Ports Authority

Minutes for TAC

Call to Order – *DERPO Director Becca Eversole opened the meeting at 10:02am.*

- 1. Ethics Awareness & Conflict of Interest Statement** – *no conflicts. Ms. Eversole reminded TAC members of their required ethics paperwork.*
- 2. Public Comment Period** – *no public comments.*
- 3. ACTION: Approval of Agenda**
The agenda for today’s meeting was presented for approval.
A motion to approve the agenda was made by Merrie Jo Alcoke, seconded by James Harper, and approved unanimously.
- 4. ACTION: Approval of Minutes**
Minutes of the September 26, 2023, meeting was presented for approval.
A motion to approve minutes from the previous meeting was made by Candy Bohmert, seconded by James Harper, and approved unanimously.

5. ACTION: Election of New Officers

As it was the first TCC meeting of 2024, elections for Chair and Vice Chair were held. Our current chair, Brandi Robertson, and Vice Chair, Chadwick Howard, were both eligible for reelection.

James Harper renominated Commissioner Robertson as TAC Chair. A second was made by Chadwick Howard, and Commissioner Robertson was reelected by a unanimous vote. Candy Bohmert renominated Commissioner Howard as TAC Vice Chair, and he accepted the nomination. A second was made by Commissioner Harper, and Commissioner Howard was elected by a unanimous vote.

6. DERPO Staff Report – Becca Eversole

a. Carbon Reduction Program – *Ms. Eversole reminded the committee that DERPO had received CRP grants for Pollocksville and Atlantic Beach sidewalk projects; these projects combine for \$1 million of new bike/ped projects (including local matches). The submittal and award guidelines have changed, and projects can now be submitted at any time, with awards occurring quarterly instead of yearly. She also reminded the committee that as this is a federal program, it requires a 20% local match and up-front funds, as it is a reimbursement program.*

b. NCDOT Special Planning Grants – *Ms. Eversole spoke about the SPR program, that allows for special studies for projects such as corridor studies. DERPO would serve as the project lead, so a financial agreement between the community and ECC would be required to fund up-front costs. There would also be a local match of 5%. The deadline for SPR applications is February 29.*

c. ECC STIP/SPOT Training – *Ms. Eversole, along with her colleague Mickey Anderson of the Eastern Carolina RPO, will be leading a half-day class on the STIP and the SPOT process for both staff and elected officials on February 13. Anyone new to the process or in need of a refresher is encouraged to attend. A registration link was provided last week.*

d. Other DERPO Updates – *Work on SPOT 7.0 continues, and the SPOT Office has decided to have data review throughout the evaluation process instead of near the end of the period. A draft methodology for local input points will be presented for approval at the March meetings, and quantitative scores should be released by the end of May. Ms. Eversole also stated that she would be attending upcoming meetings of the Hwy 17/64 Association, the Carteret County CTP Steering Committee, and the N.C. Association of RPO Directors.*

7. NCDOT Reports

a. Division 2 – *Len White of NCDOT Division 2 gave updates on current projects underway in the DERPO region. The Havelock Bypass is 75% complete with an anticipated completion date near the end of this year. There will be rerouting on US 70 in relation to the bypass project, and there will be an update to the project website. The James City upgrades to US 70/Future I-42 is 40% complete with an anticipated completion date near the end of 2025. The US 70 upgrade project to connect these two projects, R-5777C, is slated to begin construction in 2025 and take about 1.5 years to complete. Right of way and utility work is underway for the NC 43 Connector to MLK Blvd in New Bern. Work continues with Duke Energy on the Newport River Bridge in*

Morehead City to reroute the power lines. Also in Morehead City, an alternative should be selected for the Bridges St. Extension project soon. Wetland delineation is underway, and a new project website should soon be up and running. He also noted that Jeremy Stroud is the new Division 2 Engineer. James Harper asked about a project in Jones County to add ADA ramps to sidewalks, and Mr. White stated that he'd get back with him. Chadwick Howard thanked Mr. Stroud for his presentation in Carolina Pines.

b. Transportation Planning Division – Amanda Killian of NCDOT TPD spoke about NCDOT receiving \$1.1 billion from USDOT to purchase the “S Line,” which in coordination with Virginia’s DRPT will allow for quicker rail trips between Raleigh and Richmond. The next Carteret County CTP steering committee meeting will be on February 7.

c. Integrated Mobility Division – Kim Nguyen of NCDOT IMD spoke about the division’s Bike Helmet initiative; the application is open. She updated the committee on the upcoming Western Carteret Bike and Pedestrian Plan, which would soon kick off.

8. **ACTION: Approve Draft FY 2025 Planning Work Program - Becca Eversole**
The Planning Work Program (PWP) is the annual budget for the Down East RPO and lays out DERPO’s priorities in the new fiscal year. Ms. Eversole presented a draft of the document and detailed changes from this fiscal year in priorities, including an increase in indirect costs. A motion to approve the draft PWP was made by Merrie Jo Alcoke, seconded by James Harper, and approved unanimously.
9. **ACTION: Approve Resolution of Support for NC Ports Grant Application – Stephanie Ayers, NC Ports**
The North Carolina State Ports Authority is preparing an application to USDOT for a grant to modernize and revitalize their barge berths at the Port of Morehead City. Nutrien, who maintains a mining facility and chemical plant in Aurora, ships their products from these berths at Morehead City worldwide, and this planned modernization will extend the life of the barge berths for another fifty years. Ms. Ayers went into detail on why the grant was needed and the proposed work. Candy Bohmert asked if Nutrein would help pay for the project, and Ms. Ayers replied that the grant covers 100% of the costs. A motion to approve the resolution of support for the grant application was made by Commissioner Bohmert, seconded by Chadwick Howard, and approved unanimously.
10. **Other Business/Discussion – No further business or discussion.**
11. **Adjournment – Chadwick Howard adjourned the meeting at 10:32am.**