

MINUTES
LENOIR COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
EMERGENCY MEETING
December 14, 2011

The Lenoir County Transportation Committee met on Wednesday, December 14, 2011 at 9:00 a.m. in the Lenoir County Administration Conference Room at 101 N. Queen Street, Kinston, NC 28502.

Voting members present included: J. Mac Daughety, Chairman, Joe Bower, Kinston-Lenoir County Chamber of Commerce, Dan Sale County at Large, Mayor B.J. Murphy, Donald King, for Mayor of Pink Hill, and Alex Rickard, RPO Planner.

Non-Voting members present included: Brian Lucas, City of Kinston Street Superintendent.

Also Present: Ms. April Banks, Administrative Secretary

Members absent included: Joe Albright, Town of Grifton Manager, Betty Caldwell, NC DOT, Woody Gurley, Mayor of LaGrange, Wayland Humphrey, for Lenoir County Planning Board, Preston Hunter, NC DOT, Adrian King, Pride of Kinston, Mark Pope, Lenoir County Economic Development Director, Tony Sears, Kinston City Manager, and Bill Whaley, Lenoir County Economic Development Board.

Mr. Daughety called the meeting to order at approximately 9:00 a.m.

Mr. Rickard stated he appreciated everyone meeting on a short notice. The meeting was regarding the Harvey Parkway project including a rail spur. North Carolina currently utilizes new ranking and scoring system to select which projects are funded and included in the Transportation Improvement Program. Ranking and scoring are done by the Strategic Planning Office of Transportation (SPOT). A project can receive a maximum of 100 points from the RPO and Division. There is a potential for bonus points. Extra points for being multimodal are assigned based on being accessible to different modes of transportation. The Harvey Parkway received extra points for its connection to GTP. There is also an opportunity to receive additional bonus points to make the project more competitive in Division 2. The proposed Harvey Parkway extension has an option for a rail spur connection to bring the CSX line to GTP. The connection can also be closer to the DuPont facility. If this is accomplished, GTP will have access to two (2) Class One rail providers. The corridor was selected through the merger process. DOT will research permitting, design, and acquiring the right-of-way to connect to the existing CSX line. Mayor Murphy asked if more right-of-way will need to be purchased. Mr. Rickard responded an additional amount will need to be purchased.

Mr. Daughety stated at a previous public hearing, Mr. Neal Lassiter suggested combining the projects. He pledged to purchase an additional 400ft of right-of-way to make the project easier. Mr. Lassiter also informed Mr. Daughety of all projects being given the maximum amount of points from him. These include Felix Harvey Parkway, Hwy 11/241, and the Hwy 70 Bypass. Mr. Rickard stated he contact the SPOT office to obtain additional points for inclusion of the rail spur. They understood the logic and inquired if Lenoir County had any documents that could prove the need. The Kinston Comprehensive Transportation Plan does not include a rail element; only highway. The GTP Strategic Plan has reference to a desire for multiple rail providers, but no map. Mr. Diehl clarified that means there is mention in the Strategic Plan to have access to dual rail service, but currently Norfolk Southern leases rail from NC Rail Road.

They are the only rail authorized to utilize the spur. If the spur were opened, this would provide dual service and GTP and local tenants would have rail access to three (3) different ports including Morehead City, Norfolk, and Wilmington.

Mr. Daughety stated Norfolk is the only deep water port in this region. Mr. Diehl stated after 2014 and the Panama Canal expansion, Norfolk would be the only port in the area able to receive large ships. Mr. Rickard stated he drafted a brief resolution which can be altered if needed regarding the Transportation Committee's support of extending rail service. Mr. Daughety stated the connection would open up the County, GTP, and DuPont. At its last meeting, the County received a donation of land for Economic Development use near DuPont. This would be an incentive for some businesses. Mayor Murphy asked if CSX was in support of the expansion idea. Mr. Daughety stated there are ongoing discussions and the information has been forwarded to their representatives. Mr. Rickard stated this is just one step in the process with many to follow. Currently, the Committee would be asking DOT to consider the rail spur project. Mr. Diehl asked how many bonus points would be given. Mr. Rickard answered there would be an additional eight (8) for a total of 13 bonus points on the final ranking score. Mayor Murphy advised the Committee he has been in contact with Walter LaRoque who is a representative on the Railroad Board.

Mr. Daughety stated in late spring, he met with Scott Saylor of the NC Railroad regarding a single line not being acceptable. He is following their suggestions and directions. Mr. Rickard encouraged if County and City want to pursue dual service, they should make an effort to get a rail component attached to the Comprehensive Transportation Plan. The request would be made to James Upchurch. The resolution will serve as the interim plan until the complete rail element is attached to GTP. Mr. Diehl stated the NC Railroad's perspective is to have access to Wilmington, which Norfolk Southern can't provide. Mr. Daughety continued if CSX connects to the rail spur, it can continue to LaGrange, Goldsboro, and Wilmington. The GTP will have access to three (3) ports.

Upon a motion by Mr. Daughety and second Mr. Sale, the Resolution to Support Extending Rail Service from Existing CSX Line Along NC 11 in Lenoir County to the NC Global Transpark Along the Proposed Extension of Felix Harvey Parkway was unanimously approved. Mr. Daughety thanked Mr. Rickard for all he has done.

The meeting adjourned at 9:31 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted by
April L. Banks
Administrative Secretary