

# **Southeast Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SERTPO)**

## **Minutes of the Joint Policy & Technical Committee Meeting**

**June 29, 2022 – 10:00 am**

**Hybrid Meeting (Virtual/In Person)**

### **POLICY MEMBERS PRESENT:**

*Policy Member (or Alternate) listed in Alphabetical Order*

Burns, Jason	Eddy County
Cavazos, Al	Village of Capitan
Garcia, Roman (Mayor)	Town of Vaughn
Honeycutt, Jeff	Lincoln County
Jarvis, Joey	City of Ruidoso Downs
Jones, Walon	Curry County
Lovato, Ricky	Roosevelt County
Lucero, Amanda	De Baca County
Mendez, Samantha	Village of Ruidoso
Myrick, Van	City of Jal
Najar, Louis	City of Roswell
Patterson, Jeff	City of Carlsbad
Randall, Todd	City of Hobbs
Reid, Bruce	Lea County
Valverde, Summer	City of Artesia
West, Joe	Chaves County

### **POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Bradley, Jerry (Mayor)	City of Texico
Brito, Candy	City of Eunice
Bunch, Clint	City of Clovis
Burkett, Mickey (Mayor)	Village of Dora
Dean, Ray (Mayor)	Town of Carrizozo
DeSha, John	City of Portales
Estrada, Pete (Mayor)	Village of Loving
Green, Barry (Mayor)	Village of Melrose
Gutierrez, Amy (Mayor)	Town of Tatum
Hall, Jubal	Village of Cloudcroft
Ingram, Justin	Village of Fort Sumner
King, Kris (Mayor)	Village of Causey
Little, Christopher	Mescalero Apache Tribe
Lovas, Mark	Town of Hagerman
Martinez, Vidal	City of Lovington
Porter, Tom	Otero County
Powell, Justin	Town of Dexter
Powell, Leona	Village of Grady
Rael, Stella	City of Alamogordo
Sainz, Robert (Trustee)	Village of Tularosa
Salazar, Ysidro (Mayor)	Town of Lake Arthur
Sales, Rudy	Village of Hope
Seely, Sam (Mayor)	Village of Corona
Summers, Kim	Town of Elida
Whitecotton, Toni	Village of Floyd

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**TECHNICAL MEMBERS PRESENT:**

*Technical Member (or Alternate) listed in Alphabetical Order*

Burns, Jason	Eddy County
Garcia, Roman (Mayor)	Town of Vaughn
Gurule, Angelo	Chaves County
Honeycutt, Jeff	Lincoln County
Jarvis, Joey	City of Ruidoso Downs
Jones, Walon	Curry County
Kennedy, Kevin	Village of Capitan
Lovato, Ricky	Roosevelt County
Lucero, Amanda	De Baca County
Mendez, Samantha	Village of Ruidoso
Myrick, Van	City of Jal
Najar, Louis	City of Roswell
Patterson, Jeff	City of Carlsbad
Randall, Todd	City of Hobbs
Reid, Bruce	Lea County
Valverde, Summer	City of Artesia

**TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Bunch, Clint	City of Clovis
Bradley, Jerry (Mayor)	City of Texico
Burkett, Mickey (Mayor)	Village of Dora
Carbajal, Sonia	Village of Hope
Dean, Ray (Mayor)	Town of Carrizozo
DeSha, John	City of Portales
Gallegos, Louie (Mayor)	Village of Fort Sumner
Garcia, Joe	Town of Tatum
Garza, Manuel	Village of Loving
Green, Barry (Mayor)	Village of Melrose
Gutierrez, Bernardo	City of Lovington
Hall, Jubal	Village of Cloudcroft
King, Kris (Mayor)	Village of Causey
Lovas, Mark	Town of Hagerman
Morgan, Damian	Mescalero Apache Tribe
Powell, Leona	Village of Grady
Porter, Tom	Otero County
Rael, Stella	City of Alamogordo
Ruvalcaba, Imelda	City of Eunice
Salazar, Ysidro (Mayor)	Town of Lake Arthur
Seely, Sam (Mayor)	Village of Corona
Summers, Kim	Town of Elida
Torres, Adolpho	Town of Dexter
Trujillo, Margaret	Village of Tularosa
Whitecotton, Toni	Village of Floyd

**COG/NMDOT STAFF PRESENT:**

Briley, Alan	NMDOT - Roswell
Mary Ann Burr	Southeastern New Mexico Economic Development District (SNMEDD)
Coslin, Libby	NMDOT – Roswell

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Gallardo, Judith	NMDOT – Las Cruces
Krueger, Neala	NMDOT – Santa Fe
Matta, Louis	NMDOT – Roswell
Mondragon, Raymond	Eastern Plains Council of Governments (EPCOG)
Rodriguez, Raul	Eastern Plains Council of Governments (EPCOG)
Sanchez, Francisco	NMDOT – D2 Engineer

**GUESTS PRESENT:**

Dominguez, Alvin	Bohannan Huston, Inc. (Albuquerque)
Espiritu, Mike	Roswell-Chaves County Economic Development Corporation
Runyon, Richard	Dennis Engineering (Socorro/Edgewood)
Sasser, Shanna	NM Department of Finance & Administration (Santa Fe)
Shields, David	Bohannan Huston (Las Cruces)

**CALL TO ORDER / QUORUM (8)**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**INTRODUCTIONS**

Technical Committee Chair Jason Burns presided over the hybrid meeting and called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Members and guests participated with the Pledge of Allegiance. With sixteen members present, a quorum was established. Introductions was held.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Louis Najar made a motion to approve the agenda, as presented. Jeff Honeycutt seconded the motion. A call for votes was taken and with there being no objections, motion passed by unanimous vote.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Kevin Kennedy made a motion to approve the May 19, 2022 minutes as presented. Louis Najar seconded the motion. A call for votes was taken and with there being no discussion or objections, motion passed unanimously.

**PRESENTATION: Preparing Rural Local Entities for the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law**

Dr. Shanna Sasser, EdD  
Rural and Frontier Equity Ombudsman  
NM Department of Finance and Administration

Dr. Sasser informed members that she fills a new position that was created a few legislative sessions past and explained that the creation of the position was for the purpose of having an individual that would advocate for rural issues at both the state and federal level. Her office is located within the NM Department of Finance and Administration, with her supervisor being Mr. Donnie Quintana. Dr. Sasser's presentation will include discussion on how communities can prepare and seek Bipartisan Infrastructure funding and will provide guidance on items to consider when initiating the process.

To move communities forward, consideration needs to be given to any broken systems within local governments so acquiring funding can be more readily pursued. Dr. Sasser's first recommendation was for local governments to get their budget into compliance. Several local governments do not have a budget in compliance, with some spanning multiple years. For those local governments having consistent difficulties with budget noncompliance, they need to consider taking steps to get into compliance such as working together with other local communities and/or contracting out with a CPA or an accountant to work the budget. Not

having a budget in compliance will hold the community back as the local government must have a strong foundation to build upon. Local governments can also reach out to their local Council of Governments for assistance.

Dr. Sasser's second recommendation for local governments is the need for a comprehensive plan for the community to be in place, to better identify the needs. Having a community comprehensive plan helps create some scaffolding to move the community forward, as there is turnover amongst elected officials. For those entities who do not have a comprehensive plan or if the comprehensive plan is outdated, they may seek funding for a new plan. The Council of Governments can assist in securing funds through CDBG and/or strategic planning for a rudimentary plan to move forward. Recent state and local fiscal recovery funds can be used for planning. The comprehensive planning helps with organization; knowing the issues and which funding should be pursued; and seeking funding through Representatives and Senators in addition to the Infrastructure funding. Community issues around the state are very similar, such as emergency medical services, water systems that need drastic repair, etc. Dr. Sasser can refer to comprehensive plans and advocate for funding on top issues with the Representatives and Senators. Concern was expressed over the lack of considering, strategizing and pursuing the Infrastructure funding, which provides opportunities to fix the chronic issues.

Once the budget and comprehensive plan is in place, consideration needs to be given to office systems and how they can be streamlined. An example of the need for improving office systems is the lack of automation for water billing and the multiple, varied tasks placed on the clerks. Replicating systems of utilizing grants writers and project managers on the local level will help move the community move forward. There are multiple resources such as the Council of Governments and Municipal League to help with grant writing. There is staff in Senator Henrich's offices and the DFA Grant office that offer assistance in finding grants. She encouraged entities to consider using the systems and processes that are in place, instead of always relying on clerks. She offered her assistance in connecting entities to these resources for a more streamlined approach for bringing the big money to local communities.

Dr. Sasser encouraged automation for more sustainable systems (e.g., water billing, fleet maintenance, etc.). She described the types of difficulties encountered when there is staff turnover and urged entities to consider how to create a system that is going to continually move their local government forward, without massive regressions every time there are new elected officials or clerks. She also encouraged local entities to educate themselves on how to create a fiscally, secure local government. There needs to be an understanding of the different pots of monies; how to pursue the funding and bring it into their community; how to fill out applications and apply for grants; how to manage grants successfully to fruition; and learning the different aspects of funding, debt capacity, and management of revenues. She commented that there have been occasions with State budget reviews, it is determinable that there is not enough revenue coming in to sustain local budgets. She encouraged elected officials to create a financial portfolio that will sustain their communities.

Dr. Sasser expressed that she would like to get together with entities at some point (one-on-one) and visit their communities to discuss issues and connect them with resources. Her business cards were offered for her contact information.

Inquiry was made on accessing the several millions of funding at the State and Federal levels. Dr. Sasser responded that entities have to learn what grants are out there, which agencies are providing the grants, and what the application processes require. Entities can access the Infrastructure Guide, a good starting point. She encouraged entities to pull out their comprehensive and emergency plans to see their priorities and what can be accomplished with the funding and then, proceed with going into the Infrastructure funds and identifying/pulling down grants that are related to the type of project(s) requiring funding.

**ACTION ITEMS**

**A. Resolution No. 22-004 Approving NMDOT Bridge Rating and Prioritization**

Mary Ann Burr provided background for the resolution, explaining that NMDOT Bridge Management Section had provided a presentation in an earlier SERTPO meeting regarding the new federal funding and their methods for bridge prioritization. A survey had been recommended seeking input from SERTPO members. The survey was provided in meeting packets with the resolution. Ms. Burr gave an overview of the survey contents, and survey results where 90.9% were in favor of accepting NMDOT Bridge Management Section's rating and prioritization methods. The Chairman commented that he felt it was sensible, and NMDOT had the right systems in place. With there being no further discussion, Louis Najar made a motion to approve Resolution No. 22-004 as presented. Jeff Honeycutt seconded the motion. A call for votes was taken and with there being no objections, motion passed unanimously.

**B. Resolution No. 22-005 Approving SNMEDD FFY 2023-2024 Regional Work Program**

Ms. Burr explained that it was time for the next two-year Regional Work Program to be approved for the upcoming federal fiscal year. The most significant change to the work program included an increase of \$5,000 to the budget from NMDOT. She informed members a proposed cost of living increase was factored into the budget and further explained that EPCOG's RWP is being approved through NERTPO. Louis Najar made a motion to approve Resolution No. 22-005 Approving SNMEDD FFY 2023-2024 Regional Work Program. Kevin Kennedy seconded the motion. A call for votes was taken and with there being no objections, motion passed by unanimous vote.

**C. Resolution No. 22-006 Approving SERTPO Bylaws**

Ms. Burr provided that SERTPO had earlier approved pursuing the consolidation of the Policy and Technical Committees into one Committee which required a revision to the bylaws. A clean and tracked version of the draft bylaws was provided in meeting packets. The resolution provides for approval of the revision to the bylaws with any amendments made during the meeting. The Chair commented that the consolidation has been discussed for a few months and the revision had been requested. He added that he believes this will make the Committee more efficient and overall improve the effectiveness as a SERTPO Committee. Any further discussion or questions was requested. Mr. Najar requested an amendment to the Resolution number, changing from 22-003 to 22-006. Ms. Burr spoke to two other recommended changes. One change recommended by the Liaison, Neala Krueger, was to change the term of *Transportation Project Fund* to *RTIPR* on page 3, as the current wording was very specific, and there are more funding sources. Ms. Burr provided background information that the term was recommended to legal counsel for substitution, replacing the reference to *Roadway*. The recommendation of *RTIPR* works as a *RTIPR* Page is prepared, whether it is federal or state funding. If the Page is for federal, it moves onto the STIP, but if the Page is for state [projects], the same format is utilized. The second recommendation, from the Chair, was for a correction to a paragraph number reference, where a paragraph had been deleted therefore a reference to that paragraph, *Part 4* will be changed to *Part 3*.

Louis Najar made a motion to approve Resolution No. 22-006 Approving SERTPO Bylaws, as amended. Joe West seconded the motion. A call for votes was taken and with there being no objections, motion passed unanimously.

**D. Election of Officers**

The floor was opened for nominations for Chairman. Jeff Honeycutt made a nomination of Jason Burns (Eddy County) as Chairman. He commented not only for continuity's sake, but he believes that

Mr. Burns is the right person to lead SERTPO into the new direction. Joe West seconded the nomination motion. Roswell expressed concurrence. Nominations were closed. A call for votes was taken and with there being no objections, motion passed unanimously. The floor was opened up for nominations for Vice Chairman. Jeff Honeycutt made nomination of Ricky Lovato (Roosevelt County) for Vice Chairman. Louis Najar made nomination of Jeff Honeycutt (Lincoln County) and added that he is consistent in attending meetings. While discussion was being held by show of hands or use of survey, Ricky Lovato communicated that he wished to decline the nomination. Louis Najar made a motion to accept Jeff Honeycutt as he is the only candidate at this time. Joe West seconded the motion. A call for votes was taken and with there being no objections, motion approved unanimously.

## **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

### **SERTPO Program Managers Update**

Mary Ann Burr commented that the end of year activity is here. She will be working the Dexter CDBG grant, and both COGs will be doing the reimbursement packets due at the end of the quarter, which are due earlier in July (end of year). With CDBG planning grants closed or final actions taken, SNMEDD will be moving onto asset management planning applications, encouraging the transportation component.

Ms. Burr stated that she and the Executive Director attended the EnergyPlex conference in Hobbs, and on the same day, visited the Hobbs Public Library for distribution of safety outreach materials, to be used in their children's summer reading program. Recently, safety materials were also given to the Roswell Public Library who distributed the items during the Cinco de Mayo celebrations. She mentioned that she received the agency car this week, after being rear-ended earlier. Repairs have been done. Work has begun again on the RTP (aviation section) and both RTPO staff plan to be visiting soon on updates, bringing the update to the point where subcommittee can meet and review. The intent is to move the RTP update forward, for a future SERTPO meeting.

Raul Rodriguez expressed his thanks and gratitude for Shanna Sasser for coming to SERTPO for presentation. He will be attending the NADO conference in Kansas City, Missouri on July 19-21, 2022. He hopes to have Joe Moriarty speak on the NMDOT Freight Plan update at a future meeting. Mr. Rodriguez reiterated what Ms. Burr previously stated that the EPCOG RWP has been unanimously approved by the NERTPO board. He will ensure the NMDOT Quarterly Reimbursement Packet, due July 12th, is submitted for approval before it is due. He expressed his services are available pertaining to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and encourages the use of RTPO staff and Dr Sasser's services and support regarding this.

### **Local Project Updates / NMDOT Updates**

Francisco Sanchez, District 2 Engineer, informed members that the TPF recommendations are due from the District Engineers to Santa Fe by July 5<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Sanchez will be recommending TPF projects this week to the NMDOT Secretary. There is \$106,820,000 available for the program. \$46,820,000 comes from the excise tax, and \$60 million comes from the General Fund, approved by legislative partners. The Secretary, this year, has made some of this funding available for projects that need to be shored up due to escalating costs. Projects with extended agreements between 2019 and 2021 have the opportunity to apply for funding. He commented that the funding is generally divided by six districts, but it is up to the discretion of the Secretary. The District 2 Engineer anticipates 16 or 17 million per region (district). Mr. Sanchez' intent is to submit the recommendations to the Secretary, based on SERTPO criteria. Ultimately, the Secretary will decide the budget and the amount of funding overall for each district and each individual project.

Jason Burns expressed that the District 2 Engineer has been supportive in SERTPO processes, but he disagrees with the item of shoring up existing projects. The process has been changed to be fairer; cover a broader span of projects that need to be submitted; and ultimately improve efficiencies of evaluating TPF

projects. Existing projects should already have been underway or done and need to go back through the process for additional funding, versus being shored up. Projects need to be shovel-ready when application is made. Funds intended for southeastern New Mexico need to stay in southeastern New Mexico. Concern was made that projects come in that are either under-budgeted or poorly planned, and expectations are they will be rescued at the state level. Mr. Burns expressed support for District 2 and requested the message be conveyed to the Secretary. Written comments will be shared with the District Engineer. Mr. Sanchez expressed support for the processes and efforts to be more equitable. Every process needs some improvements at all levels, and the scoring criteria may need some improvements to be even more equitable for the communities. Louis Najar expressed his appreciation for District 2 staff who has always worked for all the entities and have been fair.

Regarding Local Government Road Fund (LGRF), Louis Matta and Libby Coslin spoke, and all agreements have been sent out to entities. As signed agreements are received, D2 staff will put them in for execution.

**NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next SERTPO meeting date is scheduled for September 8, 2022. The Chair commented that he would like to discuss the rotation of meeting locations at the next meeting and hosting of meetings. The next meeting location will be in Roswell.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Louis Najar made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jeff Honeycutt seconded the motion. A call for votes was taken and with no objections, motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:49 a.m.

**APPROVED BY:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
SERTPO Committee Chair/Vice Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**ATTESTED BY:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
SERTPO Program Manager

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date