

## EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

*Local Governments and Citizens Working Together*

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

The 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

The Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization (YMPO) Chair, Councilmember Gary Knight, called the YMPO Executive Board (the Board) meeting to order at 1:35 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 Accountant II/Executive Assistant, Blenda Dale, 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 ~
Member	Lynne Pancrazi, Board of Supervisors, Yuma County ^
Member	Bruce Fenske, Southwest District Administrator, ADOT ^
Member	Michael Shelton, Councilmember, City of Yuma ^
Member	Art Morales, Councilmember, City of Yuma ^
Member	Wynnie Ortega, Councilmember, Cocopah Indian Tribe ^

^ Attended in person.

~ Participated by teleconference.

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

Supervisor Pancrazi declared two votes for Yuma County.

YMPO Executive Board Members Absent

Member	Martin Porchas, Board of Supervisors, Yuma County #
Secretary/Treasurer	Maria Cruz, Councilmember, City of San Luis*
Member	Miguel Villalpando, Councilmember, City of Somerton *

# 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
Blenda Dale	Accountant II/ Executive Assistant
Jeff Heinrichs	IT Manager/Associate Planner
Jesus R Aguilar Jr.	Mobility Manager
Norma Chavez	Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper

Additional Attendees:

Kevin Adam	RTAC Liaison ~
Shelly Kreger	YCIPTA Director ~
Chona Medel	YCIPTA Financial Services Operations Manager ~

3. Title VI Declaration and Call to the Public

Mr. Jesus R Aguilar, Jr., YMPO Mobility Manager, read a brief message reminding members of our Title VI obligations. In addition, this item provided an opportunity for comments by the public on subjects *not* on the agenda. Individuals wishing to address the Board need not request permission in advance and are limited to three (3) minutes. Any members of the Public attending by teleconference are requested to contact YMPO staff with any questions they may have prior to the meeting. No individuals wishing to address the Board were in attendance.

4. Consent Agenda

A. Approval of the June 29, 2023, Board Meeting Minutes

B. YMPO Income/Expenditure Report for June 2023

MOTION: Councilmember Morales moved to approve consent agenda for both items A and B. Supervisor Pancrazi seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

5. 2023 RAISE Grant and Additional Funding Opportunities for US 95

Executive Director, Crystal Figueroa stated that last month, Arizona Senators announced the U.S. Department of Transportation RAISE grant awards for transportation projects in Arizona. The US 95 project along Wellton-Mohawk Canal to Aberdeen Road received \$8.5 million. This grant will go towards planning and design for the remaining segments of U.S. Highway 95 in Yuma County.

She said that to supplement the RAISE grant funding, ADOT has agreed to apply for \$4 million through the AZ SMART Fund. This application is expected to be presented to the State Transportation Board for possible approval next month.

Chairman Knight added that it is estimated that the design of the remaining segments of US 95 will be \$12.5 million. The project was awarded \$8.5 million and this is why ADOT has applied for the \$4 million.

He then announced the arrival of Councilmember Ortega at 1:40 p.m. to the Executive Board meeting.

Ms. Figueroa then said that YMPO, ADOT, and the consulting firm Wilson and Company would be working together to explore additional funding opportunities for US 95. One such program was the Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant program (MPDG). The program was identified as a potential funding source for the construction phase of US 95 which is estimated at a cost of more than \$100 million.

6. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Update

Chairman Knight stated that this agenda item be deferred until the next Executive Board meeting in August as presenter were unable to attend.

7. Possible Regional Project Priority List for 2024

Ms. Figueroa said the previous 2023 State Legislative process of HB2543 for the Greater Arizona Transportation Priority Projects presented by the Rural Transportation Advocacy Council (RTAC) successfully got the Yuma region \$39 million. RTAC anticipates that the budget surplus for the coming fiscal year will continue. As a result, member agencies were asked to develop a list of priority projects for State funding consideration. The Technical Advisory Committee is expected to make a recommendation to the Executive Board in August. The Board will select the regional priority projects for state funding next year.

She then reviewed a tentative schedule for producing the YMPO region's projects for consideration on the priority list. On August 10th, the TAC would recommend a list of prioritized projects to the Executive Board. The Board would then approve the prioritized projects limited to the population-based allocation for the Rural Transportation Advocacy Council (RTAC). The final priority project list will be presented to Executive Board and ultimately to the State Legislator at the Rural Summit in October.

She stated the RTAC suggested an increased, combined dollar limit of \$400 million for the statewide list, plus \$100 million for the AZ SMART fund. The funds would be distributed based on population and as such the Yuma region potentially has the opportunity of obtaining just over \$48 million. She explained that the AZ SMART fund can be used for grant writing, local match, and engineering services.



Supervisor Pancrazi asked if the US 95 is considered a priority project, to which Ms. Figueroa explained that it was selected by the Board as the top regional priority project as it benefits the entire region.

ADOT Administrator Bruce Fenske explained that there were three remaining segments of US 95 in the design phase. Two of these segments include Wellton-Mohawk to Imperial Dam Road, and Imperial Dam Road to Aberdeen. If the AZ SMART fund grant was awarded for the project, it would cover in its entirety the design phase of those segments which is \$12,250,000. The current \$33 million in state funds could then be applied toward construction. Any funding awarded to the project from the Priority List effort could all go towards the construction phase, which he estimated at approximately \$130 million. He also suggested that there were other grant opportunities that the region could apply for in the future such as the Defense Community Infrastructure Pilot (DCIP) program. Some programs required the project be shovel-ready. Those programs would not be pursued this year, but rather next year when Imperial Dam Road to Aberdeen would be ready.

Ms. Figueroa mentioned that during the last cycle, the Yuma County submitted US 95 County 22<sup>nd</sup> street (San Luis) to County 11<sup>th</sup> (Yuma) to mill and overlay three inches along US 95 and was funded 5.9 M. Respected project impact five member agencies. Funding is still needed for the second project phase II.

Chairman Knight remarked that the August Executive Board meeting was currently scheduled on the same day as the League of Cities conference. Most municipalities would be in attendance which would result in the Executive Board not meeting its quorum requirement to hold a meeting. He suggested rescheduling the August Executive Board meeting to the week prior: August 24, 2023.

8. YMPO FY 2024 Title VI Plan, Training and Guidance

Mr. Aguilar updated the Board on the changes to the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Limited English Proficiency (LEP), and the Public Participation Plan. He explained that changes include staff changes.

He explained what Title VI is, law interpretation, and what Limited English Proficiency (LEP) means and its importance. He provided charts showing the most common languages spoken in the region: Spanish and English. Due to this, YMPO provides all notices in Spanish and English. He reviewed what Environmental Justice is and how YMPO addresses this concern through public outreach and disseminating information through various mediums and languages to ensure all our citizens are kept informed and included in decision-making processes. He explained the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, who is protected under Title VI,

what the Title VI plan is used for, and how YMPO ensures these rights are protected.

He advised that the current year's changes included staff changes, the Title VI Officer as Chair Gary Knight, the Title VI Liaison YMPO Executive Director Crystal Figueroa, and Title VI Coordinator Mobility Manager "JR" Aguilar, and updates to the region's demographics, Notice, funding maps, notice to the public, Title VI complaint forms and languages spoken at home chart. JR further explained the complaint procedure and where individuals could find complaint forms and participation forms.

Councilmember Shelton asked what locations YMPO had used for public engagement, to which Mr. Aguilar listed the Yuma County Public Works, Yuma Convention Center, and the library in San Luis.

Mr. Aguilar mentioned the item was on the agenda for possible action to approve the FY 2024 Title VI Plan.

MOTION: Supervisor Pancrazi motioned to approve the FY 2024 Title VI Plan; Councilmember Morales, seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

9. YMPO Rebranding

The YMPO IT Manager/Associate Planner, Jeff Heinrichs, explained that during the May Board meeting last year, the Board approved a revised YMPO mission statement, which was the first step in the YMPO rebranding project. YMPO staff recognized the need for an updated YMPO logo, website, and resource materials such as brochures to provide updated information and a fresh look. He said YMPO Board members would be asked their opinion on the new logo design in an upcoming Executive Board meeting.

Chairman Knight suggested the logo include the Colorado River, Ocean to Ocean Bridge, and I8. Councilmember Shelton said that the shape of the current logo looked too much like the state of AZ rather than the form of Yuma County.

Ms. Figueroa said she wasn't sure when the original logo had been created but felt it needed to be updated. She explained YMPO was developing the logo internally and welcomed the Board's feedback.

10. The Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program.

YMPO Associate Planner Mr. Heinrichs updated the Board on the TA program. He said the program launched on July 20, 2023, with a call for projects. He stated that eligible entities consist of local governments, tribal governments, Regional transportation authorities, Transit agencies, Natural resource or public land



agencies, school districts, non-profit MPO's, and a State at the request of an eligible entity. The eligible projects could include HAWK signals at crosswalks, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, safe routes to school, recreational and multimodal paths, historical preservation and vegetation management, and many other projects that improve the efficiency and safety of travel.

He explained that a link was added to the YMPO website that led to the ADOT TA Program details. The website provides guidance on eligibility checklist, program guidebook, and screening application. The application would require a letter of support from the MPO as part of the screening requirements. Once submitted, the application would go through the ADOT screening process. If the application were approved, the next step would be to fill out an evaluation application. The evaluation application would then be reviewed by the TA TAC in October and recommend the projects to be added to the state project priority list, which the State Transportation Board would review in November for the final project awards.

Ms. Figueroa informed the Board that YMPO met with Crane School District and Yuma's City Engineer, Dave Westenberg, regarding adding a possible HAWK signal system around the Gary Knox Elementary School on 21st Street in front of the main library. She said YMPO helped coordinate efforts with district staff and the City of Yuma for their TA application process.

#### 11. Staff Hiring Update

Ms. Figueroa stated that YMPO interviewed a few applicants for the YMPO Senior Planner position in July, and YMPO extended an offer to a candidate with planning experience, a degree in Urban planning, and an AICP certificate and was scheduled to start mid-August and looked forward to introducing them to the Board next month.

#### 12. FY 2022-26 YMPO Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) - Amendment #9

Ms. Figueroa advised that YMPO was recently notified of three FTA 5311 Rural Transit Projects awarded to YCIPTA for year two of the FY 2022 awards and the need to update funding in the TIP to align with the award letter, including removal of another YCIPTA Rural Operations project that was not in the award letter. She explained that changes were needed to avoid any delays in the final award being issued to YCIPTA. She referred the Board to the changes and deletion listed table and provided a copy of the award letter as a reference. If approved, a letter would be sent to ADOT requesting Amendment #9 be included in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

Councilmember Shelton asked about the process of who provided the local matching funds for projects in the TIP. YCIPTA Director, Shelly Kreger explained

the funds come from local entities and bus fare revenues and were already calculated in their budget.

Chairman Knight added that the local entities have already contributed the mentioned funds, so no additional funds would be asked of the local entities.

Ms. Figueroa said the purpose of this amendment was to update the funding amounts to ensure the funding was not jeopardized.

MOTION: Councilmember Morales moved to approve the FY 2022-26 YMPO TIP Amendment #9 with stated changes. Councilmember Shelton seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

13. Executive Director's Evaluation

Chairman Knight moved agenda items 13 through 15 to the end of the Board meeting in the essence of time.

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

- 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
- G. Status Report on AZ Smart Fund

RTAC Liaison Kevin Adam reported on the current state legislative session activities. The legislature traditionally takes a two to three-week break right after the state budget is approved, however, legislators were aware of several issues needing to be addressed this session, so they took only a few days off.

The legislature was set to review the extension of Maricopa County's half-cent transportation sales tax and reconvene on July 31, 2023, to vote on this matter. One of the complications with this bill was that the state constitution requires a ninety-day grace period at the end of the legislative session before new laws would take effect.

Mr. Adams felt it would not be politically viable to increase transportation revenues in other transportation matters, as there have been some substantial surpluses for the last couple of years. Lawmakers have been willing to prioritize transportation projects. For example, there was \$650 million in one-time revenues that were directed toward state transportation projects, including the US 95 widening project



in Yuma. There was \$1 billion in revenue the previous year, of which a portion was earmarked for the Ceasar Chavez Boulevard widening project in San Luis. He believed there would not be that level of surplus compared to the prior year; however, RTAC was moving forward with the regional priority projects presentation to State Legislation to acquire any available revenue that the legislature directs towards infrastructure.

YMPO Bookkeeper /Administrative Assistant informed the Board that YMPO introduced a funding opportunity to the TAC, city administrators, and managers in July. The Rural and Tribal Assistance Program consists of \$10 million over the next five years to advance infrastructure projects through the project development phase and does not require a local match. She outlined the eligible participants and projects. The bureau will start accepting applications for this opportunity on August 14, 2023, and continue until the first year's awards have been depleted or on September 27, 2023.

She also updated the Board on the RTS Conference progress. She had registered all Executive Board members for the conference. She asked if any Board members had yet to receive their confirmation to contact her.

#### 17. Possible Future Agenda Items

The following items would be heard at a future meeting. Members were encouraged to suggest topics for discussion at future Board meetings:

- A. LRTP Outline
- B. AZ RTS Update
- C. Regional Project Priority List for 2024
- D. Transportation Alternatives Program
- E. 2022-2045 LRTP Amendment #1, Conformity update

Supervisor Pancrazi suggested discussing the swag items for the Rural Transportation Summit this October. She provided possible companies to request such swag. No other items were suggested for future meetings.

Ms. Figueroa explained that RTS sponsorship includes specific swag as part of the sponsorship fee. She explained that the conference is a shorter conference than others so the swag should be reflective of that. YMPO is attempting to get a sling bag as part of the swag.

#### 18. Progress Reports

Members are encouraged to suggest topics for discussion at a future Board meeting:

- a. Jun 30 - RTS Sponsorship Meeting with NADBank (CF)
- b. Jun 30 - Yuma TDM Results Discussion (CF)



- c. Jul 4 - Independence Day (Office Closed)
- d. Jul 10 - ADOT/YMPO Monthly Coordination Meeting (CF)
- e. Jul 10 - Rural Transportation Summit Tribal Program Discussion (CF)
- f. Jul 10 - RMC 5310 Meeting (JR)
- g. Jul 11 - Staff Meeting (CF, BD, JH, NC, JR, RA)
- h. Jul 12 - YMPO Air Quality Conformity with Kittelson & Associates (CF)
- i. Jul 12 - RTS Planning Meeting (CF, BD, JH, NC, JR)
- j. Jul 12 - Transportation Alternatives TAC Meeting #3
- k. Jul 12 - Senior Transportation Planner Manager Interview (CF, MH, JA)
- l. Jul 12 - Senior Transportation Planner Manager Interview (CF, MH, JA)
- m. Jul 13 - TAC Meeting (CF, BD, JH, NC, JR)
- n. Jul 13 - RTS Planning Meeting (CF, BD, JH, NC, JR)
- o. Jul 17 - RTS Program Meeting (CF, BD, JH, NC)
- p. Jul 17 - RTAC Advisory Committee (CF)
- q. Jul 18 - ADA Compliance Webinar (JR)
- r. Jul 18 - Yuma PM10 SIP Update Meeting (CF)
- s. Jul 19 - OneDrive & GoDaddy MFA Training (CF, BD, JH, NC, JR, RA)
- t. Jul 19 - YMPO Executive Director's Evaluation (CF)
- u. Jul 20 - Networking for Community Resources (JR)
- v. Jul 20 - Meeting with YMPO and Hilton Pivot Point (CF, BD, JH, NC)
- w. Jul 21 - Arizona State Transportation Board Meeting in Showlow (CF)
- x. Jul 24 - RTAC Board Meeting (CF)
- y. Jul 24 - YMPO and FHWA - Tribal Impacts (CF)
- z. Jul 24 - 5310 Program Site Visit with Achieve (JR)
- aa. Jul 25 - Coordination Meeting RE: RTS with Federal Speakers (CF, BD)
- bb. Jul 25 - 5310 Program Site Visit with Crossroads (JR)
- cc. Jul 26 - RTS Planning Meeting (CF, BD, JH, NC, JR)
- dd. Jul 27 - Connected and Autonomous Vehicles (CAV) Meeting (CF)

Ms. Figueroa stated as presented.

**13. Executive Director's Evaluation**

Chairman Knight then asked for a motion to go into Executive Session.

MOTION: Supervisor Pancrazi motioned to go into Executive Session.

Councilmember Shelton seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

**14. Executive Session**

The Board met in Executive Session on the Executive Director's evaluation. There are no minutes available for this period.

**15. Reconvene to Public Meeting**

Chairman Knight announced the Board would reconvene into a public meeting.

16. Executive Director's Evaluation – Open Discussion

Chairman Knight requested a motion in open session following the Executive Session with a pay increase recommendation of 5.7%.

MOTION: Supervisor Pancrazi motioned to implement a pay increase for the Executive Director of 5.7%. Chairman Morales seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

17. Adjournment

Having no further items to discuss, Chairman Knight adjourned the meeting at 3:10 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.*

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, August 24, 2023, and September 28, 2023.

Preparation and Approval of Minutes:      Minutes prepared by:



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Blenda Dale, Accountant II/  
Executive Assistant

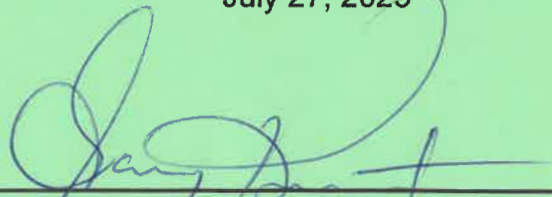
Minutes reviewed to form by:

Minutes approved in regular session on  
July 27, 2023



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Crystal Figueroa, Executive Director,  
Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization



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Councilmember Gary Knight,  
Chairman, YMPO Executive Board