

**FAIRFIELD COUNTY TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**

**MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING**

**March 14, 2023**

**FAIRFIELD COUNTY RECORDS CENTER**

**138 WEST CHESTNUT STREET; LANCASTER, OHIO 43130**

Sonja Simpson called the meeting to order just after 1:00 p.m. on March 14, 2023 at the Fairfield County Records Center. The following persons were present: Sonja Simpson (TID Chairperson); Jeremiah Upp (TID Secretary/Treasurer); Rick Szabrak (TID Vice Chairperson); Curt Shonk (TID Board Member); Greg Butcher (TID Board Member); Jeff Fix (Fairfield County Commissioner); Dave Levacy (Fairfield County Commissioner); Mitch Noland (Fairfield County Engineer's Office); Jason Grubb (Fairfield County Engineer's Office); Anthony Iachini (Fairfield County Economic Development); Jennifer Shuey (DLZ); Ron Thomas (Thomas Property); Kyle Messaros (American Structurepoint); Ralph Hedrick (Amanda Township); Don Keller (Liberty Township); Holly Mattei (Regional Planning Commission)

**1. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:**

- a. Approval of the February 14, 2023, regular meeting minutes.
- b. We have a motion by Mr. Butcher. Second by Mr. Upp. All members approved. Motion carried.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- a. No public comments.

**3. REPORT FROM FINANCE COMMITTEE: County TID Financial Report**

- a. February 7th of 2023 to March 7th of 2023.
  - 2/7/23 beginning balance of \$339,925.96
  - 2/13/23 check to Transcon Ltd for \$2,000.00.
  - 2/13/23 check to Clark Insurance Company for \$145.00
  - 3/7/23 ending Balance of \$337,780.96.
- b. Motion to approve the report from Mr. Butcher. 2nd by Mr. Shonk. All approved. Motion carried.

**4. NEW BUISNESS: No new business**

**5. OLD BUISNESS:**

**a. Consultant Project Update Report**

- i) **Far East Freeway** – Bill Lozier stated Taylor Rd. is still being designed by ODOT. Mr. Lozier will continue to check in with the consulting team as the findings of the study become available. It is possible that recommendations from the local road study could result in the need for future improvements as phases of the interchange

project. As the structure type study advances, aesthetic treatments can be coordinated by the TID.

- ii) **Refugee Road Corridor** – Bill Lozier stated, Congressman Balderson's office called to let us know that there is another round of Community Projects grant applications for fiscal year 2024. As noted in the last report, Mr. Lozier applied for the ODOT systemic safety grant program in the amount of \$2.2 million. The program requires a 10% match. The scope of work includes a 10 ft pathway on the north and a 5 ft sidewalk on the south side from the Pickerington Corp line to Pickerington Rd. The decision to make this application was confirmed by the Fairfield County TID Board after Woolpert Inc. presented the findings of the reevaluation of the safety study. The findings from Woolpert Inc. were that the ongoing project to upgrade the Pickerington Road and other intersections will provide significant congestion relief for future traffic conditions as it is currently being designed, and that the proposed 5-lane widening is not needed. Mr. Lozier stated it is still possible the project could leverage private financing from a commercial retail development. It is most likely the benefit of this would be gained from the Pickerington Rd intersection east to Tollgate Rd since this is the affected area of the development. Mr. Lozier noted more details of this will be provided as the development project advances. Mr. Lozier noted in his last report; ODOT District 5 reviewed and accepted the application, then submitted it to ODOT Central Office on January 27<sup>th</sup>. Although the maximum amount of the grant is 2 million dollars, we are hoping for some grace as we are only slightly above that amount. ODOT District 5 asked the Fairfield County TID board to provide options for phasing, so the board suggested construction of the pathway only and then the Fairfield County Commissioners would be responsible for filling the gaps of missing walkways on the south. Mr. Lozier stated this is not preferred since, in some cases, the pedestrian crosswalks would have no landing area on the south side. Mr. Lozier stated he will keep the board posted after he hears from ODOT about how we score with the ODOT project selection team. Mr. Lozier stated he expected to hear back from ODOT early to mid-April.
- iii) **US33/I-70 Connector** – Bill Lozier stated, there is nothing new to report other than there is a multi county coalition within the Intel 30-minute travel time ring has had some preliminary conversations. Commissioner Jeff Fix stressed his interest in moving the project forward. Mr. Fix will set up a meeting with Congressmen Balderson to see what needs to be done to move the project forward. Details of this will be shared with the board if anything develops.
- iv) **East Side Industrial Connector** – Curt Shonk discussed the connector. Structure Point sent the project study back to the city this week. The study was a broad overview of the project. Still need to do a feasibility study within the corridor. Mr. Shonk said he still needs to review the study with the City of Lancaster steering committee. We will continue to monitor this project.

- v) **US33 Corridor Lane Widening CAP Project** – Bill Lozier stated, ODOT awarded \$19 M from TRAC through Stage 1 design for interchanges at IR270, Hamilton Road and Bixby/ Rager Roads. With other work as noted in the description on the application: Mainline widening of US33 from 4-lanes to 6-lanes starting at the IR270 interchange (SE quad) and extending down to the Fairfield County line while improving the operations at the interchange of IR270/US33 and replacing two existing at-grade intersections at US33 and Bixby Road, and US33 at Rager Road, with a grade-separated interchange at Bixby Road. Mr. Lozier continued; Rager Road will be removed by converting the existing intersection to two cul-de-sacs on either side of US33. Jeremiah Upp stated he plans to discuss the project with Jason Sturgeon at ODOT District 5. Mr. Upp and Mr. Sturgeon's discussion with ODOT District 6 officials is an effort to try and get the widening project pulled out for construction long before the interchanges in Franklin County. Mr. Upp stated, there is no reason additional lanes can't be built before the interchanges are designed/built. The upcoming Transportation Bill has a provision that allows for grant funding that could cover the match of 20%. Mr. Upp noted, discussions continue with ODOT District 6 officials and Congressman Carey's office to make the lane addition to US33 a standalone project rather than incorporate it with the interchanges being constructed. Mr. Upp stated, this is a great opportunity to help travelers coming from Southeast Ohio as they commute to Columbus. We will continue to monitor this project.
- vi) **Basil Western Rd. Realignment** – Rick Szabrak noted he is still negotiating with the developer since the last meeting. Mr. Szabrak is working on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Fairfield County, Violet Township, and Canal Winchester to connect all the parcels to the same economic development incentive package, so all development contributes to the Basil Western Road improvements. Bill Lozier noted that he applied for a TID grant. Mr. Lozier stated the request is for \$350,000 to fund design. Mr. Szabrak stated that they are finalizing a contract with another company that could bring another project to the Basil-Western Road area. Mr. Szabrak will update the board next month on the progress of this agreement.

Mr. Szabrak stated the Fairfield County TID received a 629 grant from the State of Ohio for \$1.2 million. The TID also received a \$100,000 grant from ODOT Jobs and Commerce, but Mr. Szabrak noted he has not seen the final paperwork for that yet. Mr. Szabrak stated the TID should receive approximately \$1.5 million in developer contribution from DHL when he finalizes the DHL agreement for Basil-Western Road improvements. The Fairfield County Commissioners Office will be financing anything above \$3 million dollars for the project. Mr. Szabrak also mentioned building the entire Basil-Western corridor as a 3-lane cross section. Jeremiah Upp discussed preliminary plans to re-align Basil-Western Road and add a roundabout at Kings Crossing Road as part of those improvements. Mr. Upp stated construction cost estimates received for the Basil-Western improvements are approximately \$10 million dollars. Mr. Lozier discussed possible financing options. The board discussed accounting of the funds for construction. Further discussion will be needed to finalize the accountants, attorneys, and consultants for the project.


Mr. Szabrak made a motion to apply for the TID Grant through ODOT for Basil-Western Road design. Second by Mr. Upp. All members approved. Motion carried.

**6. OTHER BUSINESS:** No new business

**7. ADJOURMENT:**

- a. Mr. Butcher moved to adjourn. Second by Mr. Shonk. All approved. The meeting was adjourned.

Minutes approved by:



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Jeremiah Upp  
Secretary/Treasurer