



**North Carolina Association of RPOs
October 24, 2007 Quarterly Meeting
Greensboro Marriot Downtown
Greensboro, NC**

Attendees

1. Ann Whitley, Peanut Belt RPO
2. Carrie Runser-Turner, Land of Sky RPO
3. Chris Rountree, Peanut Belt RPO
4. Cliff Kendall, Mid-East RPO
5. Craig Hughes, High Country RPO
6. Daniel Van Liere, Down East RPO
7. Don Eggert, Cape Fear RPO
8. Elizabeth Lowry, Lake Norman RPO
9. Greg Christo, Isothermal RPO
10. Hanna Cockburn, Piedmont Triad RPO
11. Jack Day, Kerr-Tar RPO
12. Janet Robertson, Lumber River RPO
13. Joel Strickland, Mid-Carolina RPO
14. John Marshall, Unifour RPO
15. Josh King, Isothermal RPO
16. Shelby Powell, Kerr-Tar RPO
17. Dennis Pipkin, NCDOT – Research
18. Elena Talanker, NCDOT TPB
19. Elina Zlotchenko, NCDOT TPB
20. Jackie Huff, ECSU
21. Mustan Kadibhai, NCDOT – Research
22. Scott Bradshaw, ECSU
23. Travis Marshall, NCDOT TPB
24. Tyler Bray, NCDOT TPB

Minutes

Welcome

S. Powell called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m.

Minutes

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

Rocky River RPO Website Update

S. Powell announced that D. Stoogenke would be unable to attend the meeting due to illness, but that the Rocky River RPO website previewed at the July '07 meeting is now online. D. Stoogenke will email NCARPO members information on the cost of the website. J. Marshall commented that he had hired the same person for his website design.

Statewide TAC Concept Update

S. Powell reported that the effort to establish a statewide MPO/RPO TAC is still underway. H. Cockburn said that PTRPO has passed a resolution of support and she will make a copy available to others if needed. H. Cockburn said that the MPO Association has discussed the concept but has not taken any action and the proposal is not on their business meeting agenda today. S. Powell plans to take the issue to her RPO at their next meeting.

RPO Study Update

Dr. Scott Bradshaw from Elizabeth City State University gave a presentation titled “Development of Performance Measures for the Assessment of Rural Planning Organizations”, which provided an update on the project he and his team are working on for NCDOT. Dr. Bradshaw reviewed the project team members and introduced Jacqueline Huff. The goals of the project are to develop evaluation criteria and performance measures that will allow NCDOT to more effectively supervise the operations of the RPOs, identify exceptional programs, develop strategies to maximize the performance of the RPOs, and identify training needs. Dr. Bradshaw reviewed the process they will be using in developing the assessment tool and provided some examples of existing assessment tools they have identified so far. Dr. Bradshaw will also be conducting interviews with RPO staff across the state to learn more about individual programs. Questions for the interviews will be sent out to RPO staff ahead of time so we can be prepared for the interviews. D. Eggert pointed out that RPOs have been successful at helping local governments learn about the transportation planning process, but that our input has not always been included in statewide plans. H. Cockburn stated that there is frustration among local governments about the process by

which the statewide TIP is developed. G. Christo asked how Dr. Bradshaw will get input from our stakeholders. Dr. Bradshaw explained that he will talk to some COGs, some elected officials, and members of the project steering committee, which includes stakeholders. T. Bray asked if NCDOT RPO contacts will be interviewed and Dr. Bradshaw confirmed that they would be. S. Powell encouraged NCARPO members to make time for the interview process to give the project team our feedback.

NC Transportation Answers Website

Elizabeth Lowry from Lake Norman RPO provided an update regarding the NC Transportation Answers Website. She reported that annual invoices will go out to all RPOs next month. She asked if any content on the site needs to be updated and whether or not the site is working the way the NCARPO had hoped it would. D. Eggert suggested that a hit counter be added. S. Powell asked that everyone review the site again and send comments to Elizabeth at elowry@centralina.org by the end of the year. E. Lowry added that her IT department had suggested some changes to the design to make it more user-friendly, such as drop-down menus. D. Eggert recommended that we use non-technical language and avoid using acronyms as much as possible. A. Whitley asked about a search function. G. Christo asked if icons could be used to help improve the site. S. Powell suggested that the website committee may want to meet again to discuss comments and any changes that are needed.

January 2008 Training Session

S. Powell handed out registration forms and a tentative agenda for the NCARPO training session to be held January 22 – 24, 2008 in Greensboro. J. Robertson asked about maximum attendance. H. Cockburn said that the maximum will be 35, with RPO staff receiving first priority. S. Powell recommended that we share the training information with our TCC members so that those who are interested can consider attending. S. Powell asked how many in attendance would be interested in AICP credits if they were available. Six NCARPO members expressed interest. S. Powell explained that we can register to offer maintenance credits for a registration fee of \$95 per year (which includes the first two credits) + \$50/each additional credit hour offered. S. Powell said the registration fees for the training may cover this cost and asked for feedback. H. Cockburn added that if you are interested in the credits, you could pay for the cost of registration. S. Powell will continue to look into the logistics of offering the credits. H. Cockburn suggested a committee to oversee this effort may be needed. S. Powell reminded attendees that the January training will be held in lieu of the January NCARPO Quarterly Meeting.

Report: NADO Rural Transportation Peer Learning Conference

S. Powell reported that the NC turnout for this conference was very good. She mentioned that KYDOT has an impressive RPO system and passed out handouts regarding their project prioritization process. S. Powell also talked to Matt Chase of NADO about doing a regional conference in NC in conjunction with one of our quarterly meetings. J. Marshall mentioned the RPO America initiative. He was elected vice-chair of the group, which discusses what other states are doing with their RPO programs. NC initially was ahead in the establishment of the RPO program, but now other states are catching up with and surpassing us. S. Powell added that the overall theme of the conference was further empowerment of the RPOs and that a NADO conference here would help move that effort forward. J. Marshall stated that next year's Peer Learning Conference will be in Duluth, MN and recommended that NCARPO members try to attend.

NCARPO Officer Elections

J. Marshall reported that the nominating committee recommended that the same slate of officers be kept for another year, with S. Powell serving as President, H. Cockburn serving as Vice-President, and C. Runser-Turner serving as Secretary. J. Marshall opened the floor for additional nominations. D. Eggert made a motion to accept the current slate of officers, and G. Christo seconded the motion. Discussion: none. There being no discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports

Legislative – S. Powell read an email from P. Strong about land transfer referenda and about bridge safety concerns. Georgia is implementing reductions in Highway Trust Fund transfers.

Manual – S. Powell asked that everyone try to submit their assignments by the end of the year. H. Cockburn asked that assignments be sent to her for placement on an ftp site. J. King suggested the manual should have an executive summary. S. Powell appointed J. King to the manual subcommittee. S. Powell asked that everyone review the manual and provide feedback on it when Elina sends it out.

Best Practices – D. Van Liere reported that the Best Practices Committee will convene and report following the training session in January.

Transportation Planning Branch Update

E. Zlotchenko reminded attendees that 1st quarter invoices are due. Amendments to the current PWP must be made no later than April 1, 2008. Please start working on next year's PWP and remember that the dollar amounts for each RPO's budget are set, so there is no need to wait for NCDOT funding letters to begin PWP development. Please submit your prioritized list of transportation plan study needs to NCDOT by 12/31. E. Zlotchenko said a new coordinator for Upper Coastal Plain RPO will start on November 5, 2007. She also reminded everyone that Tier Grants are not available this year. C. Hughes asked if any CTPs are being done. E. Zlotchenko reported that many have been completed and T. Bray reported that he has completed 5 or 6 recently. E. Zlotchenko also mentioned the possibility of a training needs study and will be working on a proposal for this

MPO Update

J. Marshall reported that there has been some discussion about having the next MPO Conference be a joint effort between 2 MPOs and 2 adjoining RPOs, such as in the New Bern area.

Future Topics and Future Meeting Locations

S. Powell reminded everyone of the NCARPO training coming up on January 22 – 24, 2008 in Greensboro. There is no business meeting scheduled for January but we can call one during lunch at the training if needed. The April quarterly meeting scheduled for April 24 and 25 will be in Wilmington and will hopefully include a port tour.

Adjournment. With no other business to consider, S. Powell adjourned the meeting at 12:15 p.m.