Water Transportation Advisory Board (WTAB)
June 23, 2026, Meeting Minutes

Approved by WTAB: 10/14/2026

The meeting of the Water Transportation Advisory Board (WTAB) was called to order at 10:03 AM on Tuesday, June 23, 2026, held virtually.

The WTAB members in attendance were:
Brian Wright, Chair
Billy Ray Coursey
Chuck Davis
Jerry Pace
Amanda Davenport, Vice Chair
Wayne Cassady
Miguel Zamora

Also, in attendance were:
Jeremy Edgeworth, KYTC
Ben Weithman, Henderson Riverport
Eric Patton, Greenup Boyd Riverport
Mikael Pelfrey, KYTC
Jim Garrett, Paducah Riverport
Jennifer Kirchner, KBT
Kelia McCloud, Hickman Riverport
Jay Balaji, KYTC
Jake Rice, KYTC
Owen McNeal, Maysville Mason County Riverport
Greg Curlin, Hickman Riverport
WHAS (media, did not introduce themselves)
John Roberts, KYTC

Welcome and Introductions:
The Chair welcomed all in attendance and all attendees introduced themselves.

Public Comment Period:
The Chair invited all attendees to make comments. No public comments were made.

Presentation of Minutes from December 3, 2025
The minutes of the December 3, 2025, meeting were presented and subsequently unanimously approved on motion of Chuck Davis, seconded by Amanda Davenport.

Discussion of Economic Impact of Kentucky's Ports and Waterways Study
Jeremy Edgeworth discussed the Economic Impact of Kentucky's Ports and Waterways study is moving forward. RFP was issued with four responses. KYTC selection committee has been aided by representation from the Kentucky Association of Riverports (KAR). Short list meeting was held to score four submitted responses. Committee voted to invite two of the applications to provide presentations on June 25th to selection committee and KAR representatives. After presentations the winning firm will be selected, and scoping meeting will be set up with all interested riverports.

Discussion of HB 501 funding an FY 27 Kentucky Riverport Improvement (KRI) program
Jeremy Edgeworth reviewed HB 501 which funded the FY 27 & FY 28 KRI program and noted the changes from prior KRI programs. This $500,000 in annual funds will now go into the Riverport Financial Assistance Trust fund established by KRS 174.210. Jeremy went over the language of KRS 174.210 and the subsequent changes to the KRI program. KRI project types must now follow Part 3. Funds do not lapse per Part 4. Match is now 80/20 per Part 5. Part 6 requires review of grants annually and priority given to projects with a master plan, permits, and matching funds. KRI Guidance Document and Application will be updated to match KRS 174.210. Timing of KRI funds, wait until spring of 2027, issue call for FY 27 & FY 28 funds in one call. Mr. Edgeworth noted the final schedule would be up to KYTC leadership.

Discussion of HB 900 Funding and FY 27 Kentucky Public Riverport Construction and Maintenance (KPRCM) Program

Jeremy Edgeworth reviewed HB 900/SB 197 which funded the FY 27 & FY 28 KPRCM program and noted the changes from prior KPRCM programs. Provided $15.1M in FY 27 and $14.5M in FY 28 for projects from public riverports (KRS 65.520) that with eligible uses as outlined in KRS 174.210(3). Process will be changing to utilize a Letter of Intent (LOI) process. KYTC will issue call for LOIs with 2-week deadline. Responses require 2-3 sentence description of the project and anticipated funding request amount. After deadline, if not enough LOIs submitted, KYTC will issue call for additional LOIs until it exceeds FY appropriation. If enough LOIs are submitted, those that provided LOIs will be instructed to complete full KPRCM application and submit within 30 days. KPRCM applications will be submitted to WTAB for review and scoring.

Mr. Edgeworth also noted that the WTAB review process is also changing, implementing an individual project scoring matrix. During WTAB member review of KPRCM application, each application will be scored on seven criteria: Criticality & Transportation Impact, Economic Development Impact, Project Readiness & Deliverability, Safety, Resiliency & Preservation, Financial Leverage & Partnership, Strategic Importance to Kentucky, and a Developing Riverport Bonus. Mr. Eddgeworth also went over some of the consideration and example indicators for each criterion. There was extensive discussion about the point values assigned to each criterion and some adjustments were proposed to increase the values of the most critical criteria, and lower others. On motion of Amanda Davenport, seconded by Brian Wright, and with unanimous approval, the scoring criteria that will be presented to KYTC leadership was finalized. The tentative schedule is to begin the KPRCM process in early August. Mr. Edgeworth noted that this would all be presented to KYTC leadership and they would have the final say on the scoring criteria and schedule. Upon their approval the KPRCM Application and Guidance document would have to be modified so the early August date is tentative.

Discussion of the next WTAB meeting

Jeremy Edgeworth announced that a WTAB meeting would be needed once the KPRCM process begins, possibly in the fall. Due to the amount of grant money to award, it would be an in-person meeting. The date is undetermined as it depends on the number of rounds of the LOI process. An availability poll would be sent out to the WTAB members and all public riverports would be notified once the date is selected.

There being no further business, on motion of Miguel Zamora, seconded by Jerry Pace and with unanimous approval, the meeting adjourned at 12:01 PM.

Submitted:
Jeremy Edgeworth
Water Transportation Advisory Board Staff, KYTC