



MEMBERSHIP AGENDA

Date: July 19, 2019

Location and Time: Benton Community Building 150 S Main, Benton, KS 67017 at 12:30 PM

I. Call to Order

- a. President Jeff Hawes, Bel Aire City Council Member, called the meeting to order at 12:35 PM.
- b. Introduction of Attendees

Members in attendance: Brett Letkowski (TransSystems Corporation), Loren Jack (Hogoboom Trucking), Curt Ghormley (City of Benton), Charles Hefton (City of Benton), Ryan McCune (ASM/City of Benton), Teresa Tosh (El Dorado Public Schools), Kathy Robertson (El Dorado Public Schools), Kurt Spivey (El Dorado Public Schools), Darrell Atteberry (City of Bel Aire BAPD), Don Potter (USD#375), Will Johnson (Butler County), Darryl Lutz (Butler County), Pete Meitzner (Sedgwick County Commission), David Alfaro (Butler County,) Kelly Herzet (Butler County Sheriff), Tyler Dehn (Wildcat Construction), Jay Anglemyer (MKEC Engineering), James Walburn (Cox Communications), Bob Conger (City of Kechi), David Dillner (City of El Dorado), Ty Lasher (City of Bel Aire), Jeff Hawes (City of Bel Aire), and Anna Wealand (Butler County).

- c. Ty Lasher made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 24, 2019 Association meeting as presented. David Dillner seconded. Motion carried with all Ayes.

II. **Treasurer's Report** - David Dillner, El Dorado City Manager, stated a balance of \$3,351.45, with outstanding balances not included a total of \$3,101.45.

III. **Secretary's Report** – Ty Lasher, Bel Aire City Manager, stated there is no report.

IV. **Presentation by Wichita Regional Chamber of Commerce** – Brett Letkowski

Brett Letkowski is from the Wichita region and spoke of a transportation subcommittee, particularly the South Central Coalition consisting of various types of members with the goal of

bringing as much money into South Central Kansas as is possible. Ty Lasher is on this committee. K96 and WAMPO have also been invited. Brett has a list of the committee members should someone like to know who is on the committee. KDOT will be having meetings in late August and then in late September of this year. The North Junction is the first priority.

Brett passed around copies of a map with stages of projects highlighted in various colors. The Green Phase is under construction now. The Gold Phase is next in line but is currently only funded for right-of-way acquisition. KDOT has funded for more work. Brett stated Sedgwick County compiled a five minute video presenting the case for receiving more funding for the K-254 projects. Brett also stated the South Central Coalition met with the Federal delegation to plead their case for the awarding of more funds to the development and improvement of the K-254 corridor. A grant has been applied for and the coalition will soon find out if the grant was awarded. Brett said Senator Moran has a say in whether the grant will be awarded. If the grant is awarded the Gold Phase would be fully funded. There is currently enough funding for planning and design.

Brett reported the coalition met with Julie Lorenz, Secretary of KDOT. There are currently two projects involving the K-254 corridor on KDOT's list: the intersection of the K-254 and Boyer Road in El Dorado and the intersection of the K-254 and Woodlawn in Bel Aire. There will be three topics at the August meeting: any new projects that are on the horizon for the K-254 corridor, how transportation changes will affect traffic along the K-254 corridor, and discussion over the formulas utilized to generate projections. Some discussion ensued to flesh out the proposed topics, especially the topics of transportation changes and formulas. For the transportation changes topic the discussion centered on how scenarios will affect transportation and scenario planning and its various stages and implications. In regards to formulas, project development and the importance of getting import-export information into the formulas was discussed. Brett reported Jeremy Hill from WSU states dealing with the formulas may be difficult.

The homework from the last K-254 Corridor Development Association meeting was to send Andrew Wiens and Brett Letkowski any new projects in your area pertinent to the K-254 corridor. Brett stated it would be helpful to have a one page summary of each project so as to assist in understanding the projects and being able to better present the case for the importance of these projects to KDOT. Brett said the projects will need to be ranked but believes the projects will be placed into tiers, as per a recommendation by KDOT, with three tiers within the ranking. The K-254 Association will be in support of all regionally significant projects but each organization within the association will be able to list and present their top five projects. Brett stressed this is powerful and a very effective way to present projects.

Julie Lorenz commented to Brett the K-254 Corridor Development Association is head and shoulders ahead of other groups. Brett stated the association should desire to promote all of their projects with the goal to be on par with Johnson County in regards to the awarding of funds to projects. Brett handed out a copy of a draft of a Display of South Central Kansas Transportation Map 07/17/2019. Brett pointed out the handout is in the draft stage, although it is not marked as a draft, and is subject to changes prior to the August 2019 meeting. Brett asked the group if there

are any projects that need to be added to the highway program. These projects should be promoted at next month's meeting.

Brett's presentation was complete so he opened the meeting up for questions to him. The questions (Q) are as follows with Brett's responses (A) immediately below:

Q: Ty Lasher asked: Brett, how do we as an association proceed going forward?

A: Present your projects and their priority, both as a group and individually.

Q: Ty Lasher asked: Should safety studies be performed by the State, individual members of the association, or the association as a group?

A: Studies performed as a group would be best. The South Central Coalition (Brett) will support the association but Brett suggests the association approach KDOT about performing safety studies. Brett stressed it is important the association be on the same page.

Q: Ty Lasher asked of the group if anyone else had any ideas for projects.

The intersection of the K-254 & Greenwich was mentioned for improvement ideas. The ideas of an overpass or adding lanes at that intersection were mentioned.

A: Adding lanes (IE: going to six lanes) at intersections is a possibility. The map handout currently lists the projects in a bulleted format and the projects are arranged in random order. During the meeting in late September order will be applied to the project listings.

Q: Jeff Hawes: Changing the K-254 to a limited access highway will be important to cities located along the K-254. Jeff foresees commerce traffic on the K-254 to increase tenfold once the North Junction project has been completed.

A: The bridge replacement project in Wichita will not affect the North Junction project. The estimated scope of the whole thing is \$3 million. \$100 million of that includes \$60 million in grants that have been applied for and Sedgwick County will make up \$20 million. If the grant is received then the project is a go. Sedgwick County and the City of Wichita have both committed \$0.5 million each for right-of-way purchases. \$25 million more is needed.

Q: The question was raised as to whether studies have been conducted for increased traffic count on the K-254 when the North Junction project is completed.

A: Brett was uncertain as to how to answer that question. However, the question of traffic volume and safety on the K-254 was asked when considering the North Junction project. Discussion also touched on how the association can tap into some of the energy the North Junction project is generating and spread the word about safety along the K-254 corridor.

Q: Darryl Lutz: Emphasis has not been appropriately placed for safety concerns. The intersections of Ohio Street Road, River Valley Road, and SW Butler Road, where they cross the K-254, are intersections in which many accidents occur. The association needs to identify the highest priority intersection. Does the association need to look into changing the K-254 to freeway status? Changing the highway to freeway status would admittedly be difficult as some local access roads would have to be closed off. Some

ideas were brought up by the group including: discussing local roads, right turn only lanes, U or J turns, and frontage roads. Jeff Hawes said Lees Summit, Missouri, has done a good job with HWY 50 in that area and HWY 50 in that area looks exactly like how the K-254 should look.

A: There was no direct answer from Brett for this question, but discussion, as recorded above, was participated in by all in attendance who desired to be involved.

Q: Darryl Lutz: How will traffic be affected? When traffic increases, accidents will increase, you just don't know by how much accidents will increase.

A: A model will be able to be run but Brett also asked Ty Lasher to ask that question of KDOT.

Q: Ty Lasher: As for the timing aspect, when does the association need to know their preferences and when should those preferences be presented to KDOT?

A: The association will need to know their preferences within the next two weeks, by July 31st. There are two upcoming meetings at which members of the association can be present to represent the association and present their case. Brett recommends members of the association present at both meetings. The meeting dates are August 20th and August 27th. Both meetings will be held from 9AM to 12PM. The August 20th meeting will be held in the Atrium Hotel and Conference Center located at 1400 N Lorraine St, Hutchinson, KS 67501. The August 27th meeting will be held at the Eugene M. Hughes Metropolitan Complex located at 5015 E 29th Street N, Wichita, KS 67220.

Q: Has a ranking formula for project priority been generated yet?

A: No, a ranking formula has not yet been decided. Factors to consider in ranking include: project description, building description, regionally significant factors, traffic counts, agencies that support the project, percent of completed design, has a consultant already been hired, has a safety study already been performed, how many acres need to be procured for rights-of-way, environmental considerations, estimates on construction costs. The best thing to do is identify projects not on KDOT's list. Ty Lasher asked members to send him project ideas and Ty will forward the list of projects on to Brett.

Q: How will the list of projects be whittled down?

Ty Lasher answered: The association will use Brett's formula and the association will then vote to decide the top five projects.

Q: David Dillner: Is it important to fund a safety study for the K-254 corridor so the association will have data to back up their requests for funding?

A: Brett does not think it important to have a safety study to back up requests. He really does not think studies are important in this stage of the game. Recently, local consults did not use study data much for decisions made by KDOT.

Q: Is the K-254 Corridor Development Association to vote on what is on KDOT's list (the Green list on the handout) and then add projects to the list?

A: Local knowledge is the most important. The development on Greenwich is a good example of this as KDOT will not know much about the development Greenwich has and is undergoing. This kind of knowledge is what can influence a project to be chosen.

Q: *Brett's group wants input for formulas, is any of it safety related?*

A: Discussion in the upcoming meetings will include what the formulas should be. Brett's group needs to ask KDOT how KDOT is ranking Economic Development, and then decide how to develop a formula and rank projects. The Economic Development piece needs to be understood. David Dillner pointed out it is hard to plan for Economic Development as it has not happened yet. For example, the growth of the Benton Airport was not necessarily foreseen. It was agreed this is the kind of example of which KDOT would most likely not be aware but should be in regards to decisions about K-254 corridor projects. Ty Lasher asked members to send project ideas to him so the association can see what projects are out there and use Brett's group's formula to find a ranking for the projects. Attendees liked the idea of not adding overpasses but utilizing right-hand turns and limiting access roads to the highway. Discussion on how to juxtapose big long-term projects with small immediate projects that can be done at the local level and with decreased wait time ensued. Brett pointed out Julie Lorenz is big on safety. The association should want KDOT to see the large as well as the small projects, the severity of accidents versus the number of accidents at an intersection.

Q: *Is there a way to rank accidents on importance, such as urgent versus not, the difference between importance and urgency, in a chart?*

Jeff Hawes answered: When members send their projects to Ty Lasher, provide information on accidents in the project area.

There were no more questions for Brett. Attendees thanked Brett for his time and assistance.

- V. **Economic Development Committee Report** – Bob Conger said there is no report but will gather the committee together to develop a list of resources for businesses and groups and attract other groups into membership with the K-254 Corridor Development Association.

- VI. **Marketing Committee** – Kelly Herzet stated Jordan Buxton is not here today but has reached out to insurance companies. Jordan is also attending Leadership Butler and will push for their big project to be in line with the K-254 Association's aims. A recent non-fatal accident that occurred along HWY 400 involving a drowning woman trapped in her vehicle due to her seat belt caused Kelly to consider K-254 Association promotional items such as seatbelt cutters and window punches with the K-254 Association's logo on them. Kelly has reached out to promotional item vendors about the possibility of these items. The digital speed signs with live feedback of a vehicle's speed that are currently erected along the K-254 at intervals are helping to reduce speeds along the highway. There was a bad accident on the K-254 in the recent past but no one died. Tyler Dehn stated he had an idea for a 20 Day Challenge to motorists who frequent the K-254 with a goal to highlight the K-254 as a dangerous roadway. Tyler brought up an idea to obtain

miniature body bags with the K-254 Association's logo on them designed to fit a typical cellular phone. The 20 Day Challenge would involve encouraging commuters to zip their cell phones into the body bag prior to commencing driving and place the bag on the seat next to them. When a driver decides to reach for their cell phone to utilize it in one way, shape, or form, the driver would have to unzip it from the body bag. Tyler's hope is the idea of unzipping a phone from a body bag to use during driving would make enough of an imprint on drivers to help break the habit of cell phone use while driving. The Marketing Committee will get together with the Economic Development Committee and collaborate. It was suggested the K-254 Association's logo could be placed alongside other logos on current promotional items for Sheriff's Offices, etcetera, in an effort to save some funds and spread the word. The K-254 website has not yet been set up but Will Johnson has had some preliminary discussions about the site with Butler County's Chief Information Officer. Anna Wealand suggested the use of a Twitter and Facebook site for the K-254 Association as social media can be a powerful tool and an easy way to spread the word. Attendees were in agreement and asked Anna if she could get the group set up on Twitter and Facebook. Anna said she could and will work on setting up Facebook and Twitter accounts for the association.

VII. **Safety Committee** – John Prather. John Prather was not in attendance. No report was given.

- a. Increased major intersection watch and Butler County Sheriff patrol visibility
- b. Access and Crossing behavior continues to be problematic

VIII. **WSU CEDBR Northwest Corridor Economic Impact Study Proposal** – Tim Austin. There was no response from WSU in regards to the CEDBR proposal so the presentation was tabled until the next meeting.

IX. **Other Business** – No other business was discussed.

X. **Adjourn** – David Dillner made a motion to adjourn, Bob Conger seconded. The motion carried with all Ayes. The meeting adjourned at 1:41 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Anna Wealand.