

# RATS

**Rockford Area Transportation Study  
Metropolitan Planning Organization**

## **POLICY COMMITTEE**

*Mayor Douglas P. Scott, City of Rockford  
Mayor Darryl F. Lindberg, City of Loves Park  
Board Chairman Kristine Cohn, Winnebago County  
President Linda M. Vaughn, Village of Machesney Park  
Mayor Frederic C. Brereton, City of Belvidere  
Board Chairman Susan L. Anderson, Boone County  
District Engineer Gregory L. Mounts, Illinois Department  
of Transportation, District 2*

## **RATS POLICY COMMITTEE**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**July 24, 2003**

**Rockford City Hall**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Darryl Lindberg, City of Loves Park; Kris Cohn, Winnebago County; Bob Soltau, IDOT-District 2; Bill Bittner, City of Rockford; and Linda Vaughn, Village of Machesney Park.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Joe Vanderwerff, Winnebago County Highway Department; Ken Terrinoni, Boone County; Susan Anderson, Boone County; John Donovan, Federal Highway Administration; Einar Forsman, City of Rockford; Rob Goldsmith, City of Rockford; Steve Ernst, City of Rockford and RATS staff; Russ Petrotte, City of Rockford and RATS staff and Gary McIntyre, City of Rockford and RATS staff.

### **1. CALL TO ORDER AND REPRESENTATION**

With a quorum present, RATS Chairman Lindberg called the meeting to order at 1:40 P.M.

### **2. COMMUNICATIONS**

Steve Ernst said that the Illinois Department of Transportation has announced that applications are available for the 4<sup>th</sup> round of the Illinois Tomorrow grant program.

### **3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chairman Lindberg said the minutes for the May 29<sup>th</sup> and June 26<sup>th</sup> RATS Policy Committee meetings will be laid over since those meeting minutes are not done.

### **4. RATS COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT**

Mr. Ernst said the Technical Committee discussed the proposed cooperative agreement at their recent meeting and offered the following changes:

- a On page 4, the RATS Technical Committee membership was updated to reflect recent changes to the City of Loves Park Community Development Department and to drop all agencies from the non-voting membership status.
- b On page 8, article 11, section 4, the word "County" was added to this section to reflect that a county unit of government is eligible to be a member of the RATS Technical Committee.
- c On page 9, article 16, section 1, was updated to reflect that RATS currently has a selection process for the use of STP-Urban funds. This section highlights and clarifies that process but is not meant to supplant the actual process as previously set forth by RATS Resolutions 94-2 and 2000-4.
- d On page 12, IDOT's authorizing signature was changed from the District Engineer to the Secretary of IDOT.

Mr. Ernst said that at the Technical Committee, the Committee unanimously recommended that this updated version of the RATS Cooperative Agreement

be submitted to Policy Committee for your review and action at this meeting. Mr. Ernst said that John Donovan of FHWA does have some comments to the Cooperative Agreement.

Mr. Donovan said FHWA has the following comments to Article 2:

Section 3 - No changes

Section 4 - Again, adding the phrase ***“in cooperation with the State and operators of publicly owned transit”*** to the existing language in this section.

Mr. Donovan suggested a new section (#5) under Article 2. ***“The selection of all projects (except projects on the National Highway System and projects funded under the bridge, interstate maintenance, and Federal Lands Highway programs) in consultation with the State and operators of publicly owned transit from approved metropolitan TIP and in accordance with the priorities in the approved metropolitan TIP.”***

Chairman Lindberg expressed his concern that these comments were being submitted at a late date, just when the local units of government had reached an agreement. Mr. Ernst said that if that are substantial changes made to the cooperative agreement at this meeting, this issue might need to be referred back to the Technical Committee and those changes to be added into the agreement. Bill Bittner asked a question regarding the deadline that this a new agreement should be in place. Chairman Lindberg expressed the urgency of taking action on this matter so that Boone County and Belvidere could become members of the Committee.

Mr. Bittner suggested that a more appropriate time for the FHWA to make comments about the Cooperative Agreement would be at the September 2003 Certification Review.

Mr. Cohn also expressed her concern that these changes are being brought in at this late time and that should have been submitted in writing before this meeting.

Mr. Donovan apologized for FHWA comments at this time, but he just received the draft Cooperative Agreement on Tuesday (two days before this meeting).

Section 1 - No changes

Section 2 - Replace the word “consistent” with the phrase ***“in cooperation with the State and operators of publicly owned transit.”***

Mr. Bittner asked if RATS is in any serious violation of federal guidelines regarding the upcoming Certification Review and the new cooperative agreement being discussed today. Mr. Donovan said RATS is not violating any federal regulations today as a result of this cooperative agreement.

Mr. Bittner said the Committee appreciates FHWA comments at this time, but RATS has been working on this issue for several months and the local units of government have agreed in principle to support what is being submitted today by the Technical Committee.

Mr. Donovan said the comments being expressed today by FHWA are meant to improve and enhance the Cooperative Agreement and the overall RATS transportation planning process. Again he stated that RATS is not violating any federal guidelines regarding this issue of membership to the Policy Committee.

Mr. Donovan continued his comments by noting that Article 4 and 10 of the Cooperative Agreement limit membership in the Policy Committee to general purpose units of government. He said it may be appropriate to change these sections to provide the opportunity for transit providers to represent their interests on the Policy Committee. Mr. Donovan said he understood that RMTD is intimately tied to Rockford via funding and Board appointment but that it still might be appropriate to have RMTD as a member of the Policy Committee.

Mr. Donovan further suggested that in Article 6, Item 9 the word ***“endorse”*** should be replaced by ***“approve.”*** The RATS Policy Committee approves the Transportation Plan, TIP and UWP.

Mr. Donovan concluded his comments that Article 16 needs to be clarified to reflect that RATS has established selection criteria already in place as per previous RATS Resolutions 94-2 and 2000-4.

Following a brief discussion on the nature of changing the word ***“endorse” to “approve”*** in Article 6, Item 9, Ms. Cohn made a motion to approve the new RATS Cooperative Agreement (dated July 24, 2003 version) with the above-mentioned change to Article

6, Item 9. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bittner. By consensus, the Policy Committee acknowledged that changes may need to be made to this Cooperative Agreement after the Federal Transportation Certification Review in September 2003. Roll called was taken, and the motion was unanimous.

Mr. Ernst said the RATS Technical Committee has reviewed the draft Transportation Improvement Program for FY-2004 to FY-2006 and unanimously recommended that the draft be submitted to IDOT. Mr. Bittner made a motion to submit the draft FY-2004 to FY-2006 RATS TIP to IDOT. The motion was seconded by Linda Vaughn and approved unanimously.

## 6. RATS LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Mr. McIntyre distributed a copy of a public information open house announcement for the purpose of seeking public comments on the proposed amendment to the RATS Long Range Transportation Plan. The proposed amendment is the addition of a bike facility along the IL 173 corridor from Perryville Road (the Perryville Path) to the Village of Caledonia (the Long Prairie Trail). The open house will be held at the Village of Machesney Park Village Hall on August 26, 2003, from 4:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M. The Policy Committee concurred with the announcement and the need to hold a public informational open house.

## 7. ELECTION OF RATS POLICY COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR FY-2004

Ms. Cohn made a motion to nominate Mayor Lindberg to be RATS Policy Committee Chairman and Village President Linda Vaughn for RATS Policy Chairman Vice-Chairman during FY-2004. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bittner and approved unanimously.

## 8. PROGRESS REPORTS:

8.1 Winnebago County Smart Growth Study. No report.

Mr. Donovan expressed his thanks for the work of RATS staff on the Cooperative Agreement.

## 5. RATS TIP FOR FY-2004 to FY-2006

8.2 Rockford Area Rail Consolidation Study. The draft final report has been prepared and submitted to the area's railroad operators for their review.

8.3 Roscoe-Rockton Public Transit Study. No report.

8.4 WinGIS. WinGIS met before this meeting.

8.5 RATS/SLATS Modeling Study. Mr. McIntyre said the future computer model runs will began very soon.

8.6 RMTD Route & Schedule Analysis. Mr. Petrotte said RMTD is reviewing the final report that was submitted by their consultant.

8.7 RMTD East Side Transfer Center Study. No report.

## 9. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Petrotte said a cooperative agreement and standard assurances for conducting and administering the Rockford-Belvidere Transit Feasibility Study has been prepared by staff for the Committee's review. The Federal Transit Administration is requesting an agreement for this study. Ms. Cohn made a motion to have Chairman Lindberg sign the agreement on behalf of RATS. The motion was seconded by Ms. Vaughn and approved unanimously.

## 10. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Ms. Cohn made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Vaughn and approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 2:22 P.M.