

Agenda and Notes: Central Mississippi River Regional Planning Partnership

September 26, 2019 ◊ 7:30 a.m. ([Partnership and Staff Roster](#))

Sherburne County Government Center - Board Room, 13880 Business Center Drive, Elk River, MN 55330

To join by phone: Dial 510-338-9438, Access Code: 624 716 716

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Topic	Action	Lead
<p>1. Welcome, call to order, and sign-in (Meeting Presentation)</p> <p><u>Notes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The meeting was called to order at 7:30 A.M. ● <u>Members Present</u> City of Big Lake: Seth Hansen City of Monticello: Jeff O’Neill, Brian Stumpf Minnesota Department of Transportation: Claudia Dumont Monticello Township: Bob Idziorek Sherburne County: Raeanne Danielowski, Tim Dolan, Marc Schneider, Dan Weber, Andrew Witter Wright County: Lee Kelly, Darek Vetsch <u>Others Present</u> Shannon Bye, Monticello Township Anne Carroll, Partnership Consultant, Carroll, Franck & Assoc. Barry Heikknen, Silver Creek Township Bruce Messelt, Sherburne County 	None	Chair
<p>2. Agenda</p> <p><u>Notes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Vetsch changed the order of the Agenda, moving Item 8, Schedule, to Item 5. ● Vetsch moved Item 7, SRF Study, to Item 6. ● Vetsch moved Item 5, Planning and Economic Development Request for Qualifications to Item 7. ● Vetsch moved Item Item 6, Pending Revised JPA, to Item 8. Stumpf moved to change the order of Agenda items as mentioned. Dolan seconded, and the motion carried unanimously. <p>Vetsch gave a brief synopsis of the history of the former Highway 25 Corridor Coalition, now renamed Central Mississippi Regional Planning Partnership (CMRP). Originally the goal was to address options for a future river crossing. A study done by SRF produced several options. In the past year, the group has developed a more regional planning focus and defined common goals regarding how to work together to achieve a river crossing that benefits all.</p> <p>There were no responses to the Request for Proposals, and the group will now issue a Request for Qualifications. The CMRP is also finalizing the SRF study.</p>	Review, revise, approve	Chair

<p>Today's discussion will also discuss updates to the Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) to shift from a focus on a bridge crossing to a regional planning crossing.</p>		
<p>3. Previous meeting draft notes: August 8, 2019 <u>Notes:</u> Hansen moved, seconded by Dolan, to approve the draft notes from 8-08-19. The motion carried unanimously.</p>	Review, revise, approve	Chair
<p>4. Treasurer's Report <u>Notes:</u> There was minimal activity during the last few weeks. Weber confirmed that he received the \$25,000 Initiative Foundation grant.</p>	Review, receive	Treasurer (Larry Alfords)
<p>5. Schedule: Schedule a discussion ASAP on the Partnership's workplan and budget, then determine whether members need to adjust their budgets for a possible increase in member dues.</p> <p>Vetsch is looking for an RFQ team to create a Work Plan for the remainder of 2019 through 2020. The Request for Qualifications is part of the schedule, including housekeeping of the CMRP website. The members of the Work Plan Committee are Jeff O'Neill, Clay Wilfahrt, Darek Vetsch, Anne Carroll as facilitator, Tim Dolan, and Marc Schneider.</p> <p>Vetsch said the finalized work plan will likely not come back until November 2019. Carroll said the plan is a framework and will be modified along the way. She advised the members to keep it open and flexible, and to update it based on what is discovered in the process. O'Neill said the primary goal is to get the plan done mid-year (ideally, by July) so each entity has numbers when planning their budgets. Vetsch added that the intent is to stay within the parameters already established. Most entities adopt budgets between August and September. Dolan moved to approve the Work Group members (O'Neill, Wilfahrt, Vetsch, Carroll, Dolan, and Schneider) for the Work Plan, seconded by Hansen. The motion carried unanimously.</p>		Chair
<p>6. SRF Study:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Appointed team of Dolan, Witter, Wilfahrt, Stumpf, O'Neill, Vetsch, and Danielowski worked with SRF to finalize the Study b. Update for Partnership current status of the SRF Study <p>Vetsch said action on the SRF Study item will be pushed off until the group receives virtual/hard copies prior to adopting the study. Witter provided an update. He is anticipating receipt of a draft document by the end of next week and will send it to the SRF Work Group (see above) for review. Witter asked them to submit feedback within two weeks. SRF requests a week to update the document with CMRP comments, with a completion date by the end of October. The informational flyer requested by CMRP regarding a summary of work completed is set to be done by the first of November. The flyer has grown from one to four pages. It contains key points regarding the current transportation system, future trends, and identifies ideas brought forth by the CMRP to be given</p>	Approve	Andrew Witter

<p>to elected officials and legislators as a takeaway. Carroll asked that it be formatted appropriately for posting on the CMRP website.</p> <p>Vetsch said the next CMRP meeting isn't until 10/24/19. Do they need approval before then? Witter said that timeline is fine. He is seeking comments from the SRF Work Group within the next three weeks, and SRF will take those comments and incorporate them into the final document.</p>		
<p>7. Planning and Economic Development Request for Qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Update on previous process and shift to RFQ: Further questions d. Partners: Reps update group on discussions with their home elected bodies e. Final draft RFQ: Review, revise, approve f. Proposed RFQ process: Review, revise, approve <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Initial reviewers are Liaison Team members + Weber ii. Interview team members are Liaison Team members + O'Neill, Hansen, Dolan, Stumpf or Vetsch, and Wilfahrt <p>Schneider expressed disappointment that the CMRP Liaison Team received no proposals with the recent issuance of the Request for Proposals (RFP). After conversing with several consultants, staff returned with a recommendation to do a Request for Qualifications. It retains the timeline established by the CMRP, and reduces submittal requirements for consultants. The RFP was too broad for potential consultants. Stated challenges were time and resources to bring proposals to CMRP. Once the RFQ was drafted, it was distributed among CMRP members, who presented it to their elected bodies and provided valuable feedback. In general, Members reported that the CMRP was perceived positively, and elected officials were supportive.</p> <p>Schneider said the RFQ is ready to go out. Timelines are included. The content stayed pretty consistent. It is a scaled-down version of the RFP. The document is smaller, making it easier for the consultants to respond. He reduced the scope details while retaining key priorities so the consultants can provide the CMRP with an approach for a regional study.</p> <p>Carroll said the content of the RFQ is based on previous conversations and issues identified for CMRP by consultants. Consultants do not want this study to harm their established relationships with entities or partners in the Region. The CMRP partners did not intend to do so, either, but that was not explicitly stated in the RFP. It is now formally stated in the RFQ, Page 4, that the Partnership is committed to protecting and maintaining existing relationships. This was a consistent concern among consultants.</p> <p>Carroll said the only other change was on page 2, the Background section, which states that the JPA was updated in September 2019. Completion will occur this fall.</p>	<p>Information</p> <p>Approve</p>	<p>Liaison Team</p>

<p>Dolan asked whether there would be value in waiting to release the RFQ until after the October meeting when the SRF study will hopefully be adopted. Carroll said some of the consulting firms expressed concern that delays in a resolution of the SRF study suggested an inability to function on the part of the Partnership. Since that is not the case, and the material will be available to them before a consultant is selected, that does not appear to be an issue. Unless the plan is to change the JPA dramatically, the current JPA stands.</p> <p>Discussion continued regarding determining whether the goal is to determine short- and long-term goals for the CMRP. Danielowski said there may be some things the Partnership does separately, but she envisions the group working together for long-term regional planning. Vetsch said it is important to have concrete goals versus just having a study. Dumont said the CMRP is trying to come up with a plan to form future actions and to guide land use, transportation, etc. The plan will help the CMRP move forward with actual implementation and development in the future. Dolan said it feels like the plan is defining the group without a clear definition of priorities, instead of the group defining the plan. The group went from the Highway 25 Corridor Coalition to a broader scope. The name has changed but the goals have not been defined accordingly.</p> <p>O’Neill said the public wants a river crossing, period. He questioned how the CMRP can explain the evolution to a broader scope until it is decided how to work together for the greater good. It is not clearly stated in the RFQ. Dolan said if it is not clear to the Partnership, it won’t be clear to the public. Danielowski said it is regional planning. Vetsch asked the meaning of ‘regional planning.’ What three goals does the Partnership want to accomplish? He didn’t feel everyone was on the same page.</p> <p>Carroll referred to the RFQ, pages 2-4 that discuss the Planning Framework. She said the CMRP went through exercises on priorities a few weeks ago and laid them out in detail in the RFP. The RFQ summarizes them under topics such as Critical Issues, Regional Trends, Challenges, and Options, and so on, which provide parameters. As the process continues, the CMRP will receive information and guidance that they will be asked to act upon as a Partnership and as individual entities. It is a long process. She suggested the CMRP schedule a goal-setting exercise with the selected consultant.</p> <p>Hansen moved to approve the RFQ, seconded by Stumpf. The motion carried unanimously.</p>		
<p>8. Pending Revised JPA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> g. Appointed team of O’Neill, Wilfahrt, Weber, Kelly, and Carroll updated the JPA to reflect current activities h. Review by attorneys indicated need to update the entire JPA; team did so jointly and in consultation with Partners i. Revised JPA for Partnership’s consideration is the result of that collaborative process 	<p>Approve</p>	<p>Appointed team</p>

Weber reported that the group assigned to revise the Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) provided a draft to Sherburne and Wright County attorneys. The changes they suggested were more substantial than expected and will require more time. A finalized draft will be brought to the next CMRP meeting.

Vetsch added that outside of the name change from Highway 25 Corridor Coalition to the Central Mississippi River Regional Planning Partnership (CMRP), there are other suggested changes regarding the voting structure and requirements to add new members to the group. He solicited input from members regarding those two issues. Vetsch said currently one member on each side of the river must vote in favor of a motion for any initiative to move forward.

Stumpf asked whether the CMRP will extend membership to Monticello Township. They have had representatives attend the meetings.

Dolan expressed concern that there haven't been conversations about including other entities since the scope for CMRP expanded to a regional focus. He wants to make sure cities and townships such as Otsego, Elk River, and Monticello Township are included in the regional effort.

Carroll said the current Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) has six members. Five must vote in favor of adding anyone. There has to be support from both sides of the river. She asked for clarification regarding the minimum percentage to approve new members. Currently there must be 5/7ths in favor of a vote. O'Neill said the JPA states that one member of Wright County or Monticello has to vote for anything to pass. O'Neill said inclusion is important, but the question is how to frame the JPA so that the interests of every entity is considered.

Carroll clarified that paying membership in this JPA is not what determines inclusion or consideration in the planning sense. Stakeholder engagement is an inclusive concept. She hopes that no one in the CMRP feels that the only way a township or city has a say in the planning process is to have a seat at the table.

The group also discussed the membership payment structure and whether Sherburne and Wright Counties should split the costs since township budgets were more limited.

Danielowski said her understanding was that if one person on either side of the river says no to an action, it doesn't move forward. She feels that clause protects everyone, and does not see where the issue is.

Carroll brought the discussion back to voting rights as stated in Article II - Organization of the JPA, item 2.6 Voting: "Board actions will be determined by the majority of votes cast, however, at least one of the affirmative votes for any

action must be cast by Members located on opposite sides of the Mississippi River.”

Vetsch wanted to work through the concerns between the City of Monticello and Monticello Township before the JPA work is completed. He suggested giving new members a ⅓ vote. Stumpf said the full group should work through all these issues before sending the JPA to the small group for revision.

Lengthy discussion ensued regarding whether to allow Monticello Township into the CMRP, and the impact that could have on the annexation discussions between the City and the Township. O’Neill said inclusion is important, but the question is how to frame the JPA so that the interests of every entity is considered.

O’Neill said for the record that the City of Monticello would vote against adding Monticello Township to the CMRP based on those rules because the City wouldn’t want the Township to vote on this side of the river in opposition to the City and cause a motion to pass.

Vetsch said he would support their membership. This matter needs to be discussed. Hansen said the City and Township need to discuss this among themselves.

Bye said Monticello Township would likely object to having to pay to play, as well as having to pay to play and not be able to vote.

O’Neill said the orderly annexation guides the planning process and includes the major portion of this region. That is the premise under which the City has to operate. O’Neill said the City wants to be inclusive and work together as a community, but there isn’t equal standing between the City and the Township because of the presence of a pre-existing planning document.

Dolan said he has no problem with the current wording in the JPA regarding voting, but that is not how the CMRP solves this issue. He respects both positions. This group is not the place to force intergovernmental politics between entities on issues outside of the CMRP. This group needs to be cohesive to be effective.

O’Neill said until the City of Monticello and Monticello Township have established a bond or trust, the CMRP should stay as is and the City will work with the Township to figure out a way to integrate them so their issues don’t create a problem for the CMRP.

Carroll asked what kind of binding decisions the CMRP would make that could cause harm to an individual Partner. Dolan said the CMRP is missing a cohesive, clear vision of what it is, what it’s powers are, who is impacted, and who they are

open to including in the future. This must be determined to overcome the Monticello City/Township issue. He wants that issue to be solved.

Vetsch said other cities in the region, such as Elk River, Otsego, and Silver Creek, are asking questions. Carroll asked for input regarding a decision-making process that requires 75 percent approval, as well as support from both sides of the river. Dolan said anyone on that corridor should have a voice. Hansen said Elk River and Otsego border the river, and should have a stake. Vetsch favored inclusivity. He doesn't want financial contribution to be a barrier. He said he would be agreeable to Wright County paying the membership fee for communities in the County for whom the fee was a barrier. That would be preferable to excluding members and not having a robust plan that could be taken to MnDOT or the Met Council. Sherburne has more cities involved. Wright has townships with financial constraints.

Carroll suggested not changing the CMRP financial structure. Wright County could offer to pay the dues of smaller entities outside of the CMRP structure if so desired. Bye said Monticello Township functions with a budget under a million dollars. The Town Board has a fiduciary responsibility to keep costs down. She said financial assistance would make membership in the CMRP more accessible to them.

O'Neill said inclusivity is important. Input from entities is important. However, investments in pre-existing development places constraints on planning flexibility for the City of Monticello. They do not want to align with those who do not have the same interests or understanding. The City does not want to push people away, but there is a lot at stake. The goal is to create opportunities for growth and protect rural areas as well.

Vetsch gave a hypothetical example of a river crossing that a study showed would be better somewhere other than on Highway 25. Would the City of Monticello support those results? O'Neill said if statistics showed a regional benefit for everyone, the City would support it. If the study showed that an entity would be harmed, he assumed the CMRP wouldn't support it.

Carroll said the CMRP will not have a voice at the table with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) or the Minnesota Department of Transportation without a comprehensive regional plan. The CMRP is not a transportation plan. It is a regional planning and economic development plan.

O'Neill said there is a need for unity between the City and Township of Monticello, a community and commonality in their approach to their planning long-term. That would provide a comfort level to the CMRP. Stumpf said that would not happen at this meeting.

<p>Vetsch asked whether there would be support from the City of Monticello if the JPA work group drafted a 75 percent voting structure for new members and left the existing structure the same.</p> <p>Carroll clarified that the JPA says 5/7ths or 71 percent. If the JPA changes to state 75 percent (which would be 5/7, 6/8, or 7/9), it is manageable and doesn't make major changes. It would be good not to have the JPA revision threaten those agreements. O'Neill said the JPA work group would talk about it and go from there. Vetsch clarified that the JPA work group would include O'Neill, Kelly, Wilfahrt, Weber, Carroll, and himself.</p> <p>There was consensus regarding changing the JPA to require 75 percent approval of new members, and retaining one affirmative vote from an entity on each side of the river to move forward with an action.</p>		
<p>9. Future agenda items: Carroll said they will have a consultant recommendation and draft JPA for October. Vetsch said the work plan would be available by November.</p>		
<p>10. Adjourn Stumpf moved to adjourn, seconded by Dolan. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:13 A.M.</p>	Approve	Chair

Public information: [Partnership and Staff Roster](#)