

METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS



Commuter Connections Subcommittee

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, March 15, 2005

Chairperson: Sharon Affinito, Loudoun County
Vice Chairperson: Leanne Landry, WMATA
Staff Contact: Nicholas Ramfos (202) 962-3313

Item #1 Introductions

Ms. Affinito began the meeting by introducing herself and all who were in attendance did the same. Ms. Affinito asked everyone to sign the attendance sheet. (*See attached attendance sheet*).

Item #2 Minutes of January 18, 2005 Meeting

Ms. Affinito proceeded with the previous meeting minutes asking those in attendance if they had reviewed the minutes dated January 18, 2005, and if there were changes or additions. There were no changes to be made and the minutes were then approved by the Subcommittee. Ms. Affinito introduced the new Vice Chairperson of the Subcommittee Leann Landry from WMATA.

Item #3 FY2004 GRH Customer Satisfaction Survey

The Subcommittee was asked to endorse the FY04 GRH Customer Satisfaction draft survey report for final release. Results from the report were presented to the Regional TDM Marketing Group on December 6, 2004 and the report was endorsed on February 1, 2005.

Mr. Christopher Arabia gave a brief outline on the background of the survey. He stated that this survey was for FY 04, which began July 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004. He explained that everyone who uses the Guarantee Ride Home program receives a survey card for each trip. Monthly letters and survey cards are sent out thanking them for using the service and asks them for their overall opinion on the GRH service and what areas need improvement.

Most of the responses are compliments and although we do get some complaints, these helps us look at areas that need improvement.

In FY04 there were 2,916 trips of which survey cards were sent out, and the response rate was 27 percent (785) which was about the same as last year. He also indicated that there was a big drop in survey responses during FY01 and FY02 due to the September 11 attack and the anthrax threat, which closed the post office for a while and mail was not getting around.

Mr. Arabia gave a complete description of the overall survey, and in conclusion stated that 95% of respondents were satisfied with the program, and more than half (62%) of the written comments were compliments. He also noted that the survey might be available online in the near future.

Question: How do you know whether a taxi cab or rental car was used?

Answer: They normally write it on the survey card and they also write their name if they have a bad experience, they will let us know.

Question: Is there a way to link up a response with the trip?

Answer: Mr. Arabia stated that currently there was not a link, and that staff was looking into a web based system for ride matching and the GRH program combined, where notes will be attached. An identification number tracking system was also suggested.

There being no other questions or comments, Ms. Affinito asked a motion to approve. The survey was approved by the Subcommittee. Mr. Arabia reported that the final version would be sent to the GRH Ad-Hoc Group and the report would be posted to the Commuter Connections web site under Publications and those interested can download the entire report.

Item #4 FY05 Placement Rate Study Draft Report

The Subcommittee was asked to review the attached draft FY05 Placement Rate Study report. A detailed presentation was given to the Subcommittee at the January 18, 2005 meeting. A comment period will be established and the Subcommittee will be asked to endorse the report at the May 17, 2005 meeting.

Mr. Ramfos stated that the Placement Rate Study Draft Report was mailed out in the handout packets. Lori Diggins gave a detailed report on the findings at the last meeting. Mr. Ramfos stated that the report is being released today for comments and edits and hopefully will be approved at the next meeting. Comments and edits on the report would be accepted by Mr. Ramfos through April 15th.

Item #5 FY06 Commuter Connections Work Program

Nicholas Ramfos gave a status report on the FY06 CCWP.

Mr. Ramfos stated that a draft baseline of the program was distributed at the last meeting. Since that time a more streamlined proposal was put together for the three state funding agencies, and subsequent to that the District of Columbia requested zero base budget proposal. A revised proposal was prepared showing the impacts of the zero-based DC

budget and had additional jurisdictional program activities that will give the states more flexibility to decide whether they should contract with COG for certain program areas or use other contractors.

This latest proposal was sent out last week. The next step is to wait until staff hears back from the state DOTs and the results will be presented in our next meeting in May.

Item #6 SmarTrip Update

Dick Siskind with WMATA gave an update on the expansion of the SmartTrip fareboxes.

Mr. Siskind gave an overview of the SmartTrip card and how it is used. He stated that two years ago bus passes were discontinued on RideOn and Express buses, they are now using the SmartTrip card. Last August the installation of the SmartTrip Farebox was completed on the Metrobus. In the month of February there were approximately 9.5 million people riding Metrobus and almost 14% were paid for by using the SmartTrip card. In 2006 after the completion of phase 2, hopefully other commuter transportation such as the VRE, commuter trains, etc., will be operating on the SmartTrip card.

Item #7 Briefing on Regional Travel Trends Report

Bob Griffiths will give a briefing on a draft Regional travel trends report summarizing changing travel trends and commuting patterns in the region using COG /TPB survey and other travel data.

A handout was distributed that presented commuting data from the 2000 Census that tabulated workers by jurisdiction of residence, jurisdiction of work, and usual means of transportation to work (*Enclosed*). Mr. Griffiths described the tables in the handout and explained how these tables could be used to analyze commuting patterns in the metropolitan Washington region.

Item #8 Bike To Work Day 2005

Mark Hersey gave an update on Bike To Work Day which will be held on May 20th.

Mr. Mark Hersey updated the Subcommittee on the Bike to Work Day Event scheduled to take place May 20th. Mr. Hersey stated that last year's goal was for 4,000 event participants, and the goal this year is to have 5,000 participants. The marketing materials are in production and will be available in April. He discussed the Pit Stops set along the way for the participants. Pit Stop managers will be responsible for organizing and hosting events.

Question: How does the BWD get sponsors?

Answer: Employers in the region, national companies, such as Target, Wal Mart, are approached for sponsorships and also larger companies donate food which they use at the Pit stops.

Item #9 2nd Quarter Budget Report

Nicholas Ramfos distributed and discussed the 2nd quarter budget report for the FY05 CCWP.

Mr. Ramfos distributed the quarterly budget (*Enclosed*). Mr. Ramfos then explained the difference in some of the budget numbers on the spreadsheets for the year. He also stated that there were some unexpected expenditures with some kiosks and one in Alexandria had to be removed from USDA.

Item #10 Other Business/ Set Agenda for Next Meeting

This is an opportunity for Commuter Connections Subcommittee members to bring up other business and to request agenda items for the next meeting.

Mark Hersey distributed the final 2nd quarter Employer Outreach Conformity Verification Statement and stated that he will have the draft 3rd Quarter statement at the Employer Outreach Ad-Hoc Group meeting, following this meeting.

Sharon Affinito asked if there were any other agenda items that Subcommittee members wanted to discuss at the next meeting and none were mentioned. The meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled Commuter Connections Subcommittee meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 17, 2005 at 12 noon.

COMMUTER CONNECTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING SIGN-IN SHEET Tuesday, March 15th, 2005

Please place a ✓ beside your name, or add it using the space provided on the second to last page.

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Please cross out your e-mail if you DO NOT wish to receive information electronically.

* Chair-Robin Briscoe

** Vice Chair-Sharon Affinito

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