

Minutes  
of the joint  
RPO Technical Coordinating Committee  
And  
Transportation Advisory Committee  
May 9, 2012

TCC: Betty Moore, David Bone, Dempsey Bond, Hood Richardson, James Rhodes, Jonas Hill, Sam Noble, Paul Ellis, Daryl Vreeland, Jo Laurie Penrose, Randell Woodruff

TAC: Robert Cayton, Ephraim Smith

State: Betty Ann Caldwell, Saeed Mohamed, William Keck, Wayne Davis, Jerry Jennings

Staff: Bryant Buck, Justin Oakes, Linda Roberts

Guest: Vann Rogerson, Tom Thompson

Chair's Cayton and Moore called the meeting to order.

Approval of Agenda

Mr. Rhodes made the motion to approve the TCC agenda, and Mr. Bone second the motion. The motion carried.

Mr. Smith made the motion to approve the TAC agenda, and Rev. Cayton second the motion. The motion carried.

Minutes

All minutes were tabled until the next meeting.  
There were no public comments.

Prioritization of Mid-East RPO Highway Projects.

Vann Rogerson, representative from the NC Northeast Commission gave the following report. Under Industrial and Commercial Recruiting, he reported:

**Operational Emphasis**

Automotive

- Conventional automotive proving ground and testing
- NC Center for Automotive Research (NCCAR)
- Auto and parts manufacturing

Aerospace

- Coast Guard aircraft repair manufacturers, suppliers, and rework
- Remotely piloted aerial vehicles

Biotech/Life Sciences

- Regional commercialization partner for new patented biotech plant products.
- Specialty crop growing, processing, and packaging.

Marine

- Boat building and components
- Manufacturing and distribution

- New marine park – Perquimans

#### Food

- Food Processing
- Distribution

#### Alternative Energy

- Wind, Bio-mass, Bio Fuel and Solar

#### Defense

- Defense R&D
- Testing/Training

#### Southeast Virginia

- Businesses expanding south
- Port of Virginia partnership
- Collaborative Mid-Atlantic support for projects – I-44 in Raleigh propose interstate to connect I-44 in Norfolk, two anchors the key

### **Tourism Promotion and Development**

#### Primary Partners

- North East Tourism (NET)
- Committee of 1000 (private funds)
- Historic Albemarle Tour (HAT)
- Eastern and Southeast Regions
- NC Cultural Resources

#### Operational Emphasis

- Development and marketing
- State & Federal Heritage Designation (40 counties east of I-95)

#### Regional Marketing

- Regional advertising
- County festivals and events
- Group tours from regional hubs into more rural areas for day trips
- Host Familiarization (FAM) Tours for group tour operators to introduce the area
- Tourism and group tour conference

### **Existing Business Support**

#### Primary Partners

- Chamber of the North East (CONE)
- Committee of 1000
- NC Department of Commerce
- SBTDC
- Regional Agri-Science & Biotechnology High School

#### Operational Emphasis

- Support regional business issues
- Maintain current employment
- County business association meetings
- Regional Safety Council meetings
- Regional legislative agenda
- Annual State of the Region Event
- Support business events

- Small business sustainability
- Actively involved with connecting workforce development efforts to economic development with in the region

Tom Thompson, Beaufort County Economic Developer, stated that the biggest handicap in eastern North Carolina is transportation. He remarked that everything done at the RPO is important, but Highway 17 is the most important

He talked about sea level rise and the lawsuit in Craven County regarding flooded property. DOT is building roads too high.

#### Discussion and Endorsement FY 2012-2013 Planning Work Program (PWP)

Mr. Buck presented the Planning Work Program and stated that it has been modified from 11 pages to two legal size pages and that the format was taken from the MPO.

After a discussion, Technical Coordinating member Mr. Rhodes made the motion to approve the PWP format, and Mr. Richardson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Mr. Smith, Technical Advisory Committee member, made the motion to approve the PWP, and Rev. Cayton seconded the motion. The motion carried upon the contingent of DOT.

Mr. Buck noted that he has been working on the Beaufort County Transportation Plan and with the Beaufort County Bicycle-Ped committee.

#### Rural Transportation Organization/Rural Transit Providers Follow-Up Workshop

Mr. Buck reported that staff with Mid-East RPO, Peanut Belt RPO, and Albemarle RPO held a follow-up workshop in April with local transit providers to comment on the suggestions and ideas provided by the transit providers on maps that were distributed to this group and what direction to proceed. He stated that was good attendance representing the three counties and aging representatives from Pitt County, Hyde and several others. DOT is looking for coordination between the local transit systems. DOT has not attended any meetings.

They have their system riders and we preach coordination - more effective delivery. He stated that Hyde, Pitt and Martin riders are going to Greenville, Durham, which he was not aware of the availability. Maps were handed out were exchange points could be made and that adapt will be collected over the past two months. This information will be brought back to the next meeting.

Mr. Rhodes asked if there was DOT funding for this project? Mr. Buck stated not specific, that there are a lot of programs, and are exploring potential funding.

Rev. Cayton stated that the new projects are created and the state expects the counties to pay for them. Mr. Buck stated that he did not know.

#### Eastern NC RPO/MPO Meeting

Mr. Buck reported that at the meeting a resolution was endorsed for projects that have not moved any further, and they are: Greenville Southwest Bypass (R-2250), Slocum Gate (R5516, SPOT ID: 786), Kinston Bypass (R-2553, SPOT ID: 128), NC 11/241/24 Connector (SPOT ID. 125), Maysville Bypass (R-2514B, SPOT ID: 108), NC

24 Upgrade (R-2303 E&F SPOT ID: 82 & 83), Hampstead Bypass (R-3300, SPOT ID: 215).

He stated that the Governor came to the Transportation Summit and talked about the ferry toll increase and stressed the need for a better transportation system and embracing technology, and building bridges to gap existing ferries..

Mr. Jennings stated that at the initial meeting the eastern projects were included but not the north and at another meeting all will be included.

Mr. Buck informed the members that there is a meeting this Friday of the NC MPO.RPO coalition at the Jacksonville City Hall at 10:00 am. regarding Highway Equity Formula and Ferry Tolls Fourteen MPO's/RPO's have been invited to attend the meeting.

#### Beaufort County Comprehensive Transportation Plan

Dr. Wayne Davis, Triad Group Supervisor for NC DOT Transportation Planning Branch presented an update PowerPoint Presentation of the Beaufort County Transportation Plan. Mr. William Keck is working on maps for the area that will be completed in 18 to 20 months...

Mr. Buck reported that maps have been distributed to municipalities for input on sidewalk/pedestrian facility needs. This information will be compiled and analyzed for the upcoming mapping process. The DOT will be running the roadway network model next to identify future needs.

#### Southern Albemarle Association Update

Mr. Buck informed the members that at the Southern Albemarle Association meeting last month, Matt Wood talked about the Equity Formula and Ferry Toll. He remarked that the Association endorsed a resolution opposing the Ferry Toll. The Mid-East RPO was asked to endorse a resolution opposing the Ferry Toll increase, as well as, other individuals/organizations.

Chair Moore quoted the prices for the north side of the river with the increase: \$10 per trip, \$20 a day, \$100 week and \$400 month. She stated that this would be detrimental for the workers. For the ferries with no tolls the price would be: \$2 pedestrian, \$3 bicycle, \$5 motorcycle, and \$10 vehicle 20' and any passenger in the car \$2.

Mr. Vreeland stated that this information will be brought before the next MPO meeting.

Mr. Buck stated that DOT has been told to make up \$5 billion in their budget and that he was not aware of any other avenues that have been explored.

Mr. Bond made the motion to endorse a resolution opposing the Ferry Tolls were none exist. Mr. Richardson seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Mr. Jennings remarked that the Hatteras to Ocracoke Ferry is the only ferry there is not a toll and this route is being rethought.

Rev. Cayton made the motion for the TAC to endorse a resolution opposing the Ferry Tolls were none exist. Mr. Smith seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Ms. Caldwell stated there is talk about work passes in Carteret County.

#### NC Association of Rural Planning Organizations/Metropolitan Planning Organization Conference Updates

Mr. Buck presented a handout to the members on the House Transportation Appropriations Committee work on the budget.

#### Strategic Investment Summit Report

Mr. Buck announced that meetings were recently held regarding how DOT should invest dollars in upcoming projects. TAC Chair and staff attended the meetings and were given the opportunity to provide input in this strategic process.

Mr. Jennings stated some of the projects are based on congestion; making it a balancing act.

#### NADO RPO America

Mr. Buck announced that he attended this meeting in April and there was discussion on the budget, public transit and transportation, volunteer transit drivers, all rural transit areas and the elderly regarding transportation.

#### NC DOT Updates

Mr. Jennings reported:

- NC 125 (Williamston Bypass) is on track.
- NC 171-125 is being resurfaced.
- Ten bridges are on contract to be replaced and most are on secondary roads. Every segments of NC 17 between Williamston and Beaufort County are a matter of priority because of seal level.
- He stated that the reason for the lawsuit in Craven County is because sub grade issue and drainage concerns.
- The more the gas tax is cut; more issues on highways.
- Ms. Caldwell presented a handout on the projects in Division 2 (Beaufort and Pitt Counties)

#### Transportation Planning Branch Updates

Mr. Mohamed stated that the PWP looks good and the review such be completed this week.

The next scheduled meeting of the TCC is scheduled for August 1, 2012. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.