



MINUTES
INFRASTRUCTURE TASK FORCE MEETING
June 10, 2014
10:00 AM
Jackson Country Club

Participants

Tommy Dulaney – Structural Steel Services, Inc.
Walton Gresham, III – Gresham Petroleum Company
Matthew Holleman, III – Galaxie Corp.
Christi Kilroy – Mississippi Economic Council
Mark Leggett – Mississippi Poultry Association
Jay Moon – Mississippi Manufacturers Association
Chip Morgan – Delta Council
David Roberts – Mississippi Trucking Association
Joe F. Sanderson, Jr. – Sanderson Farms, Inc.
William Sones – Bank of Brookhaven
Derrick Surette – Mississippi Association of Supervisors
Shari Veazey – Mississippi Municipal League
Scott Waller – Mississippi Economic Council
Charlie Williams – Butler Snow LLP
Martin Williams – Corinth Coca-Cola Bottling Works
Blake Wilson – Mississippi Economic Council

- I. Attendees were welcomed by Joe Sanderson, Infrastructure Task Force Chair.
- II. Blake Wilson provided an overview of Blueprint Mississippi history and current status. Blueprint Mississippi initiatives are well under way with great progress in Energy (MS Energy Institute); Healthcare (MHSI); and education (Techmaster). Infrastructure is also making headway:
 - a. MDA/MEDC/MEC study nearing completion with a release date in the summer of 2014 anticipated.
 - b. Infrastructure segment of Blueprint contains 3 aspects
 - i. Research – to partner with Mississippi State University and University of Southern Mississippi
 - ii. Legislative
 - iii. Grassroots

- c. This group will serve as the steering committee for transportation and an expanded group will serve as the action committee
 - d. This group to seek big picture, long term solutions
- III. What is happening elsewhere? Scott Waller provided an overview of 2014 legislation that passed in Kentucky, New Hampshire, Vermont and Missouri. He also discussed pending transportation funding efforts in Delaware and Michigan. Those states that were not able to move transportation funding laws forward in 2014 include Iowa, South Dakota, Utah and Washington.

Of particular note was a recent ballot initiative increasing sales tax by ½% in Arkansas that passed. Supporters feel that it was passed because:

- a. The initiative dealt with state, county and local roads. 70% of the tax increase went to state, 15% to counties and 15% to cities.
- b. 31 state-wide projects to be funded were chosen before the vote
- c. Groceries, gasoline and medicine were exempt from the tax increase

IV. Infrastructure Approach – Blake Wilson

- a. Short-term Research (June through mid-September 2014)
 Primary: University of Southern Mississippi
 Secondary: Mississippi State University
 - i. Clearly identify short and long term need
 - ii. Outline funding issue
 - iii. Identify existing opportunities – can be funded with existing revenue
 - iv. Map strategy for accomplishing short-term goals
 - v. Economic Impact
- b. Long-term Research (Summer 2014 to late spring 2015)
 Joint effort: MS State University & University of Southern Mississippi
 - i. Identify scope of work for infrastructure projects including roads, bridges, highways, ports airports, sewer and water, etc. This is to include state, county and city owned infrastructure
 - ii. Identify model practices from other states.
 - iii. Restate original Blueprint research demonstrating MS’s key infrastructure assets and challenges.
 - iv. Identify key shortcomings.
 - v. Identify various funding mechanisms.
 - vi. Develop framework for multi-year implementation plan.
 - vii. Create specific year-by-year goals for accomplishing this plan.

V. Governor’s anticipated 2015 approach – Governor Phil Bryant has indicated that he would like to focus on the transportation issue in 2015, so this project is well timed. He is looking for ideas from this group.

VI. General Discussion

- a. MDoT funding is automatic but has been flat for the past 5 years. MDoT indicates that with higher fuel-efficiency vehicles growing in popularity, their funding will decline in the near future.
- b. MDoT follows federal guidelines on setting project priorities across the state.

- c. Many cities facing crisis situation with road maintenance as their tax base continues to decrease. Funding for cities and counties were not included in the 1987 Roads Program.
 - d. County roads make up nearly 76% of all roads in the state.
- VII. Path Forward
- a. Initial research with MSU and USM to begin immediately. Chip Morgan & Mark Leggett to provide assistance in this early phase.
 - b. Group will reconvene when initial research is complete in late summer.

Meeting adjourned.

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