



EMPLOYER OUTREACH COMMITTEE MEETING

Meeting Notes from the October 20, 2009 meeting

AGENDA ITEM 1 - INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting began with self-introductions of those in attendance. (See attached list)

AGENDA ITEM 2 – REVIEW OF PREVIOUS MEETING (7/14/09) NOTES

The group reviewed and approved the meeting notes as written.

AGENDA ITEM 3 – FOURTH QUARTER FY09 AND FIRST QUARTER FY 2010 CONFORMITY REPORTS

COG/TPB staff distributed and reviewed the final conformity for fourth quarter FY09 and the draft first quarter FY 2010 conformity statements.

AGENDA ITEM 4 - SMARTBENEFITS PRESENTATION

Lorraine Taylor of WMATA presented information on the upcoming changes to SmartBenefits and the SmarTrip cards. The new approach for Smart Benefits will be done in three sections. The first section is called the Personal Purse or stored value which would include any monies on the card itself. The second section would hold the transit benefit dollars and the third would hold the parking benefit dollars. In order to comply with the IRS rules on transit benefit dollars not being used for parking benefits, the new approach was put into place. The expected implementation is January 1st, 2010. (*note: WMATA has since postponed any implementation of this approach*) Any dollars in the parking benefits or transit benefits sections would be refunded to the employer.

Several on the committee asked how that would work in light of what section 125 of the IRS code states that there is no "use or lose" provision. Ms. Taylor responded that the WMATA legal department felt that this approach was in agreement with the intent of section 125. Nicholas Ramfos of COG/TPB staff asked if WMATA had agreements with parking vendors in the region where the parking portion of the card could be used to which Ms. Taylor responded that they (WMATA) did not.

Ms. Taylor went on to detail upcoming seminars for employers and other stakeholders before the changes would take place. The committee asked to have WMATA return with updates on the Smart Benefits program.

AGENDA ITEM 5 – MARKETING MATERIALS UPDATE

Mark Hersey, COG/TPB staff, presented a new employer-based Climate Change draft brochure to the committee. The draft brochure emphasizes what Climate Change is and what employers can do to reduce their Carbon Footprint. A demo mock-up was displayed for committee members to review. Once the brochure is finalized printed, it will be made available to Employer Outreach sales representatives and employers in the District of Columbia and Maryland.

AGENDA ITEM 6 – FY 2010 TRAINING ITEMS

The committee was briefed on the upcoming sales training sessions for January, March and May for District of Columbia and Maryland Employer Outreach sales representatives. Several members gave recounting of their experiences in the Social Media sales training session held on October 13th.

AGENGA ITEM 7 – TELEWORK UPDATE

Mr. Ramfos updated the committee on recent telework efforts in the region. New case studies are available in early October on companies such as Marriott International, Noblis, and the United States Postal Service Office of Inspector General. There are two major on-call sites, Marriott and Charles County Government that are starting and/or expanding their respective telework programs. Michelle Heeland with the Telecommuting Asdvantage Group gave an overview of the activities for both participating on-call employer sites.

Mr. Ramfos also briefed the committee on a new Facebook page on Telework available to employers and to teleworkers on the Commuter Connections web site. The effort is spotlighted in the current newsletter plus a link is on the Commuter Connections web site.

AGENDA ITEM 8 – LIVE NEAR YOUR WORK UPDATE

Mr. Jim Larsen of DATA updated the group on DATA's planned efforts in holding several Live Near Your Work seminars during the current fiscal year. There was a packet put together with specific and customized information for employer sites. The intention is to get information out and having companies buy-in and then have the employer support it for the future.

Committee members were reminded that this fiscal year would be the last for LNYW project funding. Those interested in holding a LNYW should plan to do so before June 30, 2010. An event request form is available on the Commuter Connections Internet. Once completed it should be sent to Mr. Ramfos.

AGENDA ITEM 9 EMPLOYER SURVEY REVIEW

Ms. Nita Parikh of COG/TPB staff presented the Employer Commuter survey results from FY09. Four employers participated with 277 forms returned out of 2,495 sent for an eleven percent response. Mr. Ramfos stated that the Employer Commuter survey is a necessary tool in evaluating the region's alternative commuting impacts associated with the Employer Outreach TERM. The survey acts as a baseline for measurement and the more surveys available, the better.

Mr. Robert Moore of VDOT asked how the survey was marketed and what questions were in the final draft of the survey distributed. Mr. Ramfos replied that the survey isn't done in the same manner as the State of the Commute or the Placement rate surveys, rather the Employer Commuter survey results are used as a sales tool for the sales representative to employ when speaking with companies to determine an effective TDM program site plan. Several committee members mentioned that they have done surveys but have not used the Commuter Connections survey due to certain questions being unpalatable to employers. Mr. Hersey asked that if surveys

are being done then the information must be input into the ACT! database to reflect the responses. Mr. Ramfos also stated that in order to be considered as part of the TERM evaluation process, the responses must conform to the format that Commuter Connections uses and that the Average Vehicle Occupancy calculation is exactly the same for consistency purposes.

AGENDA ITEM 10 – EMPLOYER OUTREACH ROUNDTABLE

Due to time constraints only a few topics were introduced to the committee. Ms. Judy Galen of Loudoun County informed the committee of the County's Green Challenge for employers. Mr. Glenn Hiner of Fairfax County introduced Marcus Lemar to the employer outreach representatives and a new member of the Fairfax outreach effort.

AGENDA ITEM 11 – OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting will be held at COG on Tuesday, January 19, 2010 at 10 a.m.