



2021 TMACOG Virtual General Assembly

City Caucus Notes

Wednesday, January 20, 2021

Call to Order/Welcome/Attendance – The City Caucus met on Wednesday, January 20, 2021 at 1:30 p.m. via GoToMeeting video teleconference. Michael Beazley, Oregon City administrator and the moderator of the caucus, called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone present. Mr. Beazley explained the purpose of the caucus for those new to TMACOG.

Caucus members in attendance included:

- Cecelia Adams – Council Member At-Large, City of Toledo
- Abby Arnold – Deputy Chief of Staff, City of Toledo
- Mike Aspacher – Mayor, City of Bowling Green
- Michael Beazley – City Administrator, City of Oregon
- Matt Cherry – President of Council, City of Toledo
- Robert Clark – Mayor, City of Monroe
- Nick Komives – Council Member At-Large, City of Toledo
- Thomas Mackin – Mayor, City of Perrysburg
- Allyson Murray – Administrator, City of Rossford
- Scott Noonan – Council Member, City of Maumee
- Timothy Pedro – Mayor, City of Waterville
- Angie Ruiz – Council Member, 3rd Ward, City of Fremont
- Craig Stough – Mayor, City of Sylvania
- Jerry Tarolli – Council Member At-Large, City of Port Clinton
- Kenneth Yant – Finance Director, City of Northwood

Other TMACOG members and guests in attendance included:

- Laurie Adams – Managing Principal, DGL Consulting Engineers, LLC
- Mike Avellano – Engineer Program Director, Woolpert, Inc.
- Frank Butwin – President, Maumee Valley Heritage Corridor
- Lori Brodie – Northwest Ohio Regional Liaison, Office of Ohio State Auditor, Keith Faber
- Victor Coleman – External Affairs Consultant, FirstEnergy/Toledo Edison
- Patrick Etchie – Senior Project Manager, The Mannik & Smith Group, Inc.
- Meghan Gallagher – Regional Business Development Coordinator and Account Manager, Ohio Turnpike & Infrastructure Commission
- Sally Gladwell – Senior Vice President, The Mannik & Smith Group, Inc.
- Adam Greenslade – Mayor, Village of Green Spring & Dir. of Government Affairs and Marcom, Ohio Turnpike & Infrastructure Commission
- Sarah Helbig – Executive Director of Marketing, Jones & Henry Engineers
- Erica Krause – Northwest Ohio Regional Representative, Office of U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown
- Patrick McColley – Deputy Director, ODOT District 2
- Rick McGuckin – Principal, DGL Consulting Engineers, LLC
- Amanda Miller – Area Manager, External Affairs, AT&T Ohio
- Dean Niese – President, The Mannik & Smith Group, Inc.
- Sean Smith – Planner, TARTA
- Lisa Sobecki – State Representative, 45th District, Ohio

- Mark Stahl – Commissioner, Ottawa County Board of Commissioners & Chair, TMACOG
- Julie Thomas – Senior Project Manager, CT Consultants, Inc.
- Keith Torbet – Director of Public Service, City of Wauseon
- Kacey Young – Capital Programs Administrator, ODOT District 2

TMACOG staff members in attendance included:

- Jennifer Allen, Executive Assistant
- Marissa Bechstein, Transportation Planner
- William Best, Vice President of Finance and Administration
- Tim Brown, President
- Lance Dasher, Transportation Planner
- David Gedeon, Vice President of Transportation
- Kari Gerwin, Director of Water Quality
- Sara Guiher, Water Quality Planner
- Lisa Householder, Transportation Planner
- Mary Pat McCarthy, Marketing/Public Info Manager
- Gilda Mitchell, Director of Membership and Outreach
- Nate Reiter, Accountant
- Mike Tippet, Digital Communications Manager

Election of the Representative to the Board of Trustees – A ***motion*** was made by Angie Ruiz and ***seconded*** by Jerry Tarolli to elect the following representatives to this year’s Board of Trustees. The motion passed.

Trustees

Scott Noonan, City of Maumee
 Timothy Pedro, City of Waterville
 Angie Ruiz, City of Fremont

A ***motion*** was made by Tim Pedro and ***seconded*** by Angie Ruiz to elect the following alternates to this year’s TMACOG Board of Trustees. The motion passed.

Alternates

Jerry Tarolli, City of Port Clinton
 Tom Mackin, City of Perrysburg
 Craig Stough, City of Sylvania

Election of City Representation to Transportation Council – A ***motion*** was made by Angie Ruiz and ***seconded*** by Jerry Tarolli to elect Angie Ruiz to represent the City Caucus on the Transportation Council. The motion passed.

Introduction of Discussion Topics- The following topics were discussed by the caucus.

- **Impacts of COVID-19 on your communities** – Caucus members discussed how COVID-19 has affected their communities. Many communities acknowledged that revenue from the state has covered many of the costs and decreases in tax revenue. The City of Oregon has seen a 22% lost in revenue because the refineries have faced many hardships. The City of Sylvania has seen a 5% decrease in income tax receipts, but CARES Act funding has exceeded their losses. The City of Bowling Green relied heavily on their income tax revenue, which is down 7%. However, CARES Act money and workers compensation has made up for the loss. The City of Fremont has seen an 8.5% increase in income tax from previous years. Local restaurants are doing okay with carryout options. The City of Waterville has seen a 4-5% decrease in revenue. The City of Perrysburg has

seen a 4% decrease in revenue, and the largest impact has been to local businesses downtown. The City of Port Clinton's local businesses are doing well due to the Meals on Madison event. They are expecting potential hit this year. The City of Toledo voters passed a new tax. They are a model of a city that has put off capital expenditures. Small businesses in Toledo are really struggling, the last federal relief package helped, but more money is needed to protect small businesses.

- **COVID-19 Vaccine and Timelines for Distribution** – Mike Beazley urged communities to engage in efforts to encourage their workforce to receive the vaccine. Some employers will make the vaccine mandatory or individual health care costs will rise. Some industries like wastewater treatment plants are requiring their employees to be vaccinated. There are many individuals not wanting the vaccine, but an effort is needed to educate the public and encourage them to get vaccinated. In the City of Fremont, 25% of firefighters received the vaccine.
- **Economic Recovery Efforts** – This topic was listed on the agenda but was not discussed.
- **Legislative Actions Needed** – Federal relief packages are needed. Caucus members discussed the need to prioritize 1-3 budget items. TMACOG will assist in regional collaboration by assembling local representatives to meet with federal and state representatives to discuss needed legislative priorities. Local governments are doing okay overall, but many cities deferred capital expenditures, so infrastructure dollars are needed in many cities. Capital improvement and infrastructure support would be helpful and would help get residents back to work. The group emphasized the need to work with economic development departments, city administrators, and other professionals to provide quantifiable data to demonstrate local needs to federal and state representatives.
- Erica Krause from the Office of U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown provided caucus members with updates from the federal level. The first thing at the federal level that will be prioritized is a COVID-19 relief package and then infrastructure, specifically climate infrastructure like brownfields and drinking water. There have also been discussions about a National Infrastructure Bank to help with projects across the country.
- Caucus members discussed the statewide issue of existing court systems. Currently, cities that host courts are responsible for the costs even though they serve the entire county. The burden is falls on taxpayers within these cities. The cities would like to see the Michigan model. Michigan has one statewide court system that is funded through state legislation and the state budget process. The City of Sylvania is paying for the court for the entire area. Sylvania pays about \$800,000 a year to pay for the Court. An appropriate solution is needed that is fair for cities and counties.
- TMACOG has been collaborating with the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) and ODOT to address the need of a direct route from the Toledo metropolitan area to Columbus. Currently, travelers will encounter approximately 44 traffic lights before they reach the outer belt of Columbus. TMACOG and MORPC have each allocated \$250,000, which has been matched by ODOT at \$500,000. Another issue TMACOG shared with members is that the ability to conduct official business via teleconference is currently set to expire on July 1, 2021. TMACOG is advocating for a permanent permissive authority for governments, so they can continue to conduct meetings virtually when they deem appropriate.
- Lisa Sobecki has a co-sponsor request to have telecommunication be permissive. Additionally, she has been engaged in the national infrastructure bank, which could provide \$4-5 trillion dollars to help with infrastructure needs. Additionally, it would be beneficial for a meeting to be coordinated with TMACOG, local representatives within the northwest region, and state legislators to have conversations about the needs as they move into budget cycles.

Roundtable Discussion – The City of Toledo recently passed the budget to allow more spending than normal. Spending more dollars will help get people back to work. They are now focusing on the massive roadway reconstruction program.

Members also discussed the need for more mental health awareness in cities to help reduce with the gun violence that has been seen in recent years. Legislation is needed to address poverty, education, and unemployment to assist with the mental health crisis.

Next Steps – TMACOG will work on setting up a meeting between legislators and local jurisdictions.

Adjourn Meeting – There was no further business. Mr. Beazley adjourned the meeting at 2:50 pm