



North Carolina Association of Rural Planning Organizations

**North Carolina Association of RPO's
April 29, 2005 Quarterly Meeting
Eastern Carolina Council Offices
New Bern, NC**

Attendees

1. Ann Whitley, Peanut Belt RPO
2. Brandon Shoaf, Albemarle RPO
3. Chris Padgett, Down East RPO
4. Chris Rountree, Peanut Belt RPO
5. Dana Stoogenke, Mid Carolina RPO
6. Don Eggert, Cape Fear RPO
7. Ed Johnson, CAMPO
8. Faye Lewis, Mid Carolina RPO
9. Gene Foxworth, Mid-East RPO
10. Geraldine Dumas, Kerr-Tar RPO
11. Greg Christo, Isothermal RPO
12. Hanna Cockburn, Piedmont Triad RPO
13. Jake Gilmer, Land-of-Sky RPO
14. Janet Robertson, Lumber River RPO
15. Jim Daughtry, Eastern Carolina RPO
16. John Marshall, Unifour RPO
17. Katherine English, NCDOT TPB
18. Matt Roark, Southwestern RPO
19. Pat Strong, Triangle RPO
20. Paul Black, Upper Coastal Plain RPO
21. Shelby Powell, Kerr-Tar RPO
22. Travis Marshall, NCDOT TPB

Minutes

Minutes. J. Marshall called the meeting to order and called for a motion to accept the minutes of the NCARPO January meeting. **Motion made by C. Padgett to adopt the minutes as presented in the agenda packet; Second by G. Foxworth.** There being no further discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

D. Eggert asked to add an item to the agenda to discuss adopting a resolution asking for RPO's to have individual meetings with the TIP Development Unit and Board of Transportation members. He would like the resolution to state that the RPO Association members will support individual meetings at the TIP hearings. **Motion made by G. Foxworth to have the Association write a letter to Roger Sheats requesting the individual meetings; Second by P. Black.** There being no further discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

MPO Association Update: E. Johnson stated that NCAMPO has been meeting bi-monthly from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. in Greensboro, but they are going to try the NCARPO meeting format of two days for their May meeting. Their next meeting will be May 12-13, 2005 in Raleigh. On May 13, at the request of NCDOT TPB, they have invited Fountainworks to conduct a facilitated workshop to look at MPO/RPO/NCDOT relationships and issues. He stated that the MPO Conference will be held in Greenville at the Hilton Hotel and Convention Center October 26-28. The focus of the conference will be on GIS resources and uses in transportation planning. E. Johnson stated that the comment period for the 2007-2013 TIP had been extended to October 7, 2005. He suggested that in the future, the RPO's and MPO's should work on lists of needs for a 10, 20, and 30 year period so the combined lists could be compared to the State's list of projected needs for roads, bike, pedestrian and transit to get a more accurate view of North Carolina's long-range transportation needs. He stated that the lists did not necessarily need to be prioritized, just comprehensive.

NCDOT TPB Update: T. Marshall stated that new Planning Work Programs are due in May and they would like to receive them as soon as possible to begin setting up next year's accounts. The TPB is still working on the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) process, and is refining steps in the process. In the NEPA process, the purpose and need for projects comes from Transportation Planning Branch, so some RPO's may be contacted to begin assisting TPB with identifying purposes and needs. Usually economic development is not a good enough purpose and need. T. Marshall stated that RPO planners should try to attend the May 13 RPO/MPO/NCDOT workshop. S. Powell asked T. Marshall if anything had been done with the letter the Association had written regarding Board of Transportation support of RPO's. T. Marshall stated that he had talked to Roger about it, but no formal action had been taken on it. T. Marshall asked if there were any other issues the group was facing. P. Strong stated that he would like to see a strategic plan for CTP's being completed in his region in the next 12 to 24 months to help with scheduling his work load to assist on the CTP's. P. Black stated that his RPO staff would like to help get local CTP plans done if NCDOT staff resources are an issue. H. Cockburn stated that she

will take the RPO Association's ideas gathered from this meeting to the CTP team. E. Johnson stated that MPO's are used to the LRTP concept, and they will need to get used to meshing the CTP with the LRTP, and will need to work on developing purpose and need statements for all the projects on their priority lists.

Subcommittee Reports:

GIS Subcommittee – G. Christo stated that the two main goals the GIS Subcommittee is working on is Data Standardization amongst NCDOT and the RPO's, which is a long term goal, and data sharing agreements between local governments and the RPO's. P. Black stated that the GIS group may need to meet at the July NCARPO meeting in a separate breakout session, and then give a more comprehensive report to the NCARPO on GIS issues.

Financing Subcommittee -- M. Roark stated that he and the Executive Committee were working to identify different pots of funding from the departments at NCDOT and the federal government. The group met with Calvin Leggett, and would receive assistance from his staff in collecting information, and they will hopefully compile all this information into a more simple form to present to the NCARPO.

Legislative Subcommittee – P. Strong stated that at the state level, a report should be issued soon regarding the urban needs study conducted last year. The Joint Transportation Oversight Committee had not met since January, but will probably reconvene soon. They wanted a report from NCDOT staff about management issues, and that report will likely come out in November or so. The SAFETEA reauthorization for 2004-2009 was at a \$284 million figure that the House and Administration agree on, and the Senate is considering it. The AASHTO website regularly updates the progress of reauthorization. The extension is up in May. E. Johnson stated that the donor state issue would require more than \$284 million to fix, but the senate won't pass a higher bill. He had also heard talk of tightening up regulations around gas tax fraud that may produce some extra revenue. After the Senate and the House adopt a bill, the Conference Committee will have final say on what gets adopted.

J. Marshall stated that we may need some additional subcommittees. He stated that David Baird had mentioned at the last meeting that the PWP needs to be reworked. J. Marshall stated that he would contact David to see if he wanted to lead a subcommittee to work on recommendations to NCDOT regarding the standard PWP. T. Marshall stated that we need to be careful when looking at changes in case federal regulations came in to play for RPO's. J. Gilmer stated that the main problem with the current PWP is that we have no use for the LRTP section. T. Marshall suggested using those line items when you are collecting data for local CTP's. J. Marshall asked if the group felt the need for a subcommittee to monitor progress on the goals and objectives we developed for the NCARPO. M. Roark stated that he felt the whole committee should be responsible for making progress towards the goals. J. Gilmer suggested that we should have a regular discussion about it at the quarterly meetings. H. Cockburn suggested that the Executive Committee keep up with progress towards the goals and objectives.

J. Marshall asked for suggestions on topics for the July NCARPO meeting. He stated that there would be an Air Quality session for us prior to the Thursday portion of the meeting. He also said that other topics that had been suggested were a presentation on the Division and District office duties and responsibilities and the GIS topic. B. Shoaf suggested having Rhett Fussell give an overview of transportation modeling to give us a basic understanding of inputs and ways we could help collect data for modeling efforts in our areas. P. Black stated that he would help with the GIS session, and that he would invite Forest Robson, Jennifer Robertson, John Farley, and hopefully an MPO GIS person, perhaps Jake Petrosky of CAMPO. **Motion made by P. Black to join the MPO Association in requesting better access to all NCDOT GIS data; Second by J. Robertson.** J. Marshall stated that we would prepare a resolution to this effect that the Association could vote on at the May 13 meeting. P. Black stated that he would assist with the resolution. J. Marshall stated that David Baird had suggested having a group picnic at the July NCARPO meeting, so everyone should watch for further information from David about that.

J. Marshall stated that a COG Executive Director had requested a letter be sent from Roger Sheats or Lyndo Tippett to encourage counties to maintain support of the RPO program. He asked for anyone with suggestions on what to include in the letter to email him in the next few days.

J. Marshall opened the floor for other business items. T. Marshall asked everyone to send in GIS and General Assembly fund invoices as soon as possible. J. Marshall stated that we also need to continue thinking about alternate funding sources to keep RPO's going since our initial funding agreements end in FY 2006. There being no further business to discuss, J. Marshall adjourned the meeting at 12:06 p.m.