

Mackinac Bridge Authority
Official Meeting
Mackinac Island, Michigan
July 9, 2021

Minutes

(Pursuant to the Open Meetings Act, notification of this meeting was posted on the entrance to the Mackinac Bridge Authority Administration Building, St. Ignace, Michigan, the Michigan Department of Transportation Van Wagoner Building, Lansing, Michigan, the City Hall Building, Mackinac Island, Michigan, on the Mackinac Bridge Authority website, and a press release was sent statewide more than eighteen hours prior to the meeting.)

Members present: Mr. Patrick F. Gleason, Chair – Mackinac Bridge Authority
Mr. Paul C. Ajegba, Director – Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT)
Mr. Kirk T. Steudle, Member – Mackinac Bridge Authority
Ms. Tricia Kinley, Member – Mackinac Bridge Authority
Mr. William G. Milliken, Jr., Member – Mackinac Bridge Authority
Ms. Caroline Cheeseman, Member – Mackinac Bridge Authority
Mr. Robert Brackenbury, Deputy Chief Investment Officer, attending via Microsoft Teams on behalf of State Treasurer Eubanks – Mackinac Bridge Authority

Excused absent: Ms. Amy Trahey, Vice Chair – Mackinac Bridge Authority

Also present: Ms. Kim Nowack, Bridge Director – Mackinac Bridge Authority
Ms. Kathleen Gleeson, Assistant Attorney General, Division Chief – MDOT
Mr. Mike Buby, Acting Bridge Services Manager – Mackinac Bridge
Mrs. Camille Hansen, Chief Financial Officer – Mackinac Bridge
Mrs. Julie Neph, Chief Engineer – Mackinac Bridge
Mr. Cole Cavalieri, Assistant Engineer – Mackinac Bridge
Mr. Kipp Vaughn, Personnel Liaison – Mackinac Bridge
Mrs. Melissa DeKeyser, Secretary – Mackinac Bridge
Mr. Tom Spoth, Vice President – Parsons Fellow
Sgt. Ryan Werner, St. Ignace Post – Michigan State Police
Mr. Brad Sharlow, Supervisor, Urban Travel Analysis Unit – MDOT
Mr. Jeff Cranson, Director of Communications – MDOT
Mr. James Lake, Communications Representative – MDOT
Ms. Stephanie Fortino, Writer – St. Ignace News
Mr. Murray Wikol, Former Member – Mackinac Bridge Authority

Mr. Gleason called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. Ms. Nowack called the roll and Chairman Gleason, MDOT Director Ajegba, Member Steudle, Member Milliken, Member Kinley, Member Cheeseman, Council Gleeson, and Robert Brackenbury were all present.

Approval of Agenda

Mr. Steudle made a motion to approve the agenda as presented with support from Director Ajegba. All voted in favor of the motion.

Public Comment on Agenda Items

Former Member Murray Wikol discussed and presented a military grade solar rechargeable road flare to members and staff. The company is headquartered out of Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Mr. Gleason called for any additions or corrections to the minutes of the Finance Committee, Official and Closed Session meetings of March 12, 2021, the Infrastructure and Deck Replacement Committee meetings of April 20, 2021, and June 15, 2021, the By-Laws Committee meeting of April 23, 2021, the Special meeting of May 18, 2021, and the Insurance Committee meetings of May 3, 2021, and June 16, 2021. A motion to approve the meeting minutes as presented was made by Mr. Steudle with support from Mr. Milliken. All voted in favor of the motion.

Michigan State Police Commercial Enforcement Division Report

Sgt. Ryan Werner of the St. Ignace Post presented 2021 operational and supervision hours, inspection and citation information and a chart comparing patrol hours, stops, citations, trucks weighed and inspected for 2019, 2020 and 2021. Fiscal year 2021 weight fines totaled \$62,006.

Committee Reports

By-Laws Committee

Mrs. Cheeseman reported that a draft of the By-Laws was distributed to members for comment and suggested changes by April 19, 2021. The By-Laws Committee received three suggested changes which were all implemented; a fifteen-mile perimeter pertaining to the St. Ignace meeting was added, changing the Executive Secretary title to Bridge Director was adopted, and narrowing the conflict of interest from the State of Michigan to the Mackinac Bridge Authority was accepted. The original By-Laws, the draft By-Laws with markups of suggested changes, and final draft were included in the meeting packet. Ms. Cheeseman made a motion that the final draft be approved as written with support from Mr. Milliken. Ms. Nowack called the roll and Chairman Gleason, Director Ajegba, Member Steudle, Member Milliken, Member Kinley, and Member Cheeseman all voted in favor of the motion.

Insurance Committee

Ms. Kinley reported that the Committee has met twice since the last full board meeting due to the current auto policy expiring October 1, 2021. In the last five years, the premiums have increased by 55% partially due to the liability of the wind escort and driver's assistance programs. Of the ten requests for quote letters sent, five insurance companies did not respond, two denial letters and four quotes were received. The two denial letters referenced the high liability of the wind escort and driver's assistance services provided. Committee members are concerned with staff safety, liability and labor hours performing these services and asked Counsel to review and update the liability waivers considering the State's auto insurance reform. The Committee asked Ms. Hansen to resend the ten requests for quotes omitting the wind escort, driver's assistance, and transport services. The Committee will present a cost analysis of the quotes received with the inclusion and omission of the wind escort, driver's assistance, and transport services at the special meeting of the full board on August 10, 2021, and the wind escort, driver's assistance and transport services provided by Mackinac Bridge staff will be discussed. No action was taken.

Finance Committee

Mr. Milliken reported that the Finance Committee had met the day before and heard informational investment and economic reports from the Michigan Department of Treasury. The Committee also received an informational traffic and revenue report from Mr. Buby. The Finance Committee had three action items that were approved: the repayment of advances in the amount of \$250,000, the fiscal year 2022 budget showing a revenue projection of \$24.4 million dollars and an operating expense of \$18.2 million dollars, and the sale of small grating pieces for \$20 each. Mr. Steudle made a motion that the full board accept the committee report and approve the action items previously approved by the Finance Committee with support from Ms. Kinley. All voted in favor of the motion.

Infrastructure and Deck Replacement Committee

Mr. Steudle reported that the Committee has met twice since the last full board meeting and that they heard a lengthy presentation the day prior. Ms. Neph introduced Tom Spoth of Parsons to provide an overview of the deck study. Mr. Spoth discussed the three-phased project approach: the investigation of existing conditions, the evaluation of remaining service life and load carrying capacity, and the development of rehabilitation and deck replacement alternatives. The investigation of existing conditions included a review of previous study

findings, end-to-end detailed inspection of the deck and floor framing, field testing and concrete core extraction. The evaluation of remaining service life and load carrying capacity evaluated concrete compressive strength, chloride permeability and profiles, carbonation depth, and included service life computer modeling. The development of rehabilitation and deck replacement alternative objectives would provide improvements to lane widths, railings, and medians and a 75-year service life. A timeline and project costs were presented. The preservation period would occur until 2032 with a series of deck replacement projects starting in 2033 and ending in 2050. Mr. Steudle made a motion to accept the deck study report with support from Mr. Milliken. All voted in favor of the motion.

South Tower Painting Project

Ms. Nowack reported that Seaway is currently working on the west tower leg using scaffolding from the concrete pedestal up to just above the roadway and the project is approximately 85% complete. The new completion date for the project is July 28, 2021, which will likely be extended by one month. The two-year warranty will start upon completion of the project this summer.

Maintenance Projects

Mr. Cavaliere discussed that the painters continue to clean and repaint sections of the superstructure steel in the suspended and truss spans. Steel structural repairs and deck repairs are also being performed. Concrete patches are being placed in areas where there has been water infiltration and open steel grating panels from the suspended spans are being replaced. A record number of 20 panels were replaced in 2020 and staff is on-pace to break that record for 2021. The toll lane attenuators will also be replaced this fall.

Annual Bridge Walk

Ms. Neph discussed that planning for the 2021 event is underway, including law enforcement meetings taking place, bridge closure during the walk is being discussed, supplies and equipment are being ordered and logistics are being reviewed.

Mr. Lake discussed the communications plan for the 2021 event which is similar to the communications plan for the 2019 event. The main objectives of the communications plan are to notify the public that the bridge will be closed to traffic during the walk, and to educate the public on the walk from both directions scheme that was implemented in 2018.

Workplace Update

Mr. Vaughn provided a brief review of the workplace settings that were implemented in response to the COVID pandemic and how that plan is evolving as we emerge, and workplace safety requirements are relaxed. Administration staff are transitioning to a hybrid schedule while still performing the on-line health screening, maintenance staff are resuming eight hour shifts and bridge services are seeing an increase in staffing due to higher volumes of summer traffic.

Social Media Update

Ms. Kinley provided an update on the Mackinac Bridge Twitter account and discussed the growth and engagement of the account.

HB 4872 and HB 4165 Update

Ms. Nowack discussed the origin of House Bill 4165 and discussed the bill will allow farm tractors to cross the Mackinac Bridge if they comply with the applicable requirements of the Michigan vehicle code and could maintain the minimum speed requirement. House Bill 4872 was introduced including the limited access freeway. Both bills have been referred to the Committee on Transportation.

Bridge Intruder Status

Ms. Gleeson discussed that the District Court Judge determined the statute did not include the Mackinac Bridge, therefore, the offender could not be prosecuted in Cheboygan County. Legislation is being drafted that

would name the Mackinac Bridge a key facility. The Mackinac Bridge Authority has recently filed a civil lawsuit against the defendant which included a temporary restraining order.

St. Ignace 350th Birthday Resolution

Ms. Cheeseman read the resolution that she drafted for the City of St. Ignace to commemorate their 350th birthday:

WHEREAS,

the Straits of Mackinac region has been inhabited by Indigenous peoples, principally the Chippewa, Ottawa, Huron, and Menominee, for centuries due to the region being the source of abundant fisheries, wild game, and trees for sugaring; and

WHEREAS,

the Straits of Mackinac being the confluence of two Great Lakes was recognized as a strategic location for a command post for 17th Century Anglo and European explorers and settlers, and

WHEREAS,

in 1671 Jesuit Priest Father Jacques Marquette established a mission on the north shore of the Straits of Mackinac which he named in honor of St. Ignatius Loyola the founder of the Jesuit Order, and

WHEREAS,

the City of St. Ignace having been occupied and thriving for 350 years is one of the oldest, continuously occupied cities in the United States of America, and

WHEREAS,

the City of St. Ignace is the childhood home of several persons who, having attained positions of high office in their state and country, made significant and important contributions to their fellow Americans well beyond the confines of their hometown: Vice Admiral of the U.S. Navy Aubrey Fitch, U. S. Senator Prentiss M. Brown, Wisconsin Governor Anthony Earl, Congressman Robert Davis, and Secret Service Agent Gary McLeod, and

WHEREAS,

many citizens of the City of St. Ignace have made and continue to make important contributions to and sacrifices for their country through their service as soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and coastguardsmen in all our nation's military conflicts, and

WHEREAS,

the citizens of the City of St. Ignace were instrumental in their support for the financing and construction of the Mackinac Bridge and continue to provide labor and maintenance services of the highest standards, and

WHEREAS,

the City of St. Ignace is home to the executive offices of the Mackinac Bridge Authority which oversees day-to-day operations, maintenance, and management of the bridge including the supervision of special events which mutually benefit the Mackinac Bridge and its surrounding communities through approximately \$130,000 in increased toll revenue and economic impact on the Straits area of over \$41,000,000 annually; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED,

that we, the undersigned members of the Mackinac Bridge Authority congratulate the City of St. Ignace on the occasion of its 350th anniversary and look forward to many more years of the positive, mutually beneficial relationship we have enjoyed with the City.

Ms. Cheeseman made a motion that the resolution be adopted, and that Ms. Cheeseman and Ms. Nowack present the resolution at the celebration in St. Ignace on August 20, 2021, with support from Ms. Kinley. All voted in favor of the motion.

Michigan Mobility 2045

Mr. Sharlow discussed the draft state long-range transportation plan which is a multi-modal policy-based planning document that establishes the vision, goals, objectives, and key strategies for Michigan's transportation system.

Fall 2021 Meeting Schedule

A special meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, August 10, 2021, in Lansing, Michigan at the Horatio S. Earle Learning Center and the fall meeting will be held on October 14-15, 2021, in Houghton, Michigan at Michigan Tech University.

Other

Mr. Steudle motioned to enter closed session at 10:57 a.m. per MCL 15.268 subsection 8(h) of the Open Meetings Act to discuss attorney/client pertinent information that is exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act with support from Ms. Kinley. Ms. Nowack called the roll and Chairman Gleason, Director Ajegba, Member Steudle, Member Milliken, Member Kinley, and Member Cheeseman all voted in favor of the motion.

Director Ajegba moved to end the closed session and enter back into open session with support from Ms. Kinley. Ms. Nowack called the roll and Chairman Gleason, Director Ajegba, Member Milliken, Member Kinley and Member Cheeseman all voted in favor of the motion. End closed session at 12:10 p.m.

Public Comment

Mr. Chris Byrnes, Director of the Mackinac Economic Alliance thanked the Authority for meeting in Mackinac County, for their service on the Authority and for providing year-round employment. Mr. Byrnes discussed the purpose of the organization and entities that they are partnered with. Mr. Byrnes invited members on a boat cruise on July 19, 2021, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Director Ajegba made a motion to adjourn at 12:28 p.m. with support from Mr. Milliken. All voted in favor of the motion.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Nowack, P.E.
Bridge Director