

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

Commuter Connections Subcommittee

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, July 19, 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 asked all who were in attendance to do the same. Ms. Affinito asked everyone in attendance to sign the attendance sheet.

Item #2 Minutes of May 17, 2005 Meeting

Approval was sought for the May 17th Commuter Connections Subcommittee meeting.

Muriel Bowser commented that in looking at Item #7, she felt that a lot of discussion wasn't reflected in the minutes. She stated that if there were to be minutes, then the summary should reflect discussion. In the last sentence, she could not recall Mr. Hersey saying the letter to the EPA on Best Workplaces for Commuters would be reviewed and finalized by the State TDM Work Group. Nicholas Ramfos stated that it was actually he who had said that as reflected in the current minutes and that the State TDM Work Group did, in fact, review and finalize the letter. Furthermore, he added that everyone should've received a copy of the letter sent. Ms. Affinito summarized Ms. Bowser's concern saying that perhaps the letter should be brought back to the Subcommittee for another review, however, Mr. Ramfos stated that due to structural reasons the state funding agencies had final approval. Ms. Bowser wanted to know why the State TDM Work Group did not sign the letter since they have final say. Mr. Ramfos stated that he would bring up the comment to the group for discussion. The May 17th minutes were approved with the noted comment.

Item #3 Vice Chair Nominating Committee

Chair, Sharon Affinito, appointed the Vice Chair Nominating Committee to select the next Subcommittee Vice Chair.

Ms. Affinito announced that a Vice Chair Nominating Committee will be appointed to select a representative from Maryland to be the next Vice Chair of the Subcommittee beginning in September.

Ms. Affinito recommended the following individuals to serve on the Nominating Committee

Sharon Affinito (current chair)
Robin Briscoe (past chair)
Leann Landry (current vice chair)

The Committee will be meeting by conference call on Wed. July 27 at 1:30pm to recommend nominees. Mr. Ramfos will initiate the conference call.

Item #4 **FY 2006 Commuter Connections Work Program (CCWP)**
Nicholas Ramfos briefed the Subcommittee on the status of the FY 2006 CCWP.

Mr. Ramfos announced that Subcommittee members should have received a copy of the final FY 2006 Commuter Connections Work Program (CCWP) by mail. The FY 2006 CCWP was restructured and approved by the TPB on June 15th. One change made included the reporting structure of Commuter Connections. A new group formed, the State TDM Work Group, which will oversee Commuter Connections activities and will be reporting directly to Transportation Planning Board instead of to the TPB Technical Committee. All other Commuter Connections committees remained intact.

Major Structural Changes to the CCWP included the following:

- Monitoring and Evaluation is a new program element and incorporates all monitoring and evaluation components from the CCWP (new element)
- Marketing is now consolidated for all program elements
- Information kiosk program is a stand alone project and there is no longer an Integrated Rideshare program element. The database updates for transit, street centerline files, telework centers, and park and ride lots is now a project under the Commuter Operations Center.
- Telework will only be funded by Maryland and Virginia and is a jurisdictional program versus a regional program

If any Subcommittee member has general or specific questions regarding the FY 2006 CCWP, they may contact Nicholas Ramfos.

Item #5 **Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Evaluation Project Update**
The Subcommittee was briefed on the status of the TDM Evaluation project.

Lori Diggins with LDA Consulting gave a PowerPoint presentation which summarized the main ideas, goals and achievements of the three year TERM analysis (July '02- June '05). However, the presentation only included data through December '04. A few new TERMS have been added since the last evaluation including Mass Marketing and Expanded Telecommuting and results will be included in the final evaluation report.

Expanded Telecommuting was developed in order to encourage enhanced levels of telework at large employment sites through assistance tailored to employer and site. Data sources for the evaluation of this TERM included employer surveys, record of assistance to employers and results from the 2004 State of the Commute (SOC) survey. Mass Marketing was put into place to raise awareness of Commuter Connections as an umbrella marketing effort and to address frustration with commuting and induce commuters to use alternate modes of transportation.

Ms. Diggins noted that many TERMS met and even surpassed their individual goals for the term. Participation increased and almost all participation goals were met. Shortfalls may be due to overly optimistic assumptions about vehicle trip (VT) and Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT) contributions from each placement. The two new TERMS might need more time to develop in order to reach the original goals.

Mr. Ramfos said that a final draft report on the project is currently being developed and will be released for review later this year.

Item #6 2005 Employer Recognition Awards Update

The Subcommittee was briefed on the results of the 2005 Employer Recognition Awards ceremony.

Mr. Ramfos reported that the 2005 Employer Recognition Awards Ceremony was held on June 29, 2005 at the National Press Club. Video Clips of the winning entries were shown to the Subcommittee. This year's winners included:

- American University (Incentives)
- Chevy Chase Bank, Bethesda (Marketing)
- National Wildlife Federation, Reston (Telework)
- DDOT (Employer Outreach Sales Team)
- Arlington County (Organization)

A program from the ceremony was handed out to all which listed the winners as well as other information about the awards program. Mr. Ramfos spoke about details of the ceremony including attendance, and thanked this year's Commuter Connections Employer Recognition Awards work group: Damon Harvey, Robin Briscoe, and Kate Conrad.

Item #7 Clean Air Partners/ Ozone Action Days Update

The Subcommittee was updated on Clean Air Partners and Ozone Action Days activities.

Leann Landry discussed this year's accomplishments, future possibilities and information from Clean Air Partners. She also discussed this year's Air Quality Action Days Code Red free ride days. Ms. Landry mentioned that the District of Columbia is an exception to the free ride on Code Red days because there are no dedicated funds in place for reimbursement. Handouts were distributed to the Subcommittee outlining Clean Air Partners marketing and advertising promotions.

The added value of the advertising promotions actually doubled the costs and benefits of the promotion. Many radio stations advertised free promotions for Clean Air Partners and held gas giveaways. All the gas giveaways were conducted in the evening and were very successful. Clean Air Partner brochures were distributed. Ms. Landry reported that a Chuck-E Cheese promotion was held and was not very successful. There are ideas of a possible electric lawn mower give-away (destroy gas ones), however, it would be very expensive. Ms. Landry also noted that there was also discussion about code days and most members agreed that the code status should be given out daily along with the weather report. Ms. Landry stated that they had tried to promote that, however, the weather people at the stations were not very interested in doing so, unless the code was a higher alert such as orange or red.

Item #8 TMA Advisory Group Update

The Subcommittee was briefed on recent TMA Advisory Group activities.

Jim Larsen gave an update on the TMA Advisory Group meeting held on June 21st at COG. The subject of the meeting this year was Transit Oriented Development. He thanked Mr. Ramfos, Peggy Schwartz with North Bethesda TMD, and Elisa Hill from Metro who made the presentation at the meeting. Mr. Larsen also announced that an upcoming Transit Orient Development would be held by DATA in September. The PowerPoint given at the TMA Advisory Group meeting was very informative and explained why certain procedures were being taken, the economic impact and how it has helped the Metro system. There was also discussion at the meeting of refining the development of transit. Mr. Larsen felt it was the best presentation he'd seen and very helpful.

Item #9 Other Business/ Set Agenda for Next Meeting

Ms. Affinito requested that any other business to be discussed be brought up at this time as well as suggestions for the agenda for the next meeting. There was no other business raised for discussion nor were any suggestions made for the agenda for the upcoming meeting. All agreed to send Mr. Ramfos any agenda item ideas.

The next meeting of Commuter Connections Subcommittee Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 13, 2005 at 12 noon.