



**North Carolina Association of RPOs  
April 24, 2008 Quarterly Meeting  
Wilmington State Port  
Wilmington, NC**

**Attendees**

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| 1. Alex Rickard, Eastern Carolina RPO    | 12. Janet Robertson, Lumber River RPO   |
| 2. Ann Whitley, Peanut Belt RPO          | 13. Joel Strickland, Mid-Carolina RPO   |
| 3. Carrie Runser-Turner, Land of Sky RPO | 14. John Marshall, Unifour RPO          |
| 4. Chris Rountree, Peanut Belt RPO       | 15. Marc Allred, Northwest Piedmont RPO |
| 5. Craig Hughes, High Country RPO        | 16. Morgan Jethro, Albemarle RPO        |
| 6. Daniel Van Liere, Down East RPO       | 17. Pat Strong, Triangle Area RPO       |
| 7. Don Eggert, Cape Fear RPO             | 18. Shelby Powell, Kerr-Tar RPO         |
| 8. Eddy Davis, Mid East RPO              |   |
| 9. Geraldine Dumas, Kerr-Tar RPO         | 19. Mike Kozlosky, Wilmington MPO       |
| 10. Greg Christo, Isothermal RPO         |   |
| 11. Hanna Cockburn, Piedmont Triad RPO   |   |

**Minutes**

**Welcome**

S. Powell called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

**Minutes**

S. Powell called for a motion to accept the minutes of the NCARPO October 2007 meeting. **A motion was made by D. Van Liere to adopt the minutes as presented; Second by J. Robertson.** Discussion: none. There being no discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

**TPB/RPO Update**

S. Powell noted that no one from NCDOT Transportation Planning Branch was in attendance at the meeting. She also reported that Dr. Bradshaw from Elizabeth City State University would not be in attendance. S. Powell is a member of the steering committee for the RPO assessment study. The study team has had difficulty setting up a meeting with TPB staff. The study is still on going and Dr. Bradshaw is working on the literature review. A draft assessment plan should come out in late June to early July.

**MPO Update**

M. Kozlosky provided the MPO update. The 2008 MPO conference is being planned and for the first time will be held in an RPO area, so RPO staff is working on conference planning, too. S. Powell reported that she, D. Van Liere, H. Cockburn, and A. Rickard are assisting with conference planning. The conference planning committee will be sending out a request for proposals for presentations. H. Cockburn recommended that RPO staff submit proposals so that the conference includes rural topics. Future conference hosts have been chosen: in 2009, the conference will be held in Fayetteville and in 2010 it will be held in Raleigh.

NCAMPO has sent a letter to the Governor requesting that MPOs be Designated Recipients for JARC and New Freedom funds. The funds will be lost if not programmed by September 2008. D. Eggert stated that the Public Transportation Division of NCDOT has held training for JARC and New Freedom, but have not given us sufficient notice to attend. S. Powell reported that, to her knowledge, there is no plan in place to deploy the rural funds in these programs. H. Cockburn asked if a letter from the NCARPO mirroring the MPO letter is warranted. P. Strong stated that he has gotten the impression that providers in his region are not interested in the funding at this time. S. Powell added that a lot of staff time is required for a relatively small amount of funding.

NCAMPO is also exploring the possibility of becoming a non-profit organization. Their next board meeting is June 12 in Charlotte. H. Cockburn is the NCAMPO board liaison for the NCARPO.

### **Statewide TAC Concept Update**

S. Powell reported that so far there has not been the critical mass required to get this concept up and running. She suggested a trial run of the concept at the November MPO Conference, where TAC members can be invited to participate and see if they feel there is a compelling reason to formalize the group. If you have passed a resolution in favor of the Statewide TAC, please send a copy to H. Cockburn. G. Christo, M. Jethro, C. Runser-Turner, E. Davis, and A. Rickard reported that their committees voted against the concept or are not fully in support of it at this time. D. Eggert reported that his committee is ambivalent but did approve the resolution. He suggested that there be sessions at the MPO conference geared toward any elected officials who do attend. M. Allred said that the resolution says both MPOs and RPOs would be involved, yet his MPO representative didn't know about the concept. His RPO would like a "rural TAC" because there are more common issues in rural areas. M. Kozlosky stated that he felt there would be a lack of attendance. His Chair is already in Raleigh every other week for a meeting. S. Powell pointed out that the Statewide TAC members would not have to be TAC Chairs, just members. D. Eggert reminded the group of the possibility of piggybacking the Statewide TAC with a NCLM or NCACC meeting. H. Cockburn asked who would staff the Statewide TAC. A. Rickard asked what the goal of the group would be. S. Powell stated that when some legislative issues arose last summer, at the staff level we did not have the authority to do anything about those issues. A committee of local elected officials could take action on legislative issues, and would be ideal to have in place during reauthorization of the federal transportation bill. H. Cockburn compared the Statewide TAC to the Joint Regional Forum, but with a transportation focus. A. Rickard stated he would like to see TCC members invited and accepted as part of this effort, as they are often more knowledgeable about transportation issues. S. Powell explained that these would be open meetings, so TCC members could attend. TCC members are also welcome at NCARPO meetings. The idea is for us as staff to be able to elevate concerns and issues to a Statewide TAC. S. Powell asked that NCARPO members take back to our committees the idea of a trial run of the Statewide TAC at the MPO Conference.

### **NC Transportation Answers Website**

S. Powell reported that the website committee met on Monday with Bob Henderson, who is the IT staff person from Centralina COG. We are working on revamping the site and making some organizational changes. The committee feels the site got away from its original focus of identifying funding for non-TIP projects. We are reworking navigation and the arrangement of additional info on the site. The committee will send out a draft for review and comment. Because we are all paying for the site, we all need to work to keep it updated. P. Strong suggested that a counter be added. S. Powell added that we committed to three years of funding for the website and have just paid our second year. A. Whitley added that the Peanut Belt website is not working, so please remove any links to that website for now. M. Jethro reported that the Albemarle RPO website is being updated.

### **RPO Training Follow-Up**

H. Cockburn reported that following all of the expenses from the RPO training, a balance of funds remains. H. Cockburn asked how the NCARPO would like to expend the remaining funds. She added that we got very good feedback from attendees, with some negative comments about the repetitive nature of some of the information. J. Marshall asked if this type of training should be offered every year. A. Whitley asked if PTD could come to one in the future. J. Robertson asked if all NCARPO members need the same training, since some members are relatively new while others have been RPO planners for a number of years. M. Jethro stated that the training was very useful to her as a new RPO planner. A. Whitley said it was a good review with a lot of good information. J. Marshall asked if anyone had had difficulty getting the training approved by NCDOT during invoicing. H. Cockburn said it was a lot of work to put the training together, so she recommended holding training every few years rather than every year. A. Rickard asked if we might want to have a workshop more frequently than every few years, where participants could work for several hours on an issue together rather than having speakers. S. Powell stated that the July meeting will probably be in Sylva. She suggested that the first day be more like a retreat, with a list of issues to discuss. She proposed that this discussion be continued during that time. S. Powell suggested the funds remaining from the training session could be used to sponsor a session at the MPO Conference. **J. Marshall made a motion that the decision as to what to do with the remaining funds from the training session be left up to the Executive Committee. D. Eggert seconded the motion.** Discussion: A. Rickard suggested the additional money could be spent on the website if needed. There being no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

### **Upcoming Transportation Conferences**

***Southeast Regional Transportation Forum, Raleigh – May 22-23, 2008*** – S. Powell stated that the NCARPO has worked hard to bring this conference to Raleigh. There is a lot going on in neighboring states that all of us and NCDOT should hear about. A. Whitley stated that her NCDOT Coordinator did not know about the conference. J. Marshall added that many

NCDOT staff are not on the RPO listserv. S. Powell stated that she sent the information directly to NCDOT TPB staff. H. Cockburn added that there will be a really cool bike tour and a walking tour of Fayetteville Street in Raleigh.

**RPO America Conference, Duluth, MN – August 17 – 19, 2008** – S. Powell reported that about 5 NCARPO members are planning to attend. She encouraged everyone to attend if possible. H. Cockburn added that flights out of Raleigh are about \$340.

**Other Upcoming events:** NCARPO Quarterly Meeting, Sylva, NC, July 24 – 25, 2008; NCAMPO Conference, New Bern – November 12 – 14, 2008

### **Recent Conferences/Events**

**National Bike Summit, Washington, DC** – H. Cockburn said this was an interesting conference, geared towards advocates. She received lots of information on bicycle-friendly communities, which may be of interest to those that have just completed bike plans.

**RPO America Committee** – J. Marshall reported on this effort sponsored by AMPO and NADO. The Committee discussed other states, in which many RPOs and MPOs get money to program locally as they see fit. This Committee also meets at the National Conference.

**NC Go! Gubernatorial Forum** – E. Davis commented that he attended this forum. S. Powell and J. Marshall stated that many of the candidates are uneducated about transportation issues. All of the candidates mentioned a “decentralized” DOT. E. Davis stated that he believes DOT will be reorganized and the more involved we can be in that process, the better.

**Coastal Community Planning and Development Conference** – M. Jethro reported that she attended this conference, mostly relevant to CAMA Counties. The conference included lots of good information on Smart Growth. E. Davis added that he is a delegate to discuss APA’s policy on climate change. Please read it and submit any comments to him by May 3.

### **Committee Reports**

**GIS** – A. Rickard reviewed the committee membership, which consists of J. Marshall, H. Cockburn, S. Powell, J. Robertson, R. Sherby, and A. Rickard. There are several questions the committee would like to ask of NCARPO members and plans to send out a survey. They want to know the current status of your GIS capabilities, what kinds of partnerships with GIS organizations you have or would like to have, etc. The goal is to give everyone all available sources for GIS layers, etc. Because we all maintain the same types of data, collecting it in the same way is important. The committee would like to look for an existing data set that we can update as a group to ensure that it’s complete. M. Koslosky asked what happened to the statewide GIS concept. H. Cockburn reported that the concept did not make it very far because the funding never materialized. The GIS Committee next meets via conference call on May 16.

**Best Practices** – D. Van Liere reported that the Best Practices Committee has discussed standardization of the documents we prepare. D. Van Liere asked for feedback on this idea. C. Runser-Turner suggested that sample documents of deliverables might be helpful, especially since the NCDOT manual never materialized. H. Cockburn suggested we scan for best practices around various issues, then report back to the group in July. S. Powell asked for a more in-depth discussion in July.

**Legislative** – P. Strong reported that AASHTO has released a report and vision which includes support for rail and transit. APTA critiqued the AASHTO vision shortly after its release. Visit [www.transportationfortomorrow.org](http://www.transportationfortomorrow.org) – entire doc is 125 MB and has lots of good work and illustrations. Another website to look at is [www.financecommission.dot.gov](http://www.financecommission.dot.gov) – innovative, highly visionary, and calling for major reform of transportation operations at the state level.

### **Other Announcements**

G. Christo is moving to India in July! A total of 7 NCARPO members have expressed interest in AICP credits. We may be able to provide about 2 credits per quarterly meeting for about \$40. Let D. Stoogenke know if you are interested. E. Davis commended S. Powell for her leadership in recent months.

**Adjournment.** With no other business to consider, S. Powell adjourned the meeting.