



Small Cities Council Meeting Summary

Wednesday, March 24, 2021 | 9:00 AM

Jacksonville Community Center

Approved May 26, 2021

Meeting recording may be viewed at

www.facebook.com/56041648536/videos/2815879512008094

SCC Members Attending:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Mayor Sammy Hartwick, President | City of Greenbrier |
| 2. Mayor Bernie Chamberlain | City of Austin |
| 3. Mayor Charles Gastineau | City of Ward |
| 4. Mayor Sam Higdon | City of Guy |
| 5. Mayor Butch House | City of England |
| 6. Mr. Jeffrey Reed | City of Shannon Hills |
| 7. Mayor Trae Reed | City of Lonoke |
| 8. Mayor Terry Mizer | City of Wrightsville |
| 9. Mayor Terry Don Robinson | City of Wooster |

Metroplan Staff:

- | | |
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| 10. Mr. Casey Covington | Deputy Director |
| 11. Mr. Hans Haustein | GIS Planner/Performance Measure Coord. |
| 12. Ms. Bernadette Rhodes | Community Planner |
| 13. Mr. Allen Skaggs | Planning Technician |
| 14. Ms. La'Keshia Stewart | Planner/Public Outreach |
| 15. Mr. Tab Townsell | Executive Director |

1. Call to Order and Welcome

Mayor Hartwick called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM. He welcomed the attendees and asked attendees to introduce themselves.

2. Introductions and Announcements

The attendees introduced themselves (see attendee list above) and shared the following announcements.

Shannon Hills: Mr. Reed reported that the city was approved for a loan through the Arkansas Natural Resources Commission (ANRC) to replace wastewater equipment, including forced mains, gravity mains, and lift stations.

Ward: Mayor Gastineau stated progress was being made on the 319/367 intersection improvements, which will provide Ward with its first traffic light.

Lonoke: Mayor Reed encouraged attendees to try Lonoke's newest restaurant, The Grumpy Rabbit, which opened in January 2021.

3. Summary of Previous Meeting

The summary of the January 27, 2021 meeting was previously emailed to the Council. Ms. Rhodes asked for comments or corrections. There were none.

MOTION by Mayor Gastineau, **SECONDED** by Mayor Higdon, to approve the summary of the January 27, 2021 meeting as presented.

PASSED

4. Metroplan Update

Mr. Townsell made the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) scoring rubric available and encouraged members to start thinking about which projects could fit into one of the STBG program's funding tracts – Municipal Street, Rural Street, Bike/Pedestrian Facility Tract, Jump Start Tract, or Alternative Tract. Applications can be written to address the criteria to score the maximum number of points.

A Complete Streets Tract is not included in this funding cycle because multi-modal projects are best suited for 2021 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding, which will be offered through both ARDOT and Metroplan this year. Metroplan receives \$750,000 annually in TAP funding, and issues a call for proposals once every two years for a total of \$1.5 million. In 2022, Metroplan will not issue a call for TAP proposals, so the Complete Streets Tract will once again be included in the STBG funding next year. Timing for application deadlines will be discussed in the Executive Committee meeting.

Mr. Townsell informed members that ARDOT is offering state-wide TAP and Recreational Trails Program (RTP) funding this spring. Applications are due Tuesday, June 1st. Funding can cover sidewalks, bike facilities, paths, trails, safe routes to school, re-use of rail corridors, lighting to enhance safety, educational/awareness activities, and traffic calming, among other things. RTP funding can cover motorized and non-motorized trails and trailhead improvements.

Informational webinars for both funding opportunities will be held on April 1st and May 4th to discuss the application process and answer questions. Applicants are asked to register on ARDOT's TAP webpage. State funding may be combined with Metroplan funding to maximize a project's reach.

Mr. Townsell stated that the Central Arkansas Regional Transportation Study (CARTS) Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) will be up for approval in the Executive Committee meeting following this meeting for inclusion in ARDOT's State Transportation Improvement

Plan (STIP). After the current proposed STIP's adoption, the state will immediately begin work on the next STIP update. Metroplan will be organizing county caucuses to recommend state highway projects to ARDOT for inclusion in the next TIP. An amendment to Metroplan's current Long-Range Transportation Plan is also on the Executive Committee's agenda to incorporate the updated TIP into the document.

Mr. Townsell asked members to look at Metroplan's Regional Arterial Network (RAN), the regional roads identified as priorities for regional transportation. Staff and Metroplan members will review roads included on RAN and justify their inclusion, as transportation project proposals that are located on the RAN will be prioritized for Metroplan funding.

Mr. Covington offered the staff's assistance to review funding applications, provide data, and create maps.

Mr. Townsell informed that Census block data will be published late this year, likely at the end of September, and asked members to inform staff as soon as possible if Metroplan's assistance is desired for local redistricting to give Metroplan GIS staff as much time as possible to complete recommendations. Mr. Covington explained that GIS staff can help ensure that population in each ward meets state regulations.

Mayor Hartwick asked if Metroplan had expertise in helping cities annex property. Mr. Haustein answered that there is a process with the Arkansas GIS Office, and that he can guide cities on how the process works, including options for annexing by election or volunteer annexation. Mr. Townsell emphasized that as cities annex, it is important to record that annexation with the state and other key authorities. Mayor Gastineau added that when adopting an annexation ordinance, the rules are not allowed to be suspended, thus the adoption process takes several months as the ordinance must be read three times.

5. Community Spotlight: Wooster

Mayor Robinson shared that there are approximately 12 new subdivisions pending in and around Wooster, with 3 being added onto existing subdivisions, and 3 waiting on completion of the sewer system. There will be 15-18 subdivisions in Wooster's water district, but they are not all in city limits. The water district stretches for 10 by 9 miles.

He stated that most of the new subdivisions are being built north of the Hwy 25/285 N intersection. The city has been awarded engineering funding from Metroplan to design a roundabout at that intersection. Once new subdivisions are occupied, the mayor is expecting 1,000 new cars daily to come south on Hwy 285 toward that intersection, which will create significant traffic congestion.

Mayor Robinson shared that Wooster's sewer system is tying into Greenbrier's wastewater plant. 3½-4 miles have been laid, and the city is currently in Phase 2 of ADH approval. A 160-lot subdivision will be built north of Wooster Elementary School once the sewer system is completed.

Mayor Robinson showed photos of future subdivisions and indicated that all are laying water lines, but some will be on septic systems if they cannot be reached by public sewer.

Mayor Robinson described the city's completion of Church Circle, which connects Wooster Elementary School to both Hwy 285N and Hwy 25. The mayor has been planning to build the road since 1989. Wooster partnered with Faulkner County to build first half last year, and was able to complete the second phase this year with the county's help.

Mayor Robinson shared that the pace of development has placed a large amount of pressure on local government in the region. He also explained that new residents will add significantly to the population of the Greenbrier School District.

Mayor Reed volunteered to do a Community Spotlight at the next Small Cities Council meeting.

6. Model Code Update & Review

Ms. Rhodes outlined the contents of members' packets, including the draft use table, Articles 1-3 of draft ordinance text (Authority and Purpose, Establishment of Zones, and Uses), and Article 8 (Definitions). Ms. Rhodes encouraged members to read documents and provide feedback on three main questions:

- implications for city
- how could apply to city
- concerns/red flags

Ms. Rhodes and Ms. Stewart facilitated a discussion focused on the use table and regulations. Ms. Stewart outlined the facilitation methods. Ms. Rhodes explained the abbreviations on the use table and emphasized the use of "PC," or "Permitted with Conditions," which means that the code outlines special conditions that must be met to allow certain uses, which gives the city protections while removing the need for the Planning Commission to create conditions.

POLL: Ms. Stewart asked attendees to respond "yes" or "no" to the question: "Does the use of 'PC' make sense for the uses it is proposed for?"

→ All participants responded "Yes."

DISCUSSION: Ms. Rhodes asked members if there were any conditions that did not make sense or needed to be changed.

Mayor Gastineau indicated that the use of "PC" would be useful to the Planning Commission. Mayor Kemp stated that a condensed version of conditions will benefit small cities and will allow for easier reference. Mayor Hartwick commented that food trucks currently have to apply for a Special Use Permit in Greenbrier, and the Planning Commission had to create conditions. The city had to limit the Special Use Permit to each individual operator to avoid food trucks sharing their permit with other food trucks.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Rhodes explained that the use table groups several individual uses into

more general categories. Example: “Commercial Uses – Medical Facility” includes several businesses, which are outlined in the definition instead of listed separately in the use table. Includes: dental, labs, medical marijuana, pharmacies, and plasma centers, among others.

POLL: Ms. Steward asked the question, “Do you like how we have combined uses into general categories in use table?”

→ Most participants indicated they liked the groups. Some were undecided. However, cities may opt to pull out certain uses from the group to address them separately.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Reed of Shannon Hills asked if adoption of the model ordinance will be optional or required of cities. Ms. Rhodes indicated that adoption of the code will be optional, with staff proposing the language and each city having the ability to make changes to meet city’s needs. Mr. Covington added that the model code will create consistency across small cities and allow Metroplan staff to better support cities in their interpretation of the code.

Mr. Reed asked if the model code would still reference existing ordinances or replace existing ordinances. Ms. Rhodes advised that this ordinance would replace existing zoning and subdivision ordinances but would not affect other parts of the municipal code or building codes.

Mayor Reed of Lonoke asked if the other Articles of the model code had been provided. Ms. Rhodes advised that the staff’s next step was to draft development and subdivision standards, which will be provided to members for review at a future date.

Ms. Stewart posed the final discussion question, “Name one thing in the use table or use section of the ordinance that still warrants further scrutiny.” There was a discussion about food trucks on city property. Mayor Hartwick indicated that Greenbrier does not allow food trucks on city property, but a food truck court development has been proposed in city limits. Mr. Covington asked cities if they allowed food trucks on city property. Most cities either did not allow them on city property or were still debating the issue.

7. Upcoming Meetings

Ms. Rhodes outlined future meeting dates:

- The next model code work session will take place on Wednesday, April 28, at 9:00 AM via Zoom.
- The next Small Cities Council meeting will take place on Wednesday, May 26, at 9:00 AM, in Jacksonville.

8. Educational Presentation

Ms. Rhodes informed attendees about the community development book, *13 Ways to Kill Your Community* by Doug Griffiths. The author donated three copies of the book. Ms. Rhodes gave away two copies to attendees and lent out the third copy to it could be circulated among

members. Winners of the book were Mr. Reed and Mayor Higdon.

9. Adjourn

Mr. Covington reminded members to stay for a special board meeting immediately following the Small Cities Council meeting and invited members to observe the Executive Committee meeting following the special board meeting.

MOTION to adjourn by Mayor Higdon was **SECONDED** by Mayor Robinson.

Mayor Hartwick thanked members for their attendance. Small Cities Council meeting was adjourned at 9:55 AM.