

## **NORTH CAROLINA**

### **CARTERET COUNTY**

The Highway 70 Corridor Commission of North Carolina, Inc. met on Thursday, September 21, 2017 at 1:30 p.m. at Carven County Convention Center Ballroom B, 203 S Front Street, New Bern, North Carolina.

#### **County members present:**

Carteret County – Jesse Vinson, Robin Comer and Mark Mansfield  
Craven County – Tom Mark, Danny Walsh, Jack Veit and Donald Baumgardner  
Johnston County – Berry Gray and Frank Price  
Jones County – None  
Lenoir County – Mark Pope  
Wayne County – Chris Boyette, Joe Gurley and Jack Best

#### **Other persons present:**

North Carolina Board of Transportation – Hugh Overholt and Gus Tulloss  
Highway 70 Corridor Commission Director – M. Durwood Stephenson  
North Carolina Department of Transportation – Bobby Lewis, Michael Fox, Tim Little, John Rouse, Charles Edwards, Chris Pendergraph, Jeff Cabaniss, Preston Hunter, Ronnie Keeter, Jiles Harrell and Daniel Johnson  
New Bern MPO – Kim Maxey  
Wilson's Mills – Johnny Eason and Nellie Eason  
City of Goldsboro – Jennifer Collins  
City of Havelock – Katrina Marshall  
Craven County – Joe Thomas  
Craven County Economic Development – Timothy Downs  
UCPRPO – James Salmons  
Craven County Citizen – Ophelia Davis  
Carteret County – Michelle Haynes

#### **Call to Order and Welcome**

Highway 70 Corridor Commission Chairman Tom Mark called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### **Approval of the Agenda**

Highway 70 Corridor Commission Director M. Durwood Stephenson indicated a revision to the agenda was necessary. In order to meet a flight departure, Mr. John Rouse and Mr. Craig Young needed to move their James City presentation up on the agenda.

Upon motion of the Wayne County Member Chris Boyette and seconded by Craven County Member Jack Veit, the members of the Highway 70 Corridor Commission unanimously approved the revised agenda.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Upon motion of North Carolina Board of Transportation Member Gus Tulloss and seconded by Johnson County Member Frank Price, the members of the Highway 70 Corridor Commission unanimously approved the minutes of the meeting on July 20, 2017.

### **Comments and Introduction of BOT Chairman**

North Carolina Department of Transportation Chief Operating Officer, Bobby Lewis, addressed the Commission prior to introducing the Board of Transportation Chairman, Michael Fox. Mr. Lewis indicated NCDOT had been going through an exercise and looking at Future Interstates and the needs of Existing Interstates. Future Interstates such as I-87, I-42 (US 70), I-587, I-795, I-73 and I-74 and Existing Interstate such as I-95. He stated while going through this exercise NCDOT found that Future Interstate projects over a 10-year period are roughly 65%-70% complete. He referenced this accomplishment would not have been successful without the hard work of the Commission and other organizations like the Commission. Prior to introducing Chairman Fox, he concluded with where NCDOT is today and the 21<sup>st</sup> Business Process the department needs. He indicated the 21<sup>st</sup> Business Process focuses on Programming and how NCDOT delivers the program. Accelerating and adding more projects to the STIP is a primary goal of the department and Chairman Fox would address the Commission more on Programming.

### **Comments – Board of Transportation Chairman**

North Carolina Board of Transportation Chairman, Michael Fox addressed the Commission and recognized Bobby Lewis and the hard work he and his team has been doing that resulted in advancement of existing projects and funding of new projects. He credited Mr. Lewis and his team for the acceleration of 350 transportation projects and the funding of an additional 144 projects. He gave high remarks to Board of Transportation Members Hugh Overholt and Gus Tullos and indicated the Commission is lucky to be represented by these two individuals. They are hard working individuals and great people.

Chairman Fox indicated he and the department recognizes the importance of transportation in this area and intends to continue to work hard to deliver projects in this area. The Department along with organizations like the Commission have made great progress regarding the US 70 Corridor however, Chairman Fox, stated there were still challenges and work to do. He expressed the department is committed to listening to communities to move projects forward and welcomed the Commission as true partners when working for the betterment of the entire region.

### **North Carolina Board of Transportation Member Reports**

North Carolina Board of Transportation Division 2 Member Hugh Overholt along with Division 4 Member Gus Tullos offered comments to Chairman Fox and thanked him for attending today's meeting. Mr. Overholt pointed out several staff changes within NCDOT and indicated Tim Little is now the Chief Engineer for NCDOT and John Rouse is the new Deputy Eastern Region Chief Engineer. He also recognized Preston Hunter who is now the Division 2 Engineer.

Before moving on to the James City Slide Presentation, Bobby Lewis indicated NCDOT had entered into an agreement to conduct a Flood Study to minimize area flooding along the Neuse River. Corridor

Commission Director, Durwood Stephenson will chair the Flood Study with NCDOT Environmental Program Advisor, Jamie Shern serving as primary Flood Committee staff and Director. John Rouse will lead Governor's Rural Initiatives Study for NCDOT.

### **James City Slide Presentation**

Mr. John Rouse, Deputy Eastern Region Chief Engineer, and Mr. Craig Young, Three Oaks Engineering provided the Commission with an update regarding James City. Mr. Rouse indicated Three Oaks Engineering is handling the Environmental Document and Design for this project and the presentation would be presented in two phases. Mr. Craig Young indicated the major difference regarding the James City project is the scope has expanded and two new intersections are now part of the overall project. Both U-5713 (original James City study area) and R-5777 (A & B, next two intersections) will be included as one design/build construction phase. U-5713 is the original James City study area and ends at Garner Road. R-5777 includes improvements to the Taberna Way Intersection (R-5777A) and the Thurman Road Intersection (R-5777B). Mr. Young provided the next steps for the project included finalizing the Traffic Capacity Analysis for both projects over the next month. A newsletter update would be completed by October 2017 and small group meetings of business owners and residents would take place regarding R-5777A&B. Design work for the projects would continue between now and January 2018. Technical Analysis would wrap up in March of 2018 with hopes of the Categorical Exclusion completion in May 2018. Final Design would be completed by June of 2018 with Public Meetings scheduled for July 2018. Mr. John Rouse indicated this project would be a Design/Build Construction Project with a projected let date of Fall 2018.

### **Comments from Executive Director M. Durwood Stephenson**

Highway 70 Corridor Commission Director M. Durwood Stephenson welcomed Preston Hunter, Division 2 Engineer and Ronnie Keeter, Division 4 Engineer to the Commission and indicated he looked forward to working with them. He also indicated he had been engaging partners and associates to promote and stress the importance and necessity of flood prevention and discussions with Bobby Lewis has resulted in NCDOT conducting a much needed Flood Study. NCDOT is currently working on developing a Steering Committee to assist with the develop of the study and he would be the Chairman of that Committee. Mr. Stephenson suggested the Commission contribute \$25,000 to the study effort as many on the Commission are affected by downstream flooding and would benefit from the outcome of the study. Upon motion of Craven County Member Danny Walsh and seconded by Wayne County Member Jack Best, the members of the Highway 70 Corridor Commission unanimously approved for the Commission to contribute \$25,000 to the study effort.

### **FTZ 214 Plan Benefits**

Mr. Charles Edwards, NCDOT Director of Logistics provided the Commission with a presentation regarding benefits of the Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) #214. Mr. Edwards indicated a Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) is a geographical area where commercial merchandise is treated, as if were outside the commerce of the United States. It consists of merchandise of every kind and is supervised by the U.S. Customs and Border Protection. FTZs bring regional benefits by retaining businesses, recruiting businesses and improves logistics. Companies also benefit from FTZs by gaining improved logistics, improved inventory management and cost savings. Mr. Edwards continued to go into more detail regarding the FTZ 214, which is located in Southeastern North Carolina (largest in North Carolina) and offers individuals and businesses in 22 counties the opportunity to import foreign goods into a duty-free zone. He stated if we

want to engage in international trade this is a great opportunity and should take advantage of the FTZ benefits. As developments in Eastern North Carolina, evolve, with the growth of shipping operations and with the presence of Morehead City he suggest the Commission to take a hard look at developing FTZs and using them as an economic attraction tool along the Corridor.

#### **Division 2 Update**

North Carolina Department of Transportation Division 2 Division Engineer Preston Hunter updated the members of the Highway 70 Corridor Commission on the following projects:

- Kinston Bypass – Public meeting is scheduled for January 2018 and the work on the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is underway. Right-of-way is slated for 2022 with construction in 2024.
- Newport River Port Bridge Replacement – Project scope is to widen 70 from Morehead City to the Radio Island Causeway, including the Newport River Bridge. Project is funded as part of the draft 2018-2027 STIP and Environmental Study is underway. Project will not only include the widening of the Newport River Bridge, but will also include an interchange for access to Radio Island. Project to be advertised as a Design/Build project in FY 2020.

#### **Division 4 Update**

North Carolina Department of Transportation District 3 Engineer Jiles Harrell updated the members of the Highway 70 Corridor Commission on the following projects:

- Clayton Bypass – Resurfacing is estimated to begin April 2018.
- Wilson's Mills – Interchanges currently under design. Right of way acquisition scheduled for Fall 2017. Construction let date scheduled for 2019.
- Feasibility Study – US 70 Johnston/Wayne County line to Wilson Mills area – results of study will determine if breaking the project into smaller pieces would be beneficial for future prioritization.
- Pine Level – Interchanges are under construction however, project is behind schedule. Project is still scheduled for completion by the end of 2017. 6-8 weeks out before turning traffic on to interchanges.
- US 70 – Johnston/Wayne County line to Goldsboro Bypass – looking to accelerate project to improve existing US 70 to Freeway Standards with construction in 2022.

#### **Public Comments**

No member of public spoke.

#### **Financial Report**

Highway 70 Corridor Commission Director M. Durwood Stephenson reported, as of August 31, 2017 there was an account balance of \$330,950.17.

#### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Highway 70 Corridor Commission will be held on November 15, 2017 at 1:30pm in Wayne County. The meeting location will be at the Goldsboro Event Center.

**Adjournment**

At 3:30 p.m., Highway 70 Corridor Commission Chairman Tom Mark adjourned the meeting.

  
Jennifer K. Collins