

OUTER BANKS TRANSPORTATION TASK FORCE

September 28, 2006 8:30 a.m.

Chamber of Commerce Meeting Room

Attendees: Jody Crosswaite, Willo Kelly, Cheryl Byrd, Chris Layton, Emilie Klutz, Scott Stroh, Paul Keller, Webb Fuller, Gwenn Cruickshanks, Charlie Cameron, Buck Thornton, Kermit Skinner, Gary McGee, Aaron Tuell, Megan Gregory, Ken Pagurek, Andy Szakos, Michelle Pharr

Guests: Peggy Schmidt, Bob Fiume

Staff: Chuck Poe

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Crosswaite at 8:40 a.m. The minutes of the August 24th meeting were not available - with action tabled until the next meeting.. Cheryl introduced CDC Executive Director Chuck Poe and briefly informed the group that the contract for administrative support between the Task Force and CDC was being developed by the County Attorney. As has been the practice all attendees introduced themselves and their affiliations.

Quest speaker Peggy Schmidt was introduced and in turn introduced Bob Fiume. Bob described his background as a transit system director for a community in Pennsylvania consisting of 52,000 residents. He further described his system as a “basic fixed route system”. Highlights of his presentation and the subsequent discussion were:

- The general cost for vehicle purchase is \$55,000 for an 18 passenger cutaway bus (which includes handicapped access), and as high as \$250,000 for a 31 passenger trolley style vehicle;
- The advantages of the smaller vehicle include lower maintenance cost, lower fuel costs and the heightened public perception of rider use;
- His operation utilizes a contractor, who leases the town’s vehicles at a rate of \$1 per year, passing liability maintenance and other key operational issues on to the vendor;
- The contract averages an hourly rate of \$50-\$70 per hour;
- Gasoline is purchased through the County, thus allowing for a lower cost per gallon;
- He suggested that all drivers have CDL licenses thus operating at the highest standard;
- His County (like Dare) operates an independent ADA service;
- He strongly suggested that our proposed routes are much too long and should be shortened. He suggested possible connector routes or other routing options dependant upon need and intent;
- He suggested that a transfer concept could be used;
- He further suggested that the routes be kept to the by-pass (US158) only (with possible connectors) with 20-30 minute headways;
- Finally he suggested that a TMA be seriously considered and that possible granting information could be found on the CTA website.
- Some OBTTF members discussed whether the group might better serve the Outer Banks by starting with less frequent public transit service, or service that serves a smaller area at the beginning – but also service that operates all year long. A strong concern about what would happen to residents and workers who come to rely on the service during the tourist season

prompted this discussion, and Bob Fiume also addressed this concern in his presentation. The scope of the trolley bus service provided in Dare County will clearly need to be examined some more.

•

At the conclusion of the presentation, the Task Force discussed the need to more completely inform the political sub-divisions concerning all efforts and plans. Town and County managers, planners and officials suggested that financial consideration for fiscal 2007-2008 will soon be underway and any informational efforts should happen quickly.

Cheryl provided a verbal report on her activities on behalf of the Task Force since the last meeting:

- A meeting was held with Charles Glover of the DOT concerning the seed money allocated to the Task Force. Mr. Glover is retiring soon and provided Cheryl with significant input;
 1. In order to be considered a region, transportation entity must now manage all of the transportation service for at least 2 counties;
 2. He suggested a policy change be presented to the NC Board of Transportation that explained the economic similarities of the coastal portions of Dare, Currituck and Hyde counties and the very different needs and issues in the rest of these counties and in adjacent counties. His recommendation is to ask for NCDOT to adopt a change in definition and policy with regard regions and NCDOT funding to regions.
 3. Further he also indicated that if a “regional” TMA were established and it met NCDOT’s definition of a regional organization, it can receive funding directly from NCDOT;
 4. Such a proposal should be taken before Miriam Perry and the Board of Transportation, but first should be endorsed by the District Representative to this Board, Stan White;
 5. The contract for CDC support must be finalized with Mr. Glover’s successor, or with Miriam Perry.

The group was informed that discussion about CDC support to the OBTTTF would follow with Chuck Poe, Cheryl and Jody and should members like to attend they were invited to do so.

The meeting adjourned at 11:05 a.m.