



**North Carolina Association of RPO's
October 25, 2006 Quarterly Meeting
Charlotte University Place Hilton
Charlotte, NC**

Attendees

1. Ann Whitley, Peanut Belt RPO
2. Bjorn Hansen, Lake Norman RPO
3. Carrie Runser-Turner, Land of Sky RPO
4. Chris Lukasina, Upper Coastal Plain RPO
5. Cliff Kendall, Mid-East RPO
6. Craig Hughes, High Country RPO
7. Dana Stoogenke, Rocky River RPO
8. Daniel Van Liere, Down East RPO
9. Dawn Qiu, Lake Norman RPO
10. Don Eggert, Cape Fear RPO
11. Eddy Davis, Mid-East RPO
12. Greg Christo, Isothermal RPO
13. Hanna Cockburn, Piedmont Triad RPO
14. Janet Robertson, Lumber River RPO
15. Jim Daughtry, Eastern Carolina RPO
16. Joel Strickland, Mid-Carolina RPO
17. John Marshall, Unifour RPO
18. Leigh Woodall, Kerr-Tar RPO
19. Matt Roark, Southwestern RPO
20. Shelby Powell, Kerr-Tar RPO
21. Travis Marshall, NCDOT TPB
22. Elina Zlotchenko, NCDOT TPB
23. Matt Day, NCDOT TPB
24. Katherine English, NCDOT TPB
25. Tyler Bray, NCDOT TPB
26. Kerry Vallant, NCDOT TPB

Minutes

Welcome

J. Marshall called the meeting to order at 11:04 am.

Minutes

J. Marshall called for a motion to accept the minutes of the NCARPO April 2006 meeting. Two typographic changes were offered. **A motion was made by E. Davis to adopt the minutes as revised; Second by G. Christo.** Discussion: none. There being no discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

Election of RPO Officers

J. Marshall indicated he had been waiting for this moment for two years. New officers would take over at the January meeting. D. Eggert, Chairman of the nominating committee indicated that he, E. Davis and J. Daughtry recommended the following slate of officers: S. Powell for President, H. Cockburn for Vice President, and C. Runser-Turner for Secretary, noting that the officers were selected impartial to geography. **A motion was made by M. Roark to accept the slate of officers; Second by A. Whitley.** J. Marshall opened the floor for additional nominations; none were offered. There being no additional nominations, the motion carried unanimously.

Transportation Planning Branch Update

T. Marshall provided attendees updates on several items: TPB has been working to schedule a one-day meeting with Interagency Leadership Team (ILT) members and MPOs to discuss the relationship of SAFETEA-LU requirements in the context of ILT goals. T. Marshall indicated the desire to schedule a similar meeting with the ILT for RPOs. T. Marshall indicated that the branch had a number of transportation plans underway, and that implementation was beginning for the integration project.

Discussion of Meeting Between NC RTAC Chairs

H. Cockburn distributed a discussion paper outlining the concept of a state-wide MPO/RPO Transportation Advisory Committee. Members were requested to share the information with their TACs to determine the level of interest, and address any next steps in January. H. Cockburn opened the item for general discussion and comment. S. Powell inquired if the representative had to be the TAC chair. D. Eggert encouraged everyone to insure that their COG Director sees it. B. Hansen commented that this seemed to be a lightning rod issue, and wondered if the group was necessary. J. Marshall indicated that this committee was a way to find out how other areas are addressing similar concerns. D. Eggert commented

that it seemed valuable. J. Marshall indicated this could be a way to support each other in a formal way. G. Christo commented that this seemed to solve the problems with the association having a legislative agenda. J. Marshall commented that this was not intended to be a way to get around the LRO directors. A. Whitley indicated that participation may not occur from all RPOs.

At this point, the agenda was suspended to welcome guests and to go around the room for introductions.

Conference Updates

TRB Small and Medium Size Communities – Both H. Cockburn and B. Hansen attended the conference in Nashville, TN. The subject matter was very academic, but several sessions proved informative and useful.

NADO Peer Exchange – C. Lukasina and J. Marshall made presentations at this conference in Indianapolis, IN. J. Marshall commented that North Carolina is pretty far ahead of other states in the development of the RPO program. S. Powell indicated however, that we are no further ahead than we were several years ago. S. Powell indicated there seems to be an erosion of support from the state for the program since Roger Sheats left.

ACE Conference – D. Eggert attended this conference in Raleigh. D. Eggert indicated this was an annual event, attended by 400-500 engineers from across the state, with an interesting assortment of sessions.

Public Transportation Conference – B. Hansen indicated he was working on a session for the upcoming Public Transportation Conference in June, and looking for examples of RPO involvement in public transportation planning efforts. B. Hansen indicated he would send the request via the listserv.

RPO Accomplishments

J. Marshall reminded everyone to submit their list of accomplishments. The dollar figures will be included in a letter to Representative Lucy Allen to bolster support for continued RPO funding. J. Marshall indicated the LRO directors have supported this effort.

Review Procedures Manual

J. Marshall indicated the manual was in need of updating, and as a group the association would dedicate some time to reviewing each section at future meetings. J. Marshall mentioned that this would not only aid in the review of the document, but be a learning opportunity, give input to the state and insure there was general support for the manual. E. Zlotchenko commented that the process was starting again, in part to address the need for the manual to be useful for both experienced RPO administrators and new coordinators. E. Zlotchenko indicated there would likely be major format changes. J. Marshall commented that this would begin with the January meeting. C. Runser-Turner shared that she had found discrepancies regarding due dates and other items. E. Zlotchenko encouraged everyone to send in their comments and corrections so they can be addressed. T. Marshall commented that the original manual had been assembled on the fly, and that a number of items were missing or incomplete. T. Marshall went on to say that the manual would be produced in hard copy and on line. B. Hansen indicated it might be useful to break the document into chapters.

The meeting was suspended at 11:35 am for the purpose of distributing lunch. The meeting resumed at 11:55 am, after lunches and MPO Conference packets were distributed.

Future Meeting Dates, Times and Topics

J. Marshall reviewed the details of the next quarterly meeting, scheduled for January at the Triangle J Council of Governments. B. Hansen offered to host a future meeting, preferable during warm weather to take advantage of the new white water park in Charlotte. D. Eggert reminded members that a meeting was owed to the western contingent, and that consideration should be given for the July meeting being in Asheville or points west. B. Hansen inquired about the need to follow up on the discussion of teleconference facilities for meetings.

Transportation Planning Branch Update

T. Marshall reminded members that the RPOs are in the fifth and final year of committed funding, and indicated new coordinators were on the way for the Mid-East, Lumber River and Mid-Carolina RPOs. T. Marshall also shared that Sarah Smith was the new supervisor for the Mountains Unit, and Alpesh Patel was the Metrolina supervisor.

RPO Update

E. Zlotchenko provided attendees with updates on several topics.

E. Zlotchenko reminded members that Comprehensive Transportation Plan priorities were due on December 31st, and distributed a handout with suggested format of the information necessary to consider when selecting priorities. S. Powell inquired about the need for submittals if priorities had not changed. E. Zlotchenko indicated that the priorities should be submitted regardless.

E. Zlotchenko indicated that TIP priorities should be limited to one list per division, and that county-level lists would be accepted. E. Zlotchenko also indicated that a Public Involvement Plan (PIP) must be adopted by each RPO, and that FHWA would be providing education on public participation in the coming months.

E. Zlotchenko again addressed the issue of using consultants, noting that M. Bruff was in the process of drafting a memo outlining the acceptable uses for RPO funds, which will not include the use of consultants.

E. Zlotchenko provided updates on other deadlines, including the December 1st deadline for bicycle and pedestrian grants, and the March 1st deadline for approvals of PWP, and the January 31 deadline for second quarter invoices and work summaries. D. Eggert shared with the group that the manual needed to clarify the process for submitting the PWP to DOT staff and the TCC, and suggested these could be at the same time to reduce conflicts. E. Zlotchenko indicated that this should be submitted to the TPB coordinator first.

E. Zlotchenko again mentioned the process for updating the administrative manual, indicating the page of deadlines and a deliverables checklist would be included.

E. Zlotchenko went on to say that notifications for Tier Grants and planning grants should be sent out in December. Increases for the next year were still up in the air, but a paper describing the RPOs had been prepared for a meeting with D. Barbour and L. Sanderson regarding future RPO funding.

Committee Reports

GIS – G. Christo provided an update on state-wide GIS efforts, sharing a handout that summarized the needs and benefits of the statewide GIS system. G. Christo mentioned that the Board of Transportation and the Interagency Leadership Team have given their support to the proposal, and copies of the handout and a draft resolution of support were available at the CTP booth during the conference. G. Christo suggested the association consider the resolution at the January Meeting.

Legislative – P. Strong was not present to provide a report.

Finance – B. Hansen distributed the revised memo regarding the development of the funding website. He reminded members that this had been discussed at the July association meeting, and that providing the information in an on-line format was critical. The estimated cost for the site and maintenance is \$6,000-7,000 per year. Several questions regarding the proposal were raised, including whether the cost would be eligible for reimbursement, how the site should be organized, and if the MPOs should be involved. J. Daugherty commented that there didn't seem to be another way to manage the information. T. Marshall indicated that he felt that the cost of the website would be eligible for reimbursement, but would check to make sure. J. Marshall inquired about what happened if an RPO couldn't come up with the funds. B. Hansen indicated the cost per RPO would be from \$335 - \$200 per year, and the administering RPO could invoice the other 19. C. Runser-Turner made two comments: first, that LOSRPO is in support of funding the website for the first three years, with an opportunity to reevaluate, provide feedback or opt-out if the project doesn't seem successful. Secondly that distributing the small cost of a project like this equally across the RPOs seemed fair, but more costly projects need to take into account the differing sizes of RPOs across the state. B. Hansen indicated that each RPO would need to commit to filling in 3-5 pages of information that would be subject to peer review, and that assignments would begin next quarter. **A motion was made by J. Daugherty to pursue the website; Second by S. Powell. Discussion:** a final decision on the website name resulted in nctransportationanswers.org as the preferred name, and if it was not available, the executive committee would be responsible for identifying a suitable alternative. **With no further discussion, the motion passed.**

Other Items. J. Marshall shared an AASHTO document regarding self assessment procedures for transportation planning agencies. D. Eggert indicated he would examine the document to discuss in more detail at the January meeting. B. Hansen inquired about ITS deployment in RPO areas. Attendees indicated that a couple of areas have participated. H. Cockburn distributed the list of TIP public hearings scheduled for November and December.

Adjournment. With no other business to consider, J. Marshall adjourned the meeting at 12:45p.m.