

**Outer Banks Transportation Task Force
Minutes
April 27, 2006**

Jody called the meeting to order at 8:30 am.

Those present: Jody Crosswhite, Cheryl Byrd, Ralph Buxton, Michelle Pharr, Kermit Skinner, Jeanette Rhoads, Robert Peele - 2+ Transportation, Charlie Cameron, Emilie Klutz, Debbie Moore, Chuck Poe, Willo Kelly, Chris Layton, Carl Classen,

Minutes of 3-23-06 meeting approved as presented.

Carl Classen asked to remain as private citizen on the Task Force. Cheryl Byrd moved to continue to keep Carl; Kermit seconded; motion passed.

Cheryl has been asked to cover for Southern Shores until appointee made. A new roster needs to be submitted to Dare County Board of Commissioners for approval. The Task Force appointed by County.

Transportation Authority/TMA – Jody, Willo, Ralph and Cheryl discussed the challenge of coordinating meetings/minutes/meeting places, communication with public, grant funds, etc. It was agreed that we need to move to TMA sooner rather than later. Jody spoke to Stan White about his discussion with Miriam Perry – NC DOT about funding for staff person. Funding would probably be available for part-time person; however, after discussion a full-time person is really needed. Problems with that include Social Security, benefits – retirement, health, etc. expenses. Cheryl looked into intern possibilities at ITRE; one person was identified and they were just given the information yesterday. DOT would provide 85% cost of staff person and the request would need to come from Sharron Sanderson. A merger with ICPTA would impact hiring a staff person. Jody met with Chuck Poe and Bo Taylor with CDC about how housing and transportation are linked; what are the possibilities; “It’s too much for part-time person, you have reached the point where you need to have more working than volunteers; Chuck said CDC could be a sub-grantee of County for the position. The task force will eventually have to form 501-3 entity; CDC can provide interim support

Summary: Work with Chuck Poe at CDC. Prepare job description. Research what funding can we actually get from DOT. Subcontract with CDC – they can immediately start working with Task Force and can prepare for person to be hired. County money won’t come through until July 1. Kermit moved that we partner with the CDC for staff assistance. Willo seconded; the motion passed Peggy Dawson Schmidt – will provide presentation about benefits of TMA (suburban, urban, rural) from Southeastern PA (Director of TMA), May 25th meeting

Regarding ICPTA merger – if we don’t regionalize, funding is not going to be there for bus/trolley system. Study will be ongoing in the next few months to look at funding and logistics. One question will be how to manage salaries during the transition period. We would retain operation center in Dare County and would pick up Corolla and lower Currituck. The Task Force has not heard from ICPTA

Bus-Trolley Transportation: The driving factor is Currituck County wants to get system in place next summer. It only makes sense to join forces with Currituck and operate in a coordinated fashion. It is also the beneficial to attract the best price and most capable bidder. Funding is the major issue. The Dare County Tourist Bureau will help in acquiring equipment. Dare County supports trolleys but cannot commit funding. Ralph and Willo went to Mayors meeting to ask if an amount could be dedicated in the town's budgets. The Mayors were very skeptical of bus/trolley service. There is a lot of educational work to do. We need to build the case for bus/trolleys and take the time to make sure we have a good route structure. Emilie shared information with Kitty Hawk officials and everyone asks what has changed since the last time public transportation was tried. "It won't get used if it's not good enough; if not used it will never get good enough." We have to work with the Visitors Bureau in building case for public transportation. We need to develop a method of analyzing quantitatively how service will be used and get information to towns. A suggestion was made that the staff person should work through ITRE. Transportation questions will be included in survey distributed by the Visitors Bureau. The Chamber of Commerce could also do local polling of residents/workforce.

Other notes:

Meeting to be held with Carolyn McCormick; Ken Hosen Meeting next week; Currituck trolley system would probably not be up and running next summer.

When it comes to elected officials in municipalities – most important is benefit to local residents. Transportation should be addressed.

Nags Head Land Use survey – about 300 respondents – 2/3 agreed/strongly agreed need for trolley

Michelle Pharr - protecting integrity of OBX is very important; 5th worst congested area; support from Visitors Bureau; we are not a very good aging community – needs not addressed

Bike-Pedestrian Committee: Report Attached

Challenge is prioritization of projects in towns.

Traffic Solutions:

The Committee did not meet in April. A challenge is to coordinate into a database a list of projects that are already planned. NC DOT does not have mapping/GIS work done on TIP – descriptions are also lacking. You then have to look at that what's coming in the future. There is a great need for a Transportation Planner on staff of a TMA. Albemarle Commission gets some funding from the towns for Transportation Planner but the person does not have the capacity to do transportation planning (salary is low; funding is low). We need to look at needed projects in the region; map them out; curb cuts; projects approved; platted lots; can there be an effort on beach road to improve quality of development? Last Outer Banks Transportation Thoroughfare - we are working from 1973 document; in 1995 the document was reviewed – nothing was done.

Transportation Demand Management:

No meeting this month.

Mr. Robert Peele – Special Guest from 2Plus Transportation Services out of Raleigh. What is happening on Transportation Advisory Board – looking at services (elderly, social services, etc)? What can we do about van pooling, share a ride, worker transportation? His organization looks at rural van networks to assist with workforce needs. The program was put together so that if there is no public transportation in rural areas, there could be assistance to get people to work. They have 12 van pools in area, they initially started with 20. The state pays with capital costs, maintenance. There is a van pool from EC to the beach and costs about \$1600 per month. In-season – the system pays the cost to operate. Currently there are about 134 people using van pool. The system has stabilized workforce in the area – workers using the system have stayed in their job for 2 to 5 years. It has also brought reliable transportation and a better standard of living for the riders. The fares are only about \$5.00 per day. Riders purchase about 45% of their goods in Dare County. Many riders have no driver's license or even a vehicle. Drivers do not need CDL – 2Plus covers insurance. Vans used accommodate 15 passengers – 12 passengers comfortably. 2Plus would like to have a coordinator working on the Outer Banks.

Emilie Klutz mentioned a federal program in which a van picks up people from all areas to go to the Navy Base. Riders get vouchers which are paid for by the federal gov't.

Information about 2Plus should be included in Chamber of Commerce newsletter. Brochures are available.

Meeting adjourned at 10:40 pm.

TMA Meeting

Bus/Trolley Committee Meeting – May 4th at 8:30 am

Bike/Pedestrian Committee May 19, 2006, 9:00 am; Chamber office

Traffic Solutions –May 12 - 2:00 pm Southern Shores

Transportation Demand Management - Pending

Outer Banks Transportation Task Force May 25, 2006