



MINUTES
INFRASTRUCTURE TASK FORCE MEETING
August 27, 2014
10:00 AM
Country Club of Jackson

Participants

CHAIR, Joe F. Sanderson, Jr. – Sanderson Farms, Inc.

Johnny Atherton – Mississippi Power
Justin Brooks – Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation
Steve Gray – Mississippi Association of Supervisors
Matthew Holleman, III – Galaxie Corp.
Bill Lampton – Ergon, Inc.
Mark Leggett – Mississippi Poultry Association
Hal Miller, III – Mississippi Trucking Association
Jay Moon – Mississippi Manufacturers Association
Samantha Newman – Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation
William Sones – Bank of Brookhaven
Charlie Williams – Butler Snow LLP
Blake Wilson – Mississippi Economic Council
William Yates - Yates Construction

GUEST

Tulio Sulbaran, Ph.D. – USM

STAFF

Scott Waller – Mississippi Economic Council
Christi Kilroy – Mississippi Economic Council

- I. Chair Joe Sanderson, Jr. called the meeting to order and welcomed participants. Mr. Sanderson continued by reviewing the committee's objectives. This group will seek big picture, long term solutions to funding transportation infrastructure. The early focus will be roads and bridges, but other modes of transportation will also be considered in the long term.

This group will serve as the steering committee for transportation and an expanded group will serve as the advisory committee. Research is being done

now, led by Tulio Sulbaran, Ph.D. of USM. This research and other “homework” would continue through 2015 and the goal is to have a plan to take to the legislature in 2016.

Mr. Sanderson doesn’t believe that taking something to the legislature in 2015 will work as

- a. We don’t have enough information to be ready for those conversations
- b. Timing won’t work due to the upcoming elections (November 2014)

II. Research Committee Update

- a. The research committee consisting of Mark Leggett, Chip Morgan, Scott Waller, Christi Kilroy and Tulio Sulbaran, Ph.D. have met several times by phone and in person. An outline of the research process was distributed to committee members for review.
- b. Tulio Sulbaran, Ph.D. reviewed the outline of the research process, emphasizing that the document would be open for review and updates throughout the research phase.

The process would include:

- i. Determining Need and Importance of maintaining transportation system. Work has already been completed in this area. Scott Waller will distribute via email the short paper.
- ii. Identify other Stakeholders
- iii. Understanding the Priorities as they are in place at MDoT and the priorities of stakeholders
- iv. Exploring Funding Options
- v. Create a System of Accountability

William Yates requested that the overall objectives (the deliverable) of the group be added to the outline. Members also discussed the importance of adding intermodal transportation (rail, ports, airports) infrastructure needs to the project. While there would be a strong focus on roads and bridges, the Blueprint goal is to develop a comprehensive long-term solution for all transportation. Blake Wilson reminded the group that Mississippi State University would also be involved in the research and that their focus would include these other modes of transportation.

- c. The group discussed who should be included on the stakeholders list. Besides State, Counties, Cities, Businesses and Citizens – many were added to the list including Federal, Associations and safety organizations. Opponents may include AARP and the Tea Party.
- d. Specific needs were discussed with most agreeing that the bulk of the need is additional funds for maintenance of existing roads and bridges – especially for City and County roads. New Construction to support economic development projects should also be considered.

III. Policy Strategies

- a. Scott Waller reported on the common themes of successful infrastructure investment initiatives in other states that were presented at the recent workshop presented by the Transportation Advocacy Center. Successful campaigns included:

- Both Data and Market (Opinion) Research to Determine a Plan
- Identifying Opposition and Address Their Complaints – Work to Find what it Would Take to Make them a Supporter
- Having a Plan and Sticking to the Plan
- Governor is the Champion
- Bipartisan Support
- Strong Business Support
- Make DOT a Partner
- Must Include Solutions to Local (City/County) Infrastructure Issues
- Must Create New Jobs
- Public Awareness and Buy In is Key Component – Ongoing Campaign Before, During and After Implementation. Public Must Relate to and Understand the Project– Demonstrate Return on Investment

b. 2015 Opportunities – There will be needs in 2015 and this group would support additional funding within existing resources, but any meaningful transportation investment legislation would happen in 2016. Our work in 2015 is to keep the topic of infrastructure needs in the forefront and begin to package, present and educate the public on the long-term needs for investment.

IV. Path Forward – Mr. Sanderson will continue to meet with MDoT and will distribute information he has already collected with the group. Research through Dr. Sulbaran and MSU will continue. Scott Waller will distribute the document prepared on transportation needs and importance.

V. Meeting adjourned.

Submitted by: Christi Kilroy
ckilroy@msmec.com
 mobile: 601-630-5600