

TMACOG FREIGHT COMMITTEE AGENDA & MEETING NOTES

Wednesday, March 23, 2011, 11 a.m.

1. Welcome and introductions – Ray Huber
2. Heavy truck enforcement, safety and concerns – Sgt. David Waggoner

Sgt. David L. Waggoner of the Madison County Sheriff's Office gave a presentation on the challenges of enforcing Ohio's highway weight limits. The presentation covered the evolution of enforcement from a part-time duty with minimal training and equipment to a full time, highly trained, highly specialized position within the Sheriff's Office. Highway damage from one over-weight truck can be equal to several thousand automobiles. Damage to bridges has resulted in hundreds of bridge closures across the state. Cranes are a particular problem area, and the state has allowed the movement of dangerously over-weight cranes on Ohio's against law enforcement's protests. Sgt. Waggoner is an expert on weight enforcement and trains law enforcement from all over the state on all aspects of enforcement. He also works with truckers and shippers on what they need to do to stay legal.

Good discussion points from the presentation:

- The importance of balancing economic development with protecting infrastructure.
- Permit fees paid by shippers for heavy loads should go toward maintaining the routes used by the shippers, not put into the state's general highway fund. This would be a good topic to revisit with the new state administration.
- Weight enforcement rules and methods for law enforcement should be standard across the state, and though it may be far in the future, should also be standard across state lines.
- ODOT's listing of suggested heavy permit routes is outdated and is in the process of being updated.
- Some shippers avoid hauling heavy loads (such as wind energy equipment) through Ohio because of poorly planned routing and difficulties in permitting. Over-zealous law enforcement also discourages heavy hauling through Ohio. Standardized enforcement would be very beneficial.

Sgt. Waggoner's PowerPoint presentation is available on the Freight Planning page of the TMACOG website (www.tmacog.org).

3. Approval of chair, vice chair, and steering committee members for 2011 – Roger Streiffert

The committee voted to approve the chair, vice chair, and steering committee members for 2011, in accordance with the committee operating procedures. A list of all TMACOG Freight Committee members is available on the Freight Committee page of the TMACOG website (www.tmacog.org).

4. Update on the Northwest Ohio Freight Mobility and Infrastructure Study – Warren Henry and Joe Cappel

The Study, which has been discussed at previous Freight Committee meetings, is currently on hold as the new state administration looks at the available funding. It is expected that the study will move forward in 2011. However, the NW Ohio Solar Energy Hub of Innovation may not depending on funding. The northwest and northeast freight studies have now been combined. Future updates will be reported to the committee. A Draft Scope of Services for the study was distributed at the meeting and is available as a PDF by request.

5. Discussion on the subject of selling the Ohio Turnpike – Warren Henry

This topic was brought to the Freight Committee to get their input into the possible sale of the turnpike by the new state administration. Some key points and questions:

- Money from the sale (possibly 3 billion) could benefit northern Ohio with funding for major highway and other projects, including for northwest Ohio: the widening of I-75 from Perrysburg to Findlay and dredging of the Port of Toledo.
- If there are toll increases after the sale, how does this affect businesses such as FedEx or UPS or other shippers that depend on the turnpike for moving freight?
- Will a resulting toll increase move truck traffic off of the turnpike and on to parallel routes such as US 20 or SR 2? What about maintenance costs for these routes? What about safety concerns?
- Who will maintain the turnpike? The turnpike is in very good shape and is always quickly cleared after snowstorms. Will these standards be maintained?
- How quickly will the money from the sale be “used up”? Is this a quick budget fix with long lasting negative repercussions?

It was suggested that the Freight Committee should hold a special meeting devoted to the turnpike issue, maybe bringing in an “expert” on the subject to present. Ned Hill from Cleveland State was suggested as a possible speaker. Because of the possibility of the sale being pushed through very quickly, it was suggested that this special meeting be held during the April 27 steering committee meeting time slot. Warren and Roger will look at this possibility and check on the availability of a speaker. We will keep the committee updated on this subject that is very important to northern Ohio.

6. Other business/discussion – All

The TMACOG 2011 Annual Transportation Summit will be held on Friday, April 8. Visit www.tmacog.org for an agenda and registration information.

Toledo Train Day 2011 will be held on Saturday, April 30. Also check www.tmacog.org for details. Last year we had close to 4000 attendees, this year may be more. If you would like to volunteer for a couple of hour at the event, please contact Diane at evans@tmacog.org or 419-241-9155 ext. 117.

7. Adjourn