

**EXECUTIVE BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

Local Governments & Citizens Working Together

**Executive Board
Regular Meeting**

**Thursday, August 25, 2022
1:30 P.M.**

**This meeting was held In-Person and/or using
GoToMeeting by Video and/or Teleconference from
the Main Conference Room at the YMPO Offices at
230 West Morrison Street, Yuma, Arizona 85364.**

1. Call to Order and the Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Martin Porchas called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. He called on members to join him, in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Roll Call Attendance and Declaration of Votes

Blenda Dale, YMPO Accountant II/Executive Assistant, called the roll as follows:

YMPO Executive Board Members Present:

Chair	Martin Porchas, Board of Supervisors, Yuma County ^
Vice-Chair	Gary Knight, Councilmember, City of Yuma ^
Secretary/Treasurer	Cecilia McCollough, Mayor, Town of Wellton "
Member	Matias Rosales, Councilmember, City of San Luis ^
Member	Lynne Pancrazi, Board of Supervisors, Yuma County ^
Member	Bruce Fenske, Southwest District Administrator, ADOT ^

^ Attended in person.

" Arrived after the roll call, but prior to any action items being heard.

As five of the seven constituent member agencies were represented, the quorum requirement was met.

YMPO Executive Board Members Absent:

Member	Martha Garcia, Councilmember, City of Somerton *
Member	Karen Watts, Councilmember, City of Yuma +
Member	Leslie McClendon, Deputy Mayor, City of Yuma +
Member	Cocopah Indian Tribe - not currently identified *

+ Not present but represented by proxy by another member.

* Not present, and not represented by proxy by another member.

YMPO Staff Present:

Crystal Figueroa	Executive Director
Paul Ward	Principal Engineer
Charles Gutierrez	Senior Planning Manager

Jesus R. Aguilar, Jr. Mobility Manager
Blenda Dale Accountant II/ Executive Assistant
Norma Chavez Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper

Declaration of Votes: Councilmember (and Vice-Chair) Gary Knight declared that he would exercise proxies for Councilmember Watts and Deputy Mayor McClendon and would therefore wield all five votes for the City of Yuma.

3. Title VI Declaration and Call to the Public.

Ms. Norma Chavez, YMPO Bookkeeper, read a message reminding members of the YMPO Title VI obligations. No members of the public addressed the Board.

4. Consent Agenda.

A. Approval of the July 28, 2022, Board Meeting Minutes.

B. YMPO Income/Expenditure Report for July 2022.

A copy of the draft minutes of the Regular Board meeting from July 28, 2022, accompanied the agenda and the July 2022 financial report was also provided for review.

MOTION: Vice-Chair Knight moved to approve the Consent Agenda packet, items A and B, to include the July 28, 2022, regular meeting minutes, as written, and to accept the YMPO Income/Expenditure Report for June 2022, as published. Councilmember Matias Rosales seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

5. Approval of the FY 2023 YMPO Title VI Plan.

YMPO Senior Planning Manager (and YMPO Title VI Coordinator), Mr. Charles Gutierrez, updated the Board on proposed changes to the YMPO Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 Plan, the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan, and the Public Participation Plan (PPP). He reminded members that he had presented most of the proposed changes to the Board during the previous, July 2022, meeting.

MOTION: Vice-Chair Knight moved to approve the updated FY 2023 YMPO Title VI Plan. Supervisor Lynne Pancrazi seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

6. YMPO Rail/Heavy Freight Study - Update Report.

Chair Porchas agreed to Mr. Gutierrez's request to recognize Mr. Chris Joannes, the Kimley-Horn Project Manager for the YMPO Rail/Heavy Freight Alignment Study and invited him to give an update on the study.

Mr. Joannes started by describing the conceptual alignment alternatives that had been discussed during the Public Involvement Process (PIP), which included the first two public meetings held in the San Luis City Hall and at the Yuma County

Public Works facility. He reported that they had received a lot of input, which was still coming in, through the YMPO website.

He stated that the next step in the Study is to move from the conceptual phase to the candidate phase and identified the top three best performing alternatives. He also indicated that one of the selection criteria was to avoid the most objectionable alignments identified through the PIP and that the options chosen focused on areas where the consultant felt it was feasible to implement some sort of rail alignment in the future. This effectively removed a lot of the alignments in the western end of the study and limited most of the options to the east side of the project area, mainly in the general area of the SR-195 easement.

Leading to the most recent presentation to the YMPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), the team had conducted an unplanned public engagement opportunity at the Yuma Community Center which garnered a lot of responses. Mr. Joannes summarized that much of the feedback, especially from members of the farming community, seemed to demonstrate a perceived misunderstanding of what a planning study is for and how long the process really takes. He indicated that, although the aim of the study was to identify a preferred alignment, one possible alternative is that there might be no feasible (or preferred) alignment.

He then stated that the normal outcome of such a study is to identify a feasible route through the County and then to see whether an economic case for building the rail exists. He reported that the study team were conducting a more technical evaluation of the candidate alignments and would then look at an economic analysis, especially for areas in the immediate vicinity of the intended alignments.

Charles then addressed the Chairman and told members that the study was close to being 55 to 75% complete and urged allowing the consultant to complete the study. Supervisor Pancrazi asked whether the website survey had been changed to allow a no alignment option? Mr. Joannes responded that the original option did not allow a "no-build" option, but the most recent version allowed such an option. In addition, there is always the option of sending an email comment to YMPO staff through the YMPO website. Supervisor Pancrazi reiterated that, if she received any comments from members of the public, she would recommend them to check out the YMPO website. Mr. Gutierrez also offered the option of calling YMPO staff and reported their comments and indicated that he had been receiving comments daily.

The Chair suggested that, even though the current objections to an alignment seem to be uppermost, what happens if they change their opinion? As a result, the Chair suggested, right now, the farming community does not want a rail alignment, but should that stop the planning study? Councilmember Rosales used Cesar Chavez Avenue in San Luis as an example. He indicated that, when SR-195 was originally constructed, a few decision-makers in San Luis were opposed to allowing

the roadway to be extended all the way to US-95, through the city, so the SR-195 widening project was stopped short, at Avenue E. More recently, the City has actively lobbied (and received) substantial funding to widen the roadway segment to, effectively, 'finish the job'. The Chair agreed and suggested that the study should produce a recommendation.

Supervisor Pancrazi also mentioned the possibility of an elevated rail line that had been suggested as an option. Vice-Chair Knight suggested that the problem is that the misconception is that the region WANTS to build a railroad whereas they should understand that this is just a feasibility study and that IF there is a finding of 'no preferred alignment', then there is no alignment.

There was a discussion about whether there was going to be another public meeting. Mr. Joannes reported that there was one final public meeting scheduled right at the end of the process after a preferred alignment had been identified. The Vice-Chair asked whether IF the decision were to NOT select a preferred alignment, there would not be any need for another meeting? Mr. Joannes suggested that IF the decision were to NOT select a preferred alignment, he expected there would need to be another decision as to whether to hold another public meeting.

Mr. Ward summarized that this study did review a lot of alternatives but that was to make sure that no options were overlooked and that the goal of the study is to determine what the preferred alignment for a future rail line would be IF the region decided to move forward with it. The previous study identified a corridor, approximately 500 feet wide. The current step in the process is to confirm the three alternate alignments and then to review those alignment in more details prior to selecting a preferred alignment. The final public meeting would be to inform the public what the preferred alignment was. IF the decision is to NOT select a preferred alignment, then the study is over. He also suggested that the TAC might recommend whether to hold another public meeting, but it is the YMPO Board that will decide whether to hold a final public meeting, or not.

Members reiterated the misperception by the public that YMPO was on the verge of selecting a preferred alignment and that this will immediately be followed by construction. The discussion ended with no action being taken.

7. FY 2022 Audit Schedule

Ms. Dale briefly presented the forthcoming audit schedule for members, and especially members of the Audit Committee. The Audit team had already carried out their test of control selections. During October she expects the accounting field work to commence, prepare their financial reports, and then the audit firm will produce a draft audit report. Similar to the last agenda item, no action was expected for this item either.

8. Defense Community Infrastructure Pilot (DCIP) Program Grant Update.
Ms. Figueroa updated the Board regarding this grant process. She briefly covered the recent progress and confirmed that the application had been submitted on July 15, 2022, and that the Department of Defense had agreed to allow the Arizona grant team to proceed to the second phase of the grant and continue to the next step in the process. Tentatively the request is for approximately \$13.3 million and we anticipate confirmation close to the next meeting. No action was expected for this item.

9. Regional Project Priority List.
Mr. Gutierrez presented this item and showed the update YMPO list of roadway priorities. He briefly went through the lists of projects submitted by YMPO member agencies and individually called out each project being recommended for inclusion. He reported that the total of the projects being submitted by the YMPO region was more than \$400 million. The Vice-Chair suggested that only the highest priority project from each agency should be included in the list being sent forward to the RTAC Board as the YMPO region recommended list.

MOTION: Councilmember Rosales moved to approve the first priority project from each YMPO member agency as our priority list of projects. Supervisor Pancrazi seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

10. YMPO Legal Services.
Ms. Figueroa reported that, after fifty-five years of service to clients, YMPO attorney, Wayne C. Benesch, has decided to retire at the end of the calendar year. YMPO last advertised for legal services in 2017 and, at that time, Byrne and Benesch was selected for a three-year term, and the contract was renewed for a two-year term until the end of this calendar year. Since that time, the firm has morphed into Benesch, Shadle, and White, and YMPO has been happy with their services. Ms. Figueroa requested the Board's guidance as to whether YMPO should extend the term once again or go out for a new Request for Proposals.

MOTION: Councilmember Rosales moved to extend the contract with the current firm for one further year and then make the decision based on how the performance has been, following Mr. Benesch's retirement. Vice-Chair Knight seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

11. Regional Coordination Plan (RCP) Request for Proposal (RFP).
Mr. Gutierrez reported that, following the lack of proposals from consultants to the opportunity, YMPO had adjusted the RFP and readvertised the request. The latest schedule is to take any proposals received, to the TAC for their review at their October 13, 2022, meeting and to bring forward a recommendation to the Executive Board and a possible contract for approval, to the Executive Board at their October 27, 2022, meeting. No action was taken on this item

12. 2023 Arizona Rural Transportation Summit (AZRTS) Planning.

Ms. Dale presented this item, and she reminded members that the 2022 annual RTS conference for the AZRTS is currently scheduled for September 14 and 15, 2022, at the Ak-Chin Casino and Resort, in Maricopa, Arizona. She urged any members that wished to attend this conference to contact YMPO staff as soon as possible.

This agenda item is for the 2023 RTS conference, tentatively scheduled for Yuma, in October 2023. There are hotels available, but only one appears to have the conference rooms available, the Hilton Pivot Point. There was a long discussion regarding possible venues and which hotels to use. Ms. Figueroa reported that staff would continue their efforts and would report back to the Board at a future meeting.

13. Summary of Current Events/Board Member Reports/Executive Director's Report & Comments by Other Participants

This agenda item is an opportunity for members and staff to update the Board regarding recent occurrences, as shown below. If written information is available, it will be included in an attached Information Summary.

- A. Staff Reports - Future Meetings
- B. TAC Minutes
- C. Conference Updates (AZTA, AZRTS, and Roads and Streets)
- D. MPO/COG Director/Planner Meetings
- E. Rural Transportation Advocacy Council activities
- F. Projects - Economic Development and Transportation

Mr. Fenske reported that the US-95 project had not been affected by recent flooding, was still on schedule and expects to be fully open by Thanksgiving. However, eastbound I-10 in California had been washed out approximately 100 west of the California-Arizona border and Caltrans has temporarily re-routed traffic south to I-8. As a result, the contractor working on eastbound I-8 has been temporarily closed to allow free flow on that facility during the I-10 closure. Mr. Fenske stated that further information will be forthcoming, as it becomes available.

14. Possible Future Agenda Items

Ms. Figueroa suggested that the following items will be heard at future meetings and encouraged members to suggest topics for discussion at future Board meetings:

- A. Regional Project Priority List
- B. Possible funding for future IJJA Grants
- C. DCIP Update
- D. HSIP Application Update

15. Progress Reports

Members and staff will update the Board on the progress of ongoing projects and other recent events.

- a. Aug 1 - Staff Meeting (All)
- b. Aug 1 - Budget Input into QuickBooks training (CF, BD)
- c. Aug 2 - Scheduling Meeting to Discuss Yuma HAWK HSIP Application Pedestrian Counts (CF, CG)
- d. Aug 2 - YMPO & ADOT Transit/5305(4)e (CF, CG, JR)
- e. Aug 2 - RTS 22' planning Meeting (CF, BD)
- f. Aug 2 - KHA & YMPO Rail Meeting (CF, PW, CG)
- g. Aug 2 - Rail Heavy Freight (CF, PW)
- h. Aug 3 - Payroll Reclass training (CF, BD)
- i. Aug 4 - Western Growers Association (CF, PW, CG)
- j. Aug 4 - RFP Process - Complete Streets Study (CF, PW)
- k. Aug 4 - Tribal/ Rural/ Nonprofit Focus: Reconnecting Communities Grant Program Overview (JR)
- l. Aug 4 - Meeting with Gary Knight (CF, CG)
- m. Aug 4 - Change signers on Wells Fargo accounts (CF, PW)
- n. Aug 8 - August Mobility Management Meeting (CG, JR)
- o. Aug 9 - RTS 2023 Meeting (CF, CG, BD, NC)
- p. Aug 9 - Meet with Sheraton Four points as possible venue for RTS 23' (CF, CG, BD, NC)
- q. Aug 9 - YMPO Presentation Review (CF, CG)
- r. Aug 9 - Meeting with Mayor Nicholls (CF)
- s. Aug 10 - Unpaved Road and pricing updates for traffic counting (CG)
- t. Aug 10 - ADOT/YMPO Coordination Meeting (CF, PW, CG)
- u. Aug 10 - Meet with Pivot Point Conference Center as possible venue for RTS 23' (CF, CG, BD, NC)
- v. Aug 10 - Avenue E/D Industrial Corridor Project (CF, PW, CG)
- w. Aug 10 - Maximizing Productivity with Microsoft Teams (NC)
- x. Aug 11 - YMPO TAC Meeting (CF, PW, CG, BD, JR)
- y. Aug 11 - YMPO Rail/Heavy Freight Agri-Business Public Engagement (CF, CG, BD, JR)
- z. Aug 11 - STSP Safety-Related Data EA meeting (CF, CG, JR)
- aa. Aug 11 - DC Staff of Senator Mark Kelly Re: Trade & other issues (CF)
- bb. Aug 12 - YMPO TIP discussion (CG)
- cc. Aug 11 - COG/MPO Planners August Meeting (CG)
- dd. Aug 11 - YRBC Board Meeting (PW, JR)
- ee. Aug 15 - RTAC Advisory Committee Meeting (CF, PW)
- ff. Aug 16 - Yuma PM10 SIP Update Call (CF, PW, CG)
- gg. Aug 16 - RTS Planning Meeting (CF, BD)
- hh. Aug 17 - How to Use QuickBooks Seminar (NC)
- ii. Aug 18 - Community Resource Meeting (JR)
- jj. Aug 19 - Az State Transportation Board Meeting (CF, PW)
- kk. Aug 22 - RTAC Board Meeting (CF)

- ll. Aug 23 - RTS Planning Meeting (CF, BD)
- mm. Aug 25 - YMPO Executive Board Meeting (All)
- nn. Aug 29 - League of AZ Cities and Towns (CF, PW)
- oo. Aug 29 - RTS Planning Meeting (CF)
- pp. Aug 31 - P2P Workshop Southwest District (CF)
- qq. Aug 31 - Yuma County's Regional Economic Development Meeting (CF)

16. Adjournment.

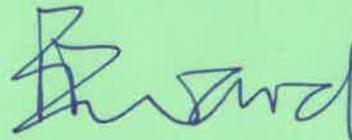
Notice: In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, YMPO does not discriminate on the basis of disability, in the admission of, or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs, activities, or services. If you have any questions regarding YMPO programs, activities, or services, please contact Crystal Figueroa or Charles Gutierrez at 928-783-8911.

Anticipated Future 2022 Meeting Locations.

All future meetings will continue to be held at the YMPO office at 230 West Morrison Street, Yuma, Arizona 85364. Members MAY participate in person, OR they may participate electronically by computer, and/or telephone (or both), using the GoToMeeting portal. The next two meetings will be held on Thursday, September 22, 2022 (to avoid conflict with the Roads and Streets Conference), and October 27, 2022, in the YMPO offices, starting at 1:30 p.m.

Preparation and Approval of Minutes:

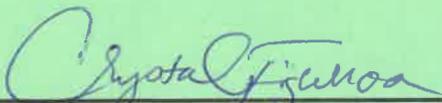
Minutes prepared by:



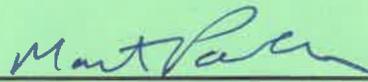
Paul D. Ward, P.E., Principal Engineer

Minutes reviewed to form by:

Minutes approved in regular session on
September 22, 2022



Crystal Figueroa, Executive Director,
Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization



Supervisor Martin Porchas,
Chairman, YMPO Executive Board