

EXECUTIVE BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Local Governments & Citizens Working Together

**Executive Board
Regular Meeting
Thursday, February 25, 2021
1:30 P.M.**

**The Meeting was held using GoToMeeting
By Video and/or Teleconference from the
Main Conference Room at the YMPO Offices at
502 South Orange Avenue, Yuma, Arizona 85364**

1. Call to Order and the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization (YMPO) Chair, Martha Garcia, called the YMPO Executive Board (the Board) meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. She asked members to join her in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Roll Call Attendance.

The YMPO Executive Assistant/Accountant II, Crystal Figueroa, called the roll as follows:

YMPO Executive Board Members Present:

Chair	Martha Garcia, Vice-Mayor, City of Somerton *
Vice-Chair	Matias Rosales, Vice-Mayor, City of San Luis ^
Secretary/Treasurer	Martin Porchas, Board of Supervisors, Yuma County *
Member	Cecilia McCollough, Mayor, Town of Wellton *
Member	Gary Knight, Councilmember, City of Yuma ^
Member	Paul Patane, ADOT Southwest District Engineer *
Member	Lynne Pancrazi, Board of Supervisors, Yuma County *
Member	Karen Watts, Councilmember, City of Yuma *
Member	Leslie McClendon, Deputy Mayor, City of Yuma *
Member	Kermit Palmer, Councilmember, Cocopah Indian Tribe *

^ Attended in person.

* Participated by teleconference.

All seven constituent member agencies were present, the quorum requirement was met.

YMPO Staff Present:

Paul Ward	Executive Director
Charles Gutierrez	Senior Planning/Mobility Manager
Crystal Figueroa	Executive Assistant/Accountant II

Additional Attendees:

Kevin Adams	RTAC Liaison *
Jenny Torres	City of San Luis, Economic Development Manager *

Susan Thorpe Yuma County Administrator *

Declaration of Votes:

All members of the City of Yuma attended the meeting and retained their allocated votes.

3. Title VI Declaration, Training and Call to the Public.

YMPO Senior Planning/Mobility Manager, Charles Gutierrez, provided the first of two annual training presentations, under Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, for all YMPO Boards, Committees, and Meetings. No members of the public addressed the Board.

4. Welcome New Members

YMPO Executive Director Paul Ward, introduced the newest member of the Board, Councilmember Kermit Palmer of the Cocopah Indian Tribe. Councilmember Palmer addressed the Board and stated that he was grateful to have the opportunity to serve on the YMPO Board and collaborate with all members. The Chair lead members in welcoming him to the Board.

5. Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of the January 28, 2021, Board Meeting Minutes.
- B. YMPO Income/Expenditure for January 2021.

MOTION: Supervisor Lynne Pancrazi moved to approve the consent agenda, as presented. Councilmember Gary Knight seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

6. New YMPO Office – Additional Costs.

Mr. Ward gladly reported having moved all the belonging out of the old YMPO premises and into the new building. He stated that it will take a few weeks to be completely set-up as tile is still being laid. Mr. Ward reported that the original estimates for the remodeling by contractors were far higher than initially expected. The initial remodeling bids were in the region of \$98,000 with options for ceramic tile, telecommunications re-wiring, LED lighting and an additional irrigation water supply valve that could increase that amount to \$142,000.

Mr. Ward mentioned that he had renegotiated the contract with a lowered scope and had accepted a revised bid of \$48,000, to include only specific improvements. The intent was to sub-contract other remodeling components, such as re-wiring with new CAT-6 computer cables and installing the ceramic file. He included using YMPO staff resources to complete a substantial portion of the work, such as demolition and painting, to reduce costs. Mr. Ward reported that there is still a need for funds to complete all the improvements necessary and the original intent had been to wait until the new fiscal year for this. However, based on off-line discussions with some Board members, Mr. Ward requested \$40,000 in additional funds for moving forward and completing the laying of

floor tile in the remainder of the building and potentially buying some additional furniture and equipment for the conference room and offices.

Councilmember Knight asked what account the funds were being requested from. Mr. Ward responded from Local funds and reported the balance of the Local account remains over a million dollars. Mr. Ward also requested an amendment to the Unified Planning Work Program and annual budget to increase the budget, to take additional money from Local funds and use the funds for added expenses in the next few months.

MOTION: Councilmember Knight moved to approve Amendment #5A to the FY 2020-21 UPWP and the Annual Budget to increase the Local funds available for making improvements to the building by \$40,000. Supervisor Pancrazi seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

7. Election of Executive Board Officers - Calendar Year 2021

Mr. Ward started by thanking the outgoing Chair, Martha Garcia, for her service as Chairwoman of the YMPO during the past year. He confirmed that she would remain the representative Board member for the City of Somerton. Mr. Ward mentioned that the City of Yuma was, based on prior year rotations, 'next' to fill the position of Secretary/Treasurer. He also reported that Councilmember Knight had submitted his nomination for possible consideration for the position of YMPO Secretary/Treasurer.

MOTION: Supervisor Pancrazi moved to approve Councilmember Knight for the YMPO Secretary/Treasurer position. Supervisor Martin Porchas seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Ward mentioned the usual rotation of elected officers outlined in the YMPO By-Laws, whereby the YMPO Vice-Chair becomes the Chair and the YMPO Secretary/Treasurer rises to YMPO Vice-Chair. Vice-Mayor Matias Rosales from the City of San Luis becomes the new Chair and Supervisor Porchas becomes the Vice-Chair. Both Vice-Mayor Rosales and Supervisor Porchas accepted their respective positions and took over as the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the YMPO Board. Chair Garcia (metaphorically) handed over the gavel to Chairman Rosales.

8. Calendar Year 2021 Election of YMPO Subcommittee Members and Identification of Officials for Attending AZSTB and RTAC meetings.

The Chairman called on Board members for nomination of YMPO representatives to Attend future State Transportation Board (AZSTB), Rural Transportation Advisory Council (RTAC), and YMPO subcommittees.

A. Election of Audit Committee members

The YMPO Secretary/Treasurer automatically becomes the Chairperson of the YMPO Audit Committee, in this case, the newly elected Councilmember Knight.

Supervisor Pancrazi and Mayor Cecilia McCollough self-nominated themselves to remain members of the Audit Committee.

MOTION: Self nominations were accepted as stated, Supervisor Porchas seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

B. Election of By-Laws Subcommittee Members

Mr. Ward stated prior Board agreement that this item can be skipped unless, and until, action on the YMPO By-Laws is needed.

C. Election of Director's Performance Evaluation Subcommittee

Mr. Ward mentioned the new Board Chairman was automatically the Chair of the Evaluation Subcommittee. Councilmember Karen Watts and Mayor McCollough expressed interest to serve on the Director Performance Evaluation Subcommittee for a second time.

MOTION: Self nominations were accepted as stated, seconded the nominations and the motion was unanimously approved.

D. YMPO State Transportation Board Representative

MOTION: Supervisor Pancrazi moved to nominate Mayor McCollough as the STB Representative and Supervisor Porchas seconded. Mayor McCollough accepted the nomination, and the motion was unanimously approved. No Alternate was named, primarily because Councilmember Knight is the actual State Transportation Board Member for District 6, which Includes Yuma County.

E. RTAC Representative and Alternate

Mayor McCollough expressed her interest to remain the RTAC Representative and Councilmember Palmer indicated interest to serve as an Alternate.

MOTION: Self nominations were accepted as stated, Supervisor Porchas seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

9. YMPO Origin-Destination Study

Mr. Ward briefed members that the General Services Administration (GSA) of the Federal Government had programmed over \$150 million for increasing the number of vehicle lanes within Port of Entry I at the City of San Luis' international border with Mexico. This was anticipated to have a significant effect on the number of border crossings. He reported that, as a supplement to the Federally funded Border improvements and the locally funded General Plan Update that was completed last year, the City of San Luis recently released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a Downtown Redevelopment Plan.

He mentioned that one of YMPO's current UPWP studies is to carry out an Origin-Destination Study (O-D Study) to find out where people crossing the border are coming from and where they are going to. The City, in addition to completing their Downtown Redevelopment Plan, plans to do a circulation study and downtown circulation plan.

Mr. Ward suggested that a more efficient approach to combine the efforts of the GSA, the MPO, and the City, would be to allocate the funds to the City to carry out the O-D Study in conjunction with the Redevelopment plan and circulation study, all under one contract. Mr. Ward reported that he had discussed the idea with the City, and they had indicated their willingness to combine efforts.

Mr. Ward reported that YMPO currently has included \$35,000 in a mixture of Federal Highway and Transit Planning and Research funds to conduct the Origin-Destination Study at the border in FY 2021 in the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). He reported that those funds cannot be given to the City as they are Federal Planning funds, which may only be used by MPOs. However, Mr. Ward suggested that, if the Board approves an amendment to the UPWP to take \$35,000 out of cash to replace the federal funds for the City and program the federal funds on the Rail Study, we could achieve the aim. Effectively, that action would authorize him to enter into an intergovernmental agreement with the City of San Luis to provide \$35,000 in Local funds to complete the O-D Study in conjunction with the City's Downtown Redevelopment Plan.

The Chairman briefed the Board on the expansion of the border, and the City's Downtown Redevelopment Plan efforts and introduced Jenny Torres, City of San Luis, Economic Development Manager. Ms. Torres reported that the funding for the City's Plan would be spread over two fiscal years and that the RFP had already been released. She anticipated awarding the contract the following week and concluded that they anticipate to contract with an engineer to do the circulation study during the current fiscal year but also considering extending the Plan to include the Origin-Destination Study. She also mentioned as a possibility, combining efforts with the 4FrontEd organization to use universities in Mexico to collect information while border-crossers are waiting in their cars to go across to the US.

MOTION: Councilmember Knight moved to authorize the Executive Director to enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of San Luis to allocate up to \$35,000 in Local funds for the completion of an Origin-Destination Study of similar scope and value as the YMPO Study as part of an expanded City of San Luis Downtown Redevelopment Plan. Councilmember Watts seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Ward introduced the staff report to Amendment #5 of the YMPO Unified Planning Program to replace the existing mixture of PL and Federal Highway Research funds (SPR with \$35,000 local funds for the Origin-Destination Study as part of a Memorandum of Understanding with the City of San Luis and increase Rail/Heavy Freight Study by

\$33,656. He anticipated additional funds to be programmed for the Rail Study as part of the forthcoming FY 2022-23 UPWP.

MOTION: Councilmember Knight moved to amend his prior motion to include Amendment #5 to the UPWP to reflect mentioned changes. Councilmember Watts agreed to the amendment, and the motion was unanimously approved.

10. Support for Arizona Legislation on Funding Transportation.

Mr. Ward informed the Board that it is now legislation season at the Arizona legislature. He added that Senator Livingston and Representative Carroll have sponsored Bills in the Senate and House which, predominantly, aim to increase gasoline and use-fuel (diesel) taxes by one cent per year from 2022 through 2045. Also included is a mechanism to annually link the fuel taxes to inflation, to place a new tax on electric and alternative fuels vehicles and to increase the Maricopa County half-cent sales tax with a three-quarter-cent sales tax. He further reported that one of the individual spending bills (possibly HB2479) had been amended by Representative Dunn to include \$10 million for widening the next section of US-95. Unfortunately, most of the Bills had NOT proceeded through the process, although several of the 'earmarks' had continued forward.

11. 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, RTS, and Roads and Streets)
- D. MPO/COG Director/Planner Meetings
- E. Rural Transportation Advocacy Council activities
- F. Projects - Economic Development and Transportation

12. Possible Future Agenda Items.

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

- A. Future Regional Transportation Funds update.
- B. Possible Ribbon-Cutting on New Office.
- C. Future visits by YMPO Team to member agencies

13. Progress Reports.

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

- A. Feb 1 - Staff meeting (All).
- B. Feb 3 - YCIPTA/YMPO SRTP telemeeting (PW).
- C. Feb 3 - YMPO LRTP biweekly telemeeting (PW, CG).
- D. Feb 8 - ADOT/YMPO Coordination telemeeting (PW, CG).
- E. Feb 10 - Yuma County Bicycle Task Force telemeeting (PW).

- F. Feb 11 - TAC telemeeting (PW, CG, DM, MR).
- G. Feb 16 - YMPO LRTP biweekly telemeeting (PW, CG).
- H. Feb 16 - RTAC Advisory Committee (PW).
- I. Feb 17 - YCIPTA/YMPO SRTP telemeeting (PW).
- J. Feb 17 - STSP Safety Emphasis Area telemeeting (CG, DM).
- K. Feb 19 - AZSTB telemeeting (PW).
- L. Feb 22 - RTAC Board meeting (PW).
- M. Feb 24 - Yuma County Bicycle Task Force telemeeting (PW, CG).
- N. Feb 25 - EB telemeeting (PW, CG, CF, DM).

14. Pay Raises for YMPO Staff.

Mr. Ward reported that there had not been a pay raise policy for YMPO staff since he arrived. He reported that he had researched similar agencies - and some member agency's adopted processes - and that most included inflation adjustments and also recognized, and rewarded, employee merit.

He outlined a possible three phase process. Phase One includes the annual Cost-of-Living-Adjustment (COLA) and is based on Consumer Price Index (CPI) statistics obtained from the Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics. He reported that the prior year's CPI Index is currently used to decipher the COLA for the following year.

Mr. Ward continued, Phase Two consists of a STEP increase procedure, primarily based on merit. He added that the increase is based on the individual who does better in the job once they get to learn it. As the individual learns the job, the step percent decreases and for the remaining years they remain, the same step percent slightly decreases. Mr. Ward explained that the effect is that, if the individual does the same job for 30 years, they will receive up to a 40% increase in step increases. He presented a sample step increase table for an employee that works six years with a starting salary of \$30,000 and over six years earn could receive pay raises that increase their salary to a total of \$35,577.

Mr. Ward then introduced Phase Three, a possible merit increases for truly outstanding effort. He mentioned that this would reward the employee who suggests a change to how YMPO does business that saves us money, and/or an employee whose efforts greatly increase the amount of money that YMPO, or member agencies, receive. Mr. Ward explained that he does not expect this third phase to occur very often and if it does, it would probably be in the form of a one-time bonus for a job well done.

Mr. Ward mentioned that the pay raise policy included for consideration includes the COLA and potential step increase as shown as part of Table Two of the information summary. He mentioned the policy on employee pay raises was presented for discussion and possible action for approval.

Councilmember Knight commented that he understands the COLA increase and asked if the merit increase is contingent on performance or if it is an automated increase. Mr. Ward clarified by stating the pay raises will only be awarded based on the receipt of a successful, minimum performance evaluation score of three out of five score, or higher. He added that if anyone does not make an average of three which meets standards, then they do not get the step increase. Mr. Ward mentioned that if an employee is not meeting a score of three, that person basically should not be working for YMPO. Mr. Ward mentioned that the CPI would be automatically given, and the step increase would arise from a satisfactory performance.

ADOT SW District Engineer Paul Patane agreed with the COLA increase and commented that in his view step increases should be given to the high performers, those that are going above and beyond the normal job expectations. He added that the State does a similar approach by issuing a bonus at the end of the year to those performing above expectations and does not get added to their base salaries. Supervisor Pancrazi agreed with a salary table that includes a step and COLA increase depending on the budget available and employee performance. She finalized by stating that if the employee is not performing accordingly, they should be fired.

After much discussion among members, the Board decided to leave the task of staff raises decisions to the discretion of the Executive Director. Mr. Ward mentioned his intent that staff pay raises for calendar year 2020 will be backdated to the beginning of the year accordingly based on the information received.

15. Executive Director's Evaluation

The Chair requested a motion to go into Executive Session.

Motion: Councilmember Knight moved to recess into Executive Session. Vice-Mayor Garcia seconded, and the item was unanimously approved.

16. Executive Session

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

17. Reconvene to Public Meeting

The Chair reconvened to public meeting.

18. Executive Director's Evaluation – Open Discussion

MOTION: Councilmember Knight moved to approve the Executive Director's pay raise as agreed to in Executive Session. Deputy-Mayor Leslie McClendon seconded, and the item was unanimously approved.

19. Adjournment.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

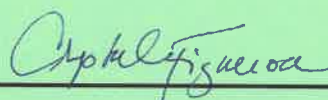
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Anticipated Future 2021 Meeting Locations

All future meetings will be held at the NEW YMPO office at 230 West Morrison Street, Yuma, Arizona 85364. However, although members **MAY** participate in person, members may also participate electronically, by computer and/or telephone (or both), using the GoToMeeting portal. The next two meetings will occur on Thursday, March 25, 2021, and Thursday, April 29, 2021

Preparation and Approval of Minutes:

Minutes prepared by:



Crystal Figueroa, Executive Assistant
and Accountant II, YMPO

Minutes reviewed to form by:

Minutes approved in regular session on
March 25, 2021



Paul D. Ward, P.E., Executive Director
Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization



Vice-Mayor Matias Rosales, Chair
YMPO Executive Board