

# *Highway 25 Coalition*

## **Agenda**

Thursday, May 30, 2019

7:30 AM

***North Mississippi Room, Monticello City Hall***

1. Call to Order
2. Consideration of Adding Items to the Agenda
3. Consideration of Approval of February 28, 2019 Meeting Minutes
4. Treasurers Report
5. Recommendation on moving forward with joint planning efforts.
6. Discussion of 2019 member dues.
7. Staff and Member Updates
8. I94 Coalition Update
10. Other Updates
11. Adjourn

### **Future Meeting Agenda Items:**

- A. Development of a Financial Policy for Fund Balance
- B. Final Acceptance of the SRF Study
- C. Consideration of Approval of the 2019 Highway 25 Coalition Work Plan and Budget
- D. Consideration of Authorizing Expenditure for Development of Highway 25 Coalition Website
  1. Discussion on the ongoing maintenance of records and posting of coalition business.

**Highway 25 Coalition**  
Meeting Minutes – February 28, 2019  
7:30 AM  
North Mississippi Room, Monticello Community Center

Members Present - **City of Becker** – Greg Pruszinske; **Becker Township** – Brian Kolbinger; **City of Big Lake** – Raeanne Danielowski, Clay Wilfahrt, Hanna Klimmek, Gina Wolbeck; **Big Lake Township** – Bob Hofer and Steve Pflighaar; **City of Monticello** – Brian Stumpf, Lloyd Hilgart, Jeff O’Neill, Matt Leonard, Angela Schumann, and Rachel Leonard; **Sherburne County** – Tim Dolan, Steve Taylor, and Andrew Witter; and **Wright County** –Darek Vetsch and Virgil Hawkins.

Others Present: Stacy Morse from Congressman Emmer’s Office.

**1. Call to order.**

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 a.m.

**2. Consideration of adding items to the agenda.**

Motion made by Hofer to adopt the proposed agenda with the addition of Election of Officers to be discussed after No. 7. Seconded by Dolan, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

**3. Consideration of approval of meeting minutes from October 25, 2018.**

Motion made by Dolan to approve the October 25, 2018 Highway 25 Coalition Meeting Minutes as presented. Seconded by Hofer, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

**4. Treasurers Report**

Bob Hofer presented the February 2019 Treasurer’s Report showing a cash balance of \$223,617.63.

Motion made by Kolbinger to accept the February 2019 Treasurers Report. Seconded by Vetsch, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

**5. Highway 25 Area Study – Consideration of Preferred River Crossing Options (tabled from 07/26/18 & 08/30/18 meetings)**

Chair Danielowski reintroduced Item No. 6 that was tabled at the July 26, 2018 meeting to allow the City of Monticello to provide data regarding Option E, tabled at the August 30, 2018 meeting to allow the City of Monticello time to review Option 2 until the September coalition meeting, and tabled at the October 25, 2018 meeting to allow time for Coalition Members to provide concerns on any of the options.

Members from Sherburne County, the City of Becker, the City of Big Lake, Becker Township, and Big Lake Township presented a letter stating the Boards collectively are fully engaged and supportive of the Highway 25 Coalition and its efforts. The letter states that it is critically important to improve the connectivity between TH 10 and I-94. It noted that goals were established and agreed to by all Coalition members to guide our process for the greater good of all the communities involved.

The City of Monticello presented a Resolution in support of an economic development analysis of TH 25 transportation improvements connecting I-94 to US 10.

Brian Stumpf presented further information on the City of Monticello Resolution noting that the City of Monticello is willing to look at Options A through E in a financially joint effort with the Coalition. Jeff O'Neill stated that a bridge crossing is inevitable, discussing that the whole region will benefit, and the importance of looking at it from an overall economic standpoint. O'Neill noted that Monticello is willing to bring option E back into the fold if land use, utilities, and economic components of the area are studied. Discussion was held on the proposed Google project in Becker which will benefit the region. Monticello doesn't want to obstruct something that is good for the area. O'Neill informed the Coalition that the Monticello City Council would like the Coalition to go the extra step and hire an independent third party planning entity to conduct an economic study of each of the options. O'Neill discussed the Coalitions cash balance, potential funding available from the Central MN Initiative Foundation, and additional membership allocations for 2019, noting that the Coalition does have enough resources to do a study. O'Neill stated that we must have an understanding of the transportation network noting that it's more than just a river crossing, it's a connection from I-94 to US 10.

Steve Taylor asked what the expected cost of the proposed study could be. O'Neill noted that the cost is unknown at this time, but would expect it to be close to what the Coalition paid for on the SRF study. It was discussed that an economic study could potentially cost \$100,000+ due to the complexity of the proposed study. Discussion was held on how far outside the scope an economic study would be from what SRF was going to do. It was discussed that it would serve as an add-on to the original study. It wouldn't undermine the study, but would curate an additional set of information. Matt Leonard discussed how a bridge crossing will impact local economies, noting that the NEPA process would only look at environmental impacts leaving a need for a study on economic benefits to the region as well. Data collected during this type of study could also be used for future grant applications.

Clay Wilfahrt questioned if the goal is to narrow down the options. O'Neill reviewed that the study will drive that, and that the end goal would be to get down to one option. Wilfahrt questioned why we would do the economic study first, questioning why it couldn't run with the rest of the information. Darek Vetsch clarified that both studies are quite expensive, expressing that they are looking for ideas that will benefit and address some of Monticello's concerns.

Tim Dolan clarified that the NEPA process would include all viable options, noting that we should focus on environmental first to eliminate options before we move on to the cost of an economic study. Vetsch stated that the Coalition should go into it as unified as possible. Dolan questioned why we would pay for a study on all options if some of them aren't environmentally viable, which can only be determined through the NEPA process. Monticello representatives stated that they are not supportive of Option E without an economic study being done.

Andrew Witter stated that if we are going to focus on the economic side of it, should we also be giving other environmental areas the same level of study. O'Neill stated that there is a huge private investment, development opportunities, utility concerns, and housing implications that surround Option E, noting that their community needs to have a good understanding of what impact Option E could have economically. Monticello is offering an overture to Sherburne County and the east side communities that they want to be in this

Coalition, and encouraged the group to allow this study to play out in an effort to keep the group together.

Dolan questioned that if we do decide to do the economic development study, how will the decision be made to move forward, specifically questioning what the threshold would be. O'Neill stated that they are not going to advocate our financial well-being, explaining that they are looking for reasons to support Option E. Vetsch stressed that there will be actionable information gained from an economic study including information on utilities and group planning in terms of residential, commercial, and industrial development noting that right now we are planning separately.

Raeanne Danielowski stated that our current study was supposed to get us to that same location, stressing that environmental impacts should be studied first as it carries the most weight. Danielowski stated her commitment to conduct the NEPA study first, continuing to work together, and considering the best interest of all entities. Vetsch stated that we need to start planning economically and cohesively. Danielowski questioned why we would conduct an economic development study on all five options when the environmental study could potentially kick out some of those options. O'Neill discussed that he feels the Central MN Initiative Foundation could potentially fund a good portion of study, possibly up to fifty percent. O'Neill also stressed that for Monticello, the economic study trumps the environmental study.

Dolan questioned what type of economic data Monticello would be opposed to regarding specific river crossings, and asked at what dollar figure does Monticello want to eliminate Option E. Vetsch clarified that they want to be able to assure their constituents that Option E would benefit them. Dolan asked for clarification on if Monticello essentially just wants an economic study done on Option E. Stumpf clarified that the study would benefit all entities, not just Monticello.

Leonard stated that economic development is a factor in the determination of the bridge placement. Monticello wants to get a return on their dollars, and questioned what the harm is with studying the economic impact. Leonard also discussed the County's Long Range Transportation Plan noting that Highway 25 is at capacity and we need to look at how to relieve traffic even past I-94.

Taylor recapped that Monticello has indicated that time is of the essence, but that the Coalition has tabled this item dating back to July 26<sup>th</sup> to allow further study. At what point do we need to make a decision. If we had made some kind of decision a year ago, option E might already be eliminated. Discussion was held on past conflict between the east and west side entities, and the need to become unified in our efforts. Danielowski discussed that members felt they were acting in a unified capacity when conducting the bridge crossing study through SRF and expected that the relationship would continue entering into the NEPA process.

Dolan asked if there is a possibility to close out the study without moving forward with the NEPA process to have a usable study for each entity to use on its own, and to allow Monticello to do whatever study they want at their own expense. After that, the Coalition can then determine if we should move forward with NEPA. Witter reviewed that the counties and some cities have already started their own studies using their own funds. Dolan expressed that he doesn't want his constituents to have to fund a study that Monticello solely wants to do to for their own benefit. Leonard stated that we could

possibly resurrect the NEPA study in the future. Discussion was held on what data should be available from the SRF study.

Motion by Dolan to accept the SRF study as it sits and to meet as a group when the study is closed out to review and possibly accept the final report. Seconded by Kolbinger, unanimous ayes.

The Coalition directed the City of Monticello to collect more information on conducting an economic study of all options and to report back at the next meeting. Angela Schumann asked for feedback from Sherburne County on finalizing the economic study plan. Dan Weber offered to assist the City of Monticello.

**6. *Consideration of Approval of the 2019 Highway 25 Coalition Work Plan and Budget (tabled from 07/26/18, 08/30/18, and 10/25/18 meetings)***

Item was tabled until the next meeting.

**7. *Consideration of Authorizing Expenditure for Development of Highway 25 Coalition Website (tabled from 07/26/18 & 08/30/18 meetings)***

Rachel Leonard stated that the website quote obtained last year is no longer valid and asked if the Coalition would like staff to seek a new quote. The general consensus of the Coalition was that they are open to obtaining new quotes. Staff will bring results back to the next meeting.

**8. *Election of Officers***

Motion by Stumpf to nominate Darek Vetsch as the Chair of the Highway 25 Coalition. Seconded by Dolan, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Motion by Dolan to nominate Brian Stumpf as the Vice Chair of the Highway 25 Coalition. Seconded by Danielowski, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

**9. *Transportation and Related Economic Development/Land Use Updates***

No updates given due to time constraints.

**10. *I94 Coalition Update***

No update given.

**11. *Other Updates***

No other updates given.

**12. *Adjourn***

Chair Vetsch adjourned the meeting at 8:35 a.m.

The next Highway 25 Coalition meeting is scheduled to be held on Thursday, March 28, 2019 at 7:30 a.m. in the North Mississippi Room at Monticello City Hall.

5/23/2019

801 HWY 25 CORRIDOR TRANSP STUDY

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance</u>
<b>Receipts:</b>			
Total Revenues	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<b>Other Financing Sources:</b>			
Total Other Financing Sources	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<b>Disbursements:</b>			
Total Disbursements	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<b>Other Financing Uses:</b>			
Total Other Financing Uses	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Beginning Cash Balance		223,617.63	
Total Receipts and Other Financing Sources		0.00	
Total Disbursements and Other Financing Uses		<u>0.00</u>	
Cash Balance as of 05/23/2019		223,617.63	