

**NJIB Transportation Engineering Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**May 22, 2020, 1:30 PM – Virtual Meeting**  
**MEETING NOTES**

**Attendees:**

- Chair – Joe Cunha (JCMUA)
- Vice Chair – Frank Rotonda (Bright View Engineering)
- Vice Chair (Backup) – Eleni Giannikopoulos (Suburban Consulting Engineers)
- Kevin Becica (Camden County)
- Joe Fiordaliso (NorthStar Strategies)
- Matt Loper (Somerset County)

**Non-Participating Members in attendance:**

- Robert Fernandez (I-Bank)
- George Rolon (I-Bank)
- Melinda Roslon (I-Bank)
- Laine Rankin (NJDOT)
- Brian Wirtz (NJDOT)

**Members not in attendance:**

- Deanna Stockton (Princeton)

Color format:    **BLUE = Done**                      **RED = In process**                      GREY = Noted

- 1. Recap of Completed To-Do Items from December** ~ I-Bank COO Rob Fernandez reviewed the completed action items from the previous meeting.
  
- 2. Discussion on Current State Financing Program** ~
  - The group discussed the streamlining of the Environmental Review and State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) process.
    - The group agreed that DEP is normally the largest hinderance, both from an environmental and cultural review perspective
    - Joe C. shared that for the JCMUA, the DEP has been doing a blanket review of all areas, before projects are even developed, to get a head start on mapping out compliance issues in problem areas
      - Noted, although this may not be a viable option for most municipalities
    - Eleni G. suggested that an environmental checklist be created and possibly added to the Initial Submission. Applicants will have an idea of what kinds of environmental concerns they will need to be aware of, and the environmental reviewers will have an idea at the start of the project of what kind of review will be necessary
      - **I-Bank will work with DOT to create checklist as well as determine triggers for other DOT groups (e.g. Railroad)**
    - Kevin B. mentioned that there may be an initiative to amend the MOU between DOT and DEP to raise the limit for the EO215 exemption above \$1M (possibly to \$5M).
    - ✓ **George R. shared with the group that the I-Bank is formulating a working group to streamline the process with DOT and SHPO**

- The group agreed that the SBE process/requirement is not a pain point, and that if/when we have a DBE requirement it will become more cumbersome
- The group briefly discussed experience with project closeout. Kevin B. shared that she meets with her Local Aid District office every quarter, which forces her to double check all her deliverables and keeps her on track with the requirements
- Eleni G. noted that while funding itself may not be impacted by COVID-19, the credit policy has changed as a result of it which makes receiving the funding a little bit more difficult

**3. Marketing of Programs** ~ The group discussed topics regarding marketing the transportation programs

- Suggestion: publish or post a process flow diagram showing the process from start to finish
- Kevin B. commented that some Local Government Units do not realize there is a bonding requirement prior to securing the loan, and once aware they may be reluctant to seek financing because this can be intimidating.
  - ✓ A potential clarification point is that a Local Government Unit can bond for and close on the Planning and Design only, and then finance the remaining at a later date, to break up the visual to the public of a large bond. George R. pointed out that while this is an option, there may be an additional cost to roll the note to the larger amount
  - ✓ Group agreed that the county meetings are a good forum to promote this, and that we should continue to target the financial people for attendance
    - I-Bank to add additional documentation to the website and to its County Outreach presentations to make the bonding requirements clear but less intimidating

**4. Discussion on NJ-Moves** ~ George R. asked the group about their experience with H2LOans and whether there are any areas of concern so the I-Bank can take the feedback and improve on NJ-Moves proactively

- Joe C. expressed how digital submission makes the requisition process more efficient
- Eleni G. mentioned how the file upload section is very valuable in H2LOans, however sometimes the uploads are not effectively communicated to the various parties in H2LOans, which can delay Authorization to Advertise
  - I-Bank will make sure something similar is incorporated into NJ-Moves, as well as identify the correct points of contact for notifications
- Eleni G. suggested adding more status bars throughout the application to show borrowers where they are in the process and how much is left.
  - I-Bank has future plans to build a dashboard and additional status bars

**5. Update on I-Bank Agreements** ~ Rob F. gave an update on the pending MOU between I-Bank and DOT, as well as the Oversight/Stewardship Agreement with FHWA-District

**6. Discussion on Proposed TIFIA RPI Financing Program** ~ Rob F. updated the committee on the status of this program (still waiting for action from FHWA – NJDOT Commissioner lobbied for NJIB designation)

**7. Additional Discussion** ~ The group discussed future meetings

- Hold meetings more frequently
- Frank R. and Joe C. suggested we follow Robert's Rules of Order for future meetings
  - Rob F. to discuss with David Z. on how to proceed

**8. Agenda Items for Upcoming Discussion - Open**