

CAPITAL BUDGET OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

Legislative Office Building, Room 201

Concord, NH

Wednesday, June 5, 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Rep. John Cloutier, Chair

Rep. John Graham

Rep. Michael Edgar

Rep. Mary Beth Walz

Sen. Regina Birdsell

Sen. David Watters

(The meeting convened at 8:36 a.m.)

(1) New Business:

JOHN CLOUTIER, State Representative, Sullivan County, District #10: The time being 8:36, I'm going to call this meeting of the Capital Budget Overview Committee to order. And we have under New Business one item. It's Item No. 19-011, the Department of Transportation, Use of Toll Credits. And I would ask, I guess, representative from DOT, I believe, Miss Mullen, Marie Mullen. I don't know who else wants to come up on behalf of the Department to speak to this item, please.

MARIE MULLEN, Director of Finance, Department of Transportation: Good morning.

CHAIRMAN CLOUTIER: Good morning. Thank you for coming.

MS. MULLEN: Marie Mullen, Director of Finance from New Hampshire DOT, and with me is Bill Watson, our Administrator for Community and Planning Assistance.

First, I'd like to thank you for having this special meeting. We apologize for this request, but we needed to get these contracts with the Regional Planning Commissions to the G & C so that the RPCs wouldn't have to stop their work on this program. And if you have questions on that we can discuss that.

But we -- we're asking to utilize toll credits for our Regional Planning Commission. This is an annual two-year program that we have. It's 100% federal funds. And based on the RSAs we need to request toll credits to utilize as the match for these -- for this program. So if you have any questions.

CHAIRMAN CLOUTIER: Okay. Questions? Representative Graham, please.

JOHN GRAHAM, State Representative, Hillsborough County, District #07: Just one. It's a procedural one. Why couldn't you have had this done for our April meeting?

MS. MULLEN: We apologize for that. I think there was an interpretation that -- of not knowing when the next meetings would be. I think there was an understanding that there would be one potentially earlier in June or in May. So we apologize for that. I do understand this is an inconvenience for you, and we do apologize for that, that oversight.

CHAIRMAN CLOUTIER: Okay. Further questions, please? Representative Walz.

MARY BETH WALZ, State Representative, Merrimack County, District #23: So everybody here knows I'm new on this Committee so I have a question. We keep getting asked to approve toll credits. Is there a master plan on using toll credits or you just kind of use them as you need them or when they're gone, they're gone?

MS. MULLEN: Well, the State, as you know being on the Finance Committee, the State does not have Highway Funds or anything to match the federal programs. So the only thing we have are toll credits.

REP. WALZ: Right.

MS. MULLEN: So our entire federal program is matched with toll credits. So that is the plan. The State Ten-Year Plan,

CAPITAL BUDGET OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

June 5, 2019

the federal program, is matched with toll credits. So we're required by law to come here for any project that is not related to a road or bridge project. So anything that might be an SPR, a research project, anything like that, a transit project that might use toll credits, we have to come to the Committee to get approval for that.

REP. WALZ: Follow-up.

CHAIRMAN CLOUTIER: Yes, please continue, Representative.

REP. WALZ: So I understood all that. What I'm asking is if you sit down today and you say we've got a hundred toll credits. I'm making numbers up. Here's where we're going to use 20, 25, 10, five, whatever. Do you know over the next year how you're going to use your toll credits or is it the kind of thing that if something comes up you go, oh, we got toll credits. Let's use those because that's our plan.

MS. MULLEN: No. Like I said, we use them on every project that has to come through with the federal funds because we do not have a State Match. So we do have a schedule. We have approximately 230 million in toll credits.

REP. WALZ: Hm-hum.

MS. MULLEN: Our balance available. We use about 32 million a year. So our plan is to use 32 million of toll credits every year to match the federal program.

REP. WALZ: And then there's 200 unused?

MS. MULLEN: Yes.

REP. WALZ: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CLOUTIER: Thank you. Representative Graham again.

REP. GRAHAM: Just a follow-up to that question. How many toll credits do you earn a year approximately?

MS. MULLEN: Hum -- it depends. We have a Maintenance of Effort that we have to comply with. So there's like a three-year rolling average. So it depends on the R&R and the Capital Program from the Turnpike System. So it can be anywhere between 40 to 60 million a year that we earn. There can be a year if we're below the Maintenance of Effort we don't earn them. But, for the most part, we are continuing to build the balance in the Turnpike Toll Credits.

CHAIRMAN CLOUTIER: Yes, please continue.

REP. GRAHAM: So we're earning more than we're spending in most years.

MS. MULLEN: In most years yes.

REP. WALZ: Great! That's what I'm trying to figure out.

REP. GRAHAM: I knew where you were going.

REP. WALZ: Great! You know, as I said, I'm new to this, and I keep approving things. I want to understand what I'm doing.

CHAIRMAN CLOUTIER: Okay. Sure. Do you have any further questions, Representative Walz?

REP. WALZ: I don't.

CHAIRMAN CLOUTIER: Okay. All right. Senator Birdsell, welcome. I don't know if you have any questions.

REGINA BIRDSELL, State Senator, Senate District #19: I'm sorry I'm late.

CHAIRMAN CLOUTIER: That's understandable. Sometimes, you know, we're all busy.

** DAVID WATTERS, State Senator, Senate District #04: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CLOUTIER: Yes, please, Senator Watters.

** SEN. WATTERS: I move approval.

CHAIRMAN CLOUTIER: You move approval. Do I have a second on that motion?

REP. WALZ: I'll second.

CHAIRMAN CLOUTIER: Okay. A motion by Senator Watters, a second by Representative Walz to approve Item dash 19 -- oh, excuse me -- 19-011. Are we ready for the vote? Is a voice vote okay? All right. Okay. All those in favor of the motion to adopt this item, signify by saying aye? All those opposed say nay?

REP. GRAHAM: No.

CHAIRMAN CLOUTIER: The ayes have it. Motion carries. The item is approved.

*** **{MOTION ADOPTED}**

CHAIRMAN CLOUTIER: Just a reminder our next regular meeting is 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, November 20 -- excuse me -- not 25th. Excuse me. I'm rushing. Tuesday, June 25th. So you'll be getting packets soon, and I thank you very, very much for coming everybody, and I'm going to adjourn this meeting. I know there's a ceremony at 9 that a lot of you want to go to. Thank you. Thank you very much, LBA, for coming and Representative Edgar especially for serving as acting clerk.

CAPITAL BUDGET OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

June 5, 2019

MICHAEL EDGAR, State Representative, Rockingham County, District #21: You're welcome.

MS. MULLEN: Thank you to the Committee for your help.
Thank you.

(Meeting adjourned at 8:43 a.m.)

CAPITAL BUDGET OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

June 5, 2019

CERTIFICATION

I, Cecelia A. Trask, a Licensed Court Reporter-Shorthand, do hereby certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate transcript from my shorthand notes taken on said date to the best of my ability, skill, knowledge and judgment.

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