



**Commuter Connections Subcommittee
Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday, July 19, 2011

Chairperson: Gabriel Ortiz, City of Alexandria
Vice Chairperson: Lorraine Taylor, (WMATA) Washington D.C.
Staff Contact: Nicholas Ramfos (202) 962-3313

Item #1 Introductions

The Subcommittee members were asked to introduce themselves and to sign the attendance sheet

Gabriel Ortiz, called the meeting to order by introducing himself and asking the rest of the attendees to do so.

Item #2 May 17, 2011

Approval was sought for the March 15, 2011 Commuter Connections Meeting Minutes.

There was a motion and a second to approve the minutes of the meeting as written.

Item #3 Vice Chair Nominating Committee

Gabriel Ortiz of City of Alexandria appointed the Vice Chair Nominating Committee.

Mr. Ortiz appointed the Nominating Committee that will select the next Subcommittee Vice Chairperson. The committee consists of Mr. Ortiz, Ms. Taylor and Willie Epps.

Item #4 Clean Air Partners Update

Lorraine Taylor, WMATA briefed the Subcommittee on upcoming Clean Air Partners activities.

Ms. Taylor briefed the subcommittee on upcoming Clean Air Partners activities. The advertising picture for Clean Air Partners; is a picture that states "How is your Air." Approximately 150 of these bus cards were installed for advertisement and distribution starting in May and will continue through August. There will be 10 dioramas that will appear in the MetroRail stations. There will be 7 two sheet posters. The value for all the exposures for this ad was valued at \$23,000.

Item #5 Car Free Day Update

Douglas Franklin of COG/TPB Staff briefed the Subcommittee on the region's Car Free Day Event.

Ms. Franklin briefed the committee on the upcoming Car Free Day Event, which will be held on Thursday September 22nd. This event became a region wide focus in the year 2008. CFD is open to everyone from students, workers, senior citizens etc. In the year of 2010 the event had 7,000 pledges and this year there is a goal for 10,000 pledges. CFD Posters were distributed.

Item #6 Enterprise Vanpool Services

Gretchen Kim of Enterprise Vanpool Services briefed the Subcommittee on Enterprise Rideshare's vanpool program.

Ms. Gretchen along with James Wagner briefed the Commuter Connections Subcommittee on the Enterprise Rideshare Vanpool Program. Rideshare was founded in 1994 and have over 1.1 million vehicles. The advantages of a vanpool includes financial support through available pre-tax employer funding and direct employer benefits which provide tax benefits, best in class vehicle condition and fleet selection, freedom of time to rest, to read, or to work. Enterprise has an implementation strategy, in which an analysis of employee data can be compiled to identify potential vanpool groups. Rideshare creates a short-term education campaign and compiles and delivers membership behavioral and emissions data.

Item #7 Pool Rewards Update

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff, briefed the Subcommittee on the status of the 'Pool Rewards Project.

Mr. Ramfos briefed the Subcommittee on the status of the "Pool Rewards project and expanding the program to Vanpools. On July 8th there was a TPB Steering Committee Resolution approving an amendment to the FY 2012 Commuter Connections Work Program (CCWP) for the expansion of the "Pools Rewards Program" to include Vanpools. The 'Pool Rewards program was established in FY 2009 after a demonstration pilot program, and it offers a \$130 carpool incentive over a 90-day period for commuters that were previously driving alone to and from work. The Commuter Connections State TDM Work Group had agreed to expand the 'Pool Rewards program to encourage newly formed vanpools with destinations in the Washington DC non-attainment region eligible to participate. COG/TPB staff has also looked at offering a \$200 monthly incentive to vanpools joining the 'Pool Rewards program in exchange for reporting their mileage to the National Transit Database. Additional coordination with a vanpool study group in Virginia will also occur in order to allow for a succinct project approach.

Item #8 Reach A Ride Project Briefing

Stephen Finafrock COG/TPB Staff briefed the Subcommittee on the new regional COG/TPB website.

Mr. Finafrock briefed the Commuter Connections Subcommittee on the new regional clearinghouse database and program called Reach A Ride. Reach A Ride will provide alternate transportation options for persons with disabilities, low income residents and residents with very limited English proficiency. The database is capable of considering very specialized needs of

users including baggage assistance, wheelchair accessibility, curb to curb and door through door assistance. The database program will be operated by COG/TPB staff and a call center will be housed at COG. In addition to the database, a telephone number has been established and will be manned during normal operations hours from 9 a.m. through 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday. The number will be made public in August 2011. This resource is available as a tool for Ridematching Coordinators as well as COG/TPB staff and will allow staff to better tailor trips to the needs of this targeted population base in the National Capitol Region. More information will be forthcoming and soft launch of the database and program is slated for August 2011.

Item #9 Employer Recognition Awards Update

Douglas Franklin, COG/DTP staff, discussed results from the 2011 ERA awards.

Mr. Franklin discussed the results from the 2011 Employer Recognition Awards held on June 28th at the National Press Club. The emcee was, Greenbelt Councilmember Rodney Roberts and the COG Awards were given out by DC Councilmember Muriel Bowser. The other speakers included; Janet Kavinoky, Executive Director, Congressional and Public Affairs from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Deputy Secretary Darrel Mobley of MDOT, and Executive Director W. David Dabney of the Bethesda Urban Partnership. Following the event an ad was placed in the Wall Street Journal for the winners. Mr. Franklin presented a video of the award winners which was used at the event ceremony.

Item #10 SmartBenefits and SmartTrip Update

Lorraine Taylor, WMATA gave an update on SmartBenefits.

Ms. Taylor gave an update on the preparation for the SmartBenefits Autoload and stated that the SmartTrips benefits plan will comply with IRS by January 2012. The SmartTrips compartments include a Transit benefit and a Metro parking benefit which will include up to \$230 stored value for each, and a personal stored value up to \$300. Private sector and non-profit employers that don't utilize their pre-tax benefits, can rollover the unused portions to the employees account and those providing the direct benefit can have a credit back to their employer account. The SmartBenefits[®] Autoload participating systems include, Metrorail and Metrobus, ART, CUE, DASH, DC Circulator, Fairfax Connector, Loudoun County Transit, PRTC Omni Ride, Ride ON, and TheBus.

Item #11 4th Quarter Budget Report

Carlos Tovar, COG/DTP staff, distributed and discussed the 4th Quarter Budget Report.

A copy of the fourth quarter preliminary Commuter Connections budget report for FY2011 was distributed to the Subcommittee. Mr. Tovar reviewed the report and went over the Commitments and Expenditures for FY 11 (July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011) and asked if there were any questions or comments. A final 4th Quarter Budget Report will be presented at the September Subcommittee meeting.

Item #12 Other Business/Set Agenda for Next Meeting

Subcommittee members are encouraged to contact Nicholas Ramfos with any particular agenda items they may be interested in seeing on the next agenda.

The next meeting of the Commuter Connections Subcommittee will be held on Tuesday, September 20, 2011 at 12 noon.