

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Local Governments and Citizens Working Together

**EXECUTIVE BOARD
Regular Meeting
Thursday, April 27, 2023
1:30 P.M.**

**The Meeting was held In-Person and 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

The Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization (YMPO) Chair, Councilmember Gary Knight, called the YMPO Executive Board (the Board) meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. and asked the Board to join him in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Roll Call Attendance and Declaration of Votes

The YMPO Bookkeeper/Administrative Assistant, Norma Chavez, called the roll as follows:

YMPO Executive Board Members Present:

Chair	Gary Knight, Councilmember, City of Yuma ^
Vice-Chair	Cecilia McCollough, Vice Mayor, Town of Wellton ^
Secretary/Treasurer	Maria Cruz, Councilmember, City of San Luis ^
Member	Wynnie Ortega, Councilmember, Cocopah Indian Tribe
Member	Lynne Pancrazi, Board of Supervisors, Yuma County ^
Member	Art Morales, Councilmember, City of Yuma ~
Member	Bruce Fenske, Southwest District Administrator, ADOT

^ Attended in person.

~ Participated by teleconference.

As six of the seven constituent member agencies were present, the quorum requirement was met.

YMPO Executive Board Members Absent

Member Miguel Villalpando, Councilmember, City of Somerton

Member Michael Shelton, Councilmember, City of Yuma #

Member Martin Porchas, Board of Supervisors, Yuma County #

Not present but was 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
Jesus Aguilar, Jr.	Regional Mobility Manager
Norma Chavez	Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper

Additional Attendees:

Mark Hoffman	ADOT Senior Planner ~
Justine Marmesh	LSC ~
Claire Hutchinson	LSC ~
Scott Blitz	Mayor Town of Wellton ~

YMPO Executive Director Crystal Figueroa stated she received written authorization from the City of Somerton that Councilmember Miguel Villalpando will serve as the official Executive Board member and Mayor Art Morales will serve as the alternate.

Declaration of Votes:

Councilmember Knight declared that he would exercise the proxy vote for Councilmember Shelton. Supervisor Pancrazi declared that she would exercise the proxy vote for Supervisor Porchas when she arrived at the meeting.

3. Title VI Declaration and Call to the Public

YMPO Mobility Manager Jesus Aguilar Jr., read the Title VI obligations. No members of the public addressed the Board.

4. Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of the March 30, 2023, Board Meeting Minutes
- B. YMPO Income/Expenditure Report for March 2023

MOTION: Vice Mayor McCollough moved to approve both items of the consent agenda with the correction of her title from Mayor Pro Tem to Vice Mayor. Councilmember Cruz seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

5. YMPO Staff Hiring Update

Ms. Figueroa said that during the March meeting, the Board was introduced to the newest YMPO staff member: Jeff Heinrichs, YMPO Information Technology Manager. Since then, a change in staff has occurred. There is now an opening for Senior Planning Manager, due to a staff resignation. The position will be advertised through the Yuma County Employment Opportunity site, which also lists on Indeed and Linked In, per the usual hiring process. In the interim, Paul Ward has been

hired as Principal Engineer on a part-time basis to assist until a new Senior Planning Manager has been hired.

Councilmember Knight stated to let the record show at 1:35 p.m. Supervisor Pancrazi joined the meeting in person and will yield all votes for the Yuma County Board of Supervisors.

He thanked YMPO Principal Engineer, Paul Ward for stepping in to aid YMPO during this transition.

6. 2023 Regional Coordination Plan (RCP)

Mr. Aguilar explained the Regional Coordination Plan (RCP) commenced on November 1, 2022, and LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc has prepared three papers: Existing Conditions, Transportation Needs and Gaps, and Goals and Strategies. Public Engagements were held in the Cities of San Luis and Yuma, Arizona. Public notices for these public engagements were issued through local media and hand-delivered to senior living facilities prior to the events.

He said that after public comments were received and reviewed, LSC prepared the final draft of the 2023 YMPO RCP. The final draft document provides information about existing conditions in Yuma County, a review of existing planning, an inventory of existing transportation services, and a summary of community and stakeholder input. It also includes an assessment of potential transportation service needs, gaps, and duplicate services. The plan supplies an analysis of potential coordination strategies and recommendations.

Mr. Aguilar then introduced Claire Hutchinson and Justine Marmesh from LSC to present their findings to the Executive Board. Ms. Hutchinson explained that the Coordination Plan is meant to enhance local mobility in the YMPO region for the targeted populations, such as senior adults, disabled persons, and low-income individuals. She stated that it's a valuable plan as Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requires that specific transit-related projects to be funded must be revived from the locally developed coordinated plan. The Coordinated Plan was developed through a process that included representatives from the public, private, and non-profit transportation, human services, and participation by members of the public. Other components of the development included an assessment of available transportation services, an assessment of needs to target population, strategies, and activities to identify gaps and achieve efficiencies in service delivery. Ms. Hutchinson also presented a demographic summary of senior adults, disabled persons, and poverty levels in Yuma County.

ADOT Southwest District Administrator Bruce Fenske asked if there was any overlap of persons between the seniors, disabled and low-income persons in the demographic summary Ms. Hutchinson presented. Ms. Hutchinson explained there could be, and likely was, an overlap as several individuals counted could fall into more than one demographic.

She then reviewed the Yuma County Transit Needs. An index was created that determined which areas in the county had the greatest concentration of persons

that needed transit services. The index determined that Somerton had the highest need, followed by Yuma, San Luis, and Fortuna Foothills. LSC identified a need for more providers to serve residents in rural areas, a lack of services was caused by staffing and vehicle shortages, driver and staff training is needed for clients living with such disabilities as Alzheimer's and dementia, a need to fill the transportation gap due to existing service providers leaving the area and lastly, the need for transportation services for non-medical related trips.

Ms. Marmesh then discussed the four major goals for the Yuma region:

- Maintain existing transportation services.
- Increase public awareness of available transportation services.
- Increase cooperation and coordination of Yuma's transportation providers.
- Enhance or expand transportation services.

She explained that based on the priority of each goal, it was determined what strategies, lead agencies, and potential funding sources that could be used to achieve these goals. She then provided a table showing the local agencies providing mobility services that have requested federal grants. Ms. Hutchinson explained that a brochure was created to increase public awareness and to explain who YMPO is and what public transportation services are currently available for citizens who identify as elderly, disabled, or low-income residents, as well as family and friends of those residents.

Councilmember Cruz asked why some agencies had left or stopped servicing the Yuma Region. Ms. Hitchinson stated the two agencies no longer servicing the region had closed their offices. Mr. Aguilar added that the two agencies closed their offices because of staff shortages.

Vice Mayor McCollough asked if a non-profit wants to apply for FTA 5310 funding, what would be the matching fund requirements to receive the federal grants for their program. Mr. Aguilar explained that the funding match varies depending on the purpose of the funds and would vary from 20-50% match. With no further questions from the Board, Mr. Aguilar stated the Technical Advisory Committee had recommended the Executive Board consider approving the Regional Coordination Plan.

Ms. Figueroa congratulated Mr. Aguilar for his efforts in managing the project.

MOTION: Supervisor Pancrazi moved to approve The Regional Coordination Plan with the two recommended edits previously discussed. Vice Mayor McCollough seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

7. FY 2024 and 2025 YMPO Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Ms. Figueroa provided a brief overview of the FY 2024-25 UPWP and mentioned that it is the third two-year program and annual budget. She stated the program describes the transportation planning activities and priorities to be conducted in the Yuma MPO area for the specified years. It is the foundation for requesting federal funds and a control tool for scheduling, budgeting, and monitoring the

transportation planning process. It is developed in cooperation with member agencies and federal partners and is reviewed and approved by the Executive Board. The UPWP provides and defines the tasks and budget necessary to accomplish those tasks. In addition, Ms. Figueroa mentioned that, in general, the work program funds staff salary and operational costs, and It is presented for review and comments only at this time; she anticipated presenting the final draft to the Executive Board next month for possible approval.

She reviewed the YMPO transportation planning projects recently completed or ongoing. This included the Rail/Heavy Freight Study, The San Luis Origin and Destination study component of the San Luis POE Impact Study, the Regional Coordination Plan, and the Safety Applications (HSIP) as part of the Safety Plan Update done in 2021 development and funding in the fiscal year 2023 and later years.

Next, she outlined the anticipated transportation planning projects for the new UPWP, which included: Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Regional Safety Update Plan, Complete Streets Study, 2026-2049/50 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), Roads of Regional Significance, GIS Traffic Count Map and the Federally Funded Program. She further explained that the YMPO Federally Funded Program would establish detailed guidelines for selecting and developing federally funded projects with STBG, HSIP, the Carbon Reduction Program, Off System Bridge Program, and soon the Transportation Alternatives Program.

Ms. Figueroa provided a sample schedule of the anticipated studies and plans for the new UPWP and budget tables showing funding sources and operating and direct expense tables.

8. Status of Recent Federal, State, & Local Legislation on Funding Transportation.

Ms. Figueroa reviewed the latest transportation legislation activity. She listed the various funding opportunities from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) or Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Acts (IIJA), which was signed into law by President Biden in 2021. The law provides \$550 billion in funding for transportation and infrastructure projects over fiscal years 2022-2026 which is the first half of the 10-year BIL. She mentioned that it marks the second year of the federal spending bill, and various grant opportunities have been released and awarded. A new funding opportunity was released in March, called Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) with total available funding of \$1.177 billion to fund local projects that improve road safety.

This past February, the US Department of Transportation awarded over 470 communities with Action Planning grants and 37 communities received implementation grants from the first round of the SS4A funding program.

YMPO was notified that the City of Yuma intends to apply for the SS4A grant and highlighted that the grant incentivizes communities to adopt and implement Complete Streets Policies that prioritize the safety of all users in the transportation network planning design. She provided a list of Key Notices of Funding Opportunities, of which several are being offered this spring.

Key Notices of Funding Opportunity:

Opening Date	NOFO
April 2023	Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative Efficient, and Cost Saving Transportation (PROTECT) Discretionary - FHWA
April 2023	Transit – Oriented Development Pilot Program - FTA
May 2023	Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant Opportunity (Mega, Infra, Rural) – Office of the Secretary
Spring 2023	Thriving Communities – Office of the Secretary

She advised the City of San Luis was selected to receive technical assistance from the Thriving Communities program for the next two years. In addition, Yuma County was awarded \$610,000 through the Arizona State Match Advantage for Rural Transportation (SMART) fund to use for the design and environmental portion of the Avenue E and D project.

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

Ms. Figueroa informed the Board that the invitation to the Arizona Rural Transportation Summit (RTS) was emailed and extended an invitation to all Executive Board members. She explained YMPO would pay for any Executive Board member's registration should they choose to attend and confirmed conference dates as Wednesday/Thursday, October 18 & 19, followed by the State Transportation Board meeting in the City of Yuma.

She provided an update on the efforts of the Rural Transportation Advocacy Council regarding House Bill 2543, as still pending. The bill will go before the floor after the legislature returns from spring break. The legislature budget staff has updated revenue and expenditures. The projection estimates are approximately \$2.5 billion of additional funds will be available for the next state budget. There has been discussion that we may pursue another RTAC project priority list effort to present to our legislators, similar to what we did this year, to obtain further funding for our rural transportation projects. It is not the norm to have excess revenue, so this is a rare opportunity. This item is expected to be one of the main topics for the upcoming Rural Transportation Summit.

Councilmember Knight said the State Transportation Board (STB) meeting was last Friday. There were three applications for the Arizona SMART fund awards. Two were awarded without amendments, one was Yuma County and the other was Camp Verde. The third application was from Flagstaff, which requested \$6 million for several items; however, the STB awarded Flagstaff \$3 million. There is currently around \$3 million remaining in the Arizona SMART fund. He said that in addition, the STB approved \$50.5 million in emergency funds for several highways that had been affected by winter storms. It was the maximum available this fiscal year and he predicts more funding will be approved next year.

Supervisor Pancrazi asked if there was any progress on Proposition 400.

Councilmember Knight said there has been no new progress. There are two proposals; one with just under 40 percent for light rail and the second is considerably less. One proposal will be sent to the voters. He said he was going to try to find a funding solution that does not include HURF (gas tax) funds.

Supervisor Pancrazi then asked if the Transportation Bill HB 2543 had been signed by the governor?

Councilmember Knight advised the bill still needs to go through the rules committee but was stopped while the legislature works on the state budget before it can be presented to the governor.

Ms. Figueroa stated that two lawmakers have departed; Liz Harris (Rep) and Raquel Teran (Dem), which may impact the progress of the Bill.

Councilmember Knight stated the Republicans no longer have the majority vote.

10. Possible Future Agenda Items

The following items will be heard at a future meeting. Members are encouraged to suggest topics for discussion at a future Board meeting:

- A. Approval of new TIP 2024-2028
- B. FY 2024-25 two-year UPWP Approval
- C. TIP Amendment
- D. Short-Term Loan of Federal Funds and Obligation Authority to ADOT

11. Progress Reports

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

- a. Mar 31 - Intermountain West MPO Meeting (CF)
- b. Apr 3-5 - AzTA Conference in Mesa (CF, NC, CG, JR)

- c. Apr 7 - Carbon Reduction Strategy State Practices 2 (CG, CF)
- d. Apr 6 - YMPO IT Discussion/Transfer of Operations with Yuma County (CF, JH, NC)
- e. Apr 10 - ADOT/YMPO Monthly Coordination Meeting (CF, CG)
- f. Apr 10 - Staff Meeting (CF, CG, JH, BD, NC, JR, RA)
- g. April 10 - Emotional Intelligence Part 2 Training with Yuma County (CF, BD, NC, JR, RA, JH)
- h. Apr 11 - Avenue E/D Industrial Corridor Project - Working Group (CF)
- i. Apr 12 - COG/MPO Directors Meeting (CF)
- j. Apr 13 - Yuma MPO Work Plan Review with FHWA (CF, BD, NC, JH, JR)
- k. Apr 13 - Accounting for Government Grants (BD)
- l. Apr 13 - YRBC Meeting (JR)
- m. Apr 17 - Yuma County Board of Supervisors Presentation (CF)
- n. Apr 17 - Town of Wellton Senior Program Discussion (JR, CF)
- o. Apr 17 - Virtual RTAC Advisory Committee Meeting (CF)
- p. Apr 18 - Yuma PM10 SIP Update Meeting (CF)
- q. Apr 18 - YMPO and Census Meeting (CF, PW)
- r. Apr 19 - RTAP Reimbursement Submission Refresher (JR, NC)
- s. Apr 21 - Arizona State Transportation Meeting in Winslow (CF)
- t. Apr 24 - RTAC Board Meeting (CF)
- u. Apr 27 - TAC Meeting (CF, NC, JR, JH, PW)
- v. Apr 27 - Executive Board Meeting (CF, NC, JR, JH, PW)

Ms. Figueroa stated as presented.

Vice Mayor McCollough wanted to thank Mr. Aguilar for allowing her to express her concerns over the lack of mobility transportation services in the Town of Wellton.

Mr. Aguilar advised her concerns are being addressed within the Regional Coordination Plan.

Councilmember Knight said there is a parking lot with YCAT buses parked that are currently not being used. He wondered if they are not needed, why do they not sell them or perhaps if they are needed, why they are not being used?

Mr. Aguilar said he was under the impression YCIPTA is attempting to find a venue to auction the buses.

Councilmember Knight suggested YCIPTA come to the Executive Board meeting to advise them of the situation.

12. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 2:33 p.m.

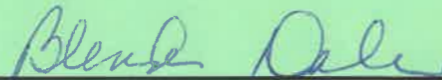
Notice: In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, YMPO does not discriminate on the basis of disability, in the admission of, or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs, activities, or services. If you have any questions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

13. Anticipated Future 2023 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 occur on Thursday, May 25, 2023, and June 29, 2023.

Preparation and Approval of Minutes:

Minutes prepared by:



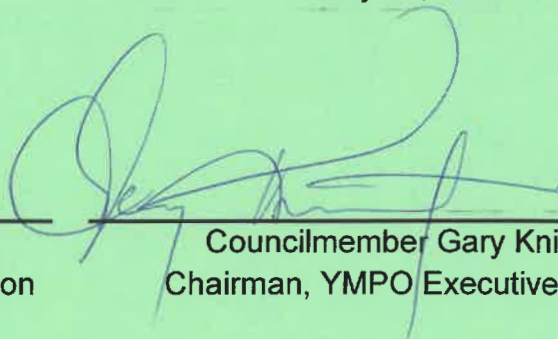
Blenda Dale, Accountant II/
Executive Admin Assistant

Minutes reviewed to form by:

Minutes approved in regular session on
May 25, 2023



Crystal Figueroa, Executive Director,
Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization



Councilmember Gary Knight,
Chairman, YMPO Executive Board