

MINUTES

Transportation Planning for Small and Medium Sized Communities Conference Subcommittee ADA30(1)

Saturday, July 7, 2007, 1:45 PM to 3:30 PM
Chicago, IL

ATTENDEES

Libby Rushley, Subcommittee Chair	Ohio DOT
Stacey Bricka, Secretary	NuStats, TX
Michael Anderson	University of Alabama
Jerry Everett	University of Tennessee
Marsha Fiol	Virginia DOT
Jeff Moore	Kentucky Transp Cabinet
Elaine Murakami	FHWA
Ron Poole	Retired NCDOT
Thomas Schwetz	Lane Council of Governments, OR
Montie Wade	Texas Transportation Institute

FRIENDS

Jason Bittner	WI Transportation Center
Grant Day	AMEC (MO)
Kumar Molugaram	India
Bjorn Radstrom	University of Manitoba

AGENDA:

Attachment 1

(Minutes are not necessarily in the sequence in which items were considered)

1. Introductions

Libby Rushley opened the meeting with introductions.

2. Chair's Report

Libby Rushley referred committee members to the briefing packet (from Mark Norman of TRB) that was emailed prior to the mid-year meeting. A few highlights from that packet included:

- **Budget:** SAFETEA-LU funding shortfalls for TRB have impacted staffing as open positions are left unfilled.
- **TRR:** The subscription service for the electronic version was successful.
- **Vendors:** TRB will offer commercial exhibits and sponsors at the annual meeting for the first time in 2008. Any agency interested in this new program should review the prospectus on the TRB website.
- **Cross-Cutting Issues:** The theme for the annual meeting is Partnership for Progress in Transportation.
- Closing out a successful conference in September 2006, the committee focus now shifts to the 2008 conference in Portland, OR. We are finalizing the hotel information, which will finalize the dates.

3. Portland Conference – September 2008 – Logistics – Tom Schwetz

- a. **Dates:** We are in the process of finalizing a hotel contract, and the two hotels we are in negotiations with have different dates available. The likely candidate is the Holiday Inn (soon to be Crowne Plaza), with dates of September 17-19. Our second choice is the Doubletree, with available dates the following week. We anticipate having a hotel contract within the next week or so, as we are down to the last few contractual issues.
 - b. **Hotel:** We anticipate finalizing a contract with the Holiday Inn – Portland Downtown Convention Center (which is in the process of being upgraded to a Crowne Plaza).
 - c. **Oregon DOT Commitments.** ODOT signed a letter of commitment, which Libby has. They will be mailing out the call for abstracts next week.
 - b. **Federal Commitments**
 - **FTA:** Libby provided Effie Stallsmith with an official request and this has been included in Effie's program's request for funds. For the Nashville conference, these funds were provided via Volpe to the state DOT.
 - **FHWA:** With Elaine Murakami's help, Libby has submitted to FHWA a request for funding support. This is part of the FY '08 request and submitted to Rob Ritter at FHWA. It is possible that we will need to provide a higher match if the funds come through the STEP (Surface Transportation Efficiency Program), and more paperwork. But if so, we will be able to use registration funds as part of this match.
 - c. **Budget.** Using our 2006 conference budget, alongside the 2005 Transportation Planning Applications conference budget (which was held in Portland), Tom has drafted a conference budget.
 - **Meals:** Tom indicated that the meals estimate was about \$12,000 lower than what was estimated for the Nashville conference. Jerry E. indicated that the 2006 meals estimate included the Thursday evening event, which Tom had not yet added into the budget.
 - The meals estimate includes breakfast, break and lunch for the Wednesday pre-conference workshops.
 - d. **Honorariums.** The budget includes 36 estimated honorariums at \$400 each. In 2006, the budget assumed 36 honorariums but only 31 were paid for various reasons.
 - e. **On-Line Registration Cost.** The credit card fees associated with on-line registrations for the 2006 conference was \$1400. More than half the registrations were paid by credit card. Fees varied based on whether personal or corporate credit cards were used. The 2008 budget assumes \$1600. The committee agreed to charge a \$10 fee if registration is paid by credit card (similar to how the 2007 Applications Conference treated this issue).
- ➔ Tom will confirm current charges for on-line registration with LCOG before finalizing the registration forms.

- f. **Printing/Mailing – First Brochure:** The purpose of this first mailing is to formally announce the conference, its dates and the venue so that attendance at the conference can be included in next year's budget. It will be mailed to the entire mailing list (see notes below on updating that mailing list). It will also be posted to the web and the email link mailed to 2004 and 2006 attendees for whom email addresses are available. In lieu of a brochure, our first mailing will be a postcard, similar to what was used in the 2006 Conference, but with a Portland cityscape on the front of the postcard.
- **Tom** will adjust the budget to reflect current postage for postcards, given the recent postage rate increase.
- g. **Continued Updates to the Mailing List.** The mailing list contains about 2500 names. Mailings for the conference will be paid by ODOT. At the Nashville conference, of the 250 attendees, 100 were on the mailing list while 150 were not. We will both mail and email all information for the 2008 conference.
- **Tom** will sort and assign sections of the mailing list to committee members. Committee members are to look for name changes and address updates. Also, Jerry E. and Jeff will specifically review for names associated with the Nashville location, and Elaine will review the FHWA employee names and locations contained in the mailing list.
- **Libby** will coordinate with **Kim Fisher** regarding the official TRB conference announcement.
- h. **Other Meetings.** The Oregon APA traditionally has their Oregon Planning Institute in September of each year. It is possible they may have that meeting in conjunction with our conference. In addition, the Oregon APA and the Washington APA sections have discussed having a joint meeting. This may also be in conjunction with our conference.
- i. **Handling Agent for Registration.** The registration tasks (both leading up to and at the conference) have traditionally been handled by the sponsoring agency or the agency of the logistical chair. The costs of registration therefore have typically been in-kind matches and not a direct line item in the conference budget. For the 2008 conference, ODOT cannot assume this task as they do not have the available staff, nor can the Lane Transit District. Thus, **Tom** will be pursuing information about a contract with the company who handled registration and other tasks for the 2005 Applications Conference that was held in Portland. In addition, he will work with Portland State University to secure volunteers to help with the conference as well.
- j. **Vendors.** The vendor program was very successful for the 2006 Conference. For the 2008 conference, we will build on and try to expand that program, calling on Portland-based sponsors as well as those who have supported the Tools for the Trade conference in the past. The ballroom foyer at the Holiday Inn could support about 16 vendors, plus small meeting tables and chairs, as well as the breaks. In addition, per the recent Daytona Applications Conference, we will attempt to secure a sponsor for free internet service in this area.
- k. **Registration Fee.** The registration fee for the 2006 conference was \$195 (early bird) and \$250 regular. We had 186 early bird registrants, 9 full price registrants, and 9 students (\$150 each). Once the hotel and budget are finalized, the registration fee for 2008 can be finalized. It will be based on total estimated costs less anticipated federal funding, less a goal for sponsorships.

1. **Refund Policy.** To date, there has not been a formal refund policy for the Tools of the Trade conferences. Refunds have been handled on a case-by-case basis. Our main cost-points are the meal counts (locked into 72 hours prior to the conference) and the room blocks (which have a “30-day prior” deadline). TRB’s policy is to refund all but \$50 as long as the event is at least 30 days away. Anything within the 30 days leading up to the event is non-refundable.

After some debate and discussion, the committee agreed to adopt TRB’s refund policy, recognizing that there will always be special circumstances to be addressed on a case-by-base basis. In addition, registrations can be transferred to others within the same agency for no charge.

- ➔ **Tom** will ensure that the web registration site and all printed registration materials will reference our refund policy.

4. **Portland Conference – September 2008 – Technical – Stacey Bricka**

- a. **Call for Abstracts:** The call for abstracts was finalized and sent to committee members and friends via email. In addition, it will be posted on the committee website, distributed to Oregon APA, Washington APA, and the Transportation Planning Division of the national APA lists. We have requested it be posted to the TMIP list-serve, and Vicky McLane will coordinate posting to the AMPO list-serve. Committee members and friends are encouraged to distribute this widely. ODOT will be mailing the call for abstracts in the next week to the 2,500 names on the committee mailing list and it will be emailed to conference attendees from the 2004 and 2006 conferences.
- b. **Abstract Review.** Abstracts are due October 1st. **Stacey** will set up a web site to facilitate the web process. Abstracts will be assigned based on topic, but anyone will be able to review any abstracts. The reviews will be tallied and results will be distributed at the annual meeting, to help in finalizing the technical program. Committee members should plan to review abstracts in November.
- c. **Member Organized Workshops.** **Vicky McLane** has volunteered to work with PSU and Metro staff to set up a walking-tour workshop during the conference. Its possible this could be combined with a TOD tour or a separate event. In addition, **Elaine Murakami** submitted an abstract for the Wednesday morning data workshop.
- d. **Session Map.** A preliminary session made was distributed and discussed. Key points included the fact that the sessions would be organized around tracks (to be determined once the technical content is finalized) and that the student papers would be part of the regular sessions and not a separate session.

5. **Website – Tom Schwetz.** Once the hotel contract is finalized, Tom will work with LCOG to have the website updated. This includes taking down the 2006 conference details and replacing them with a summary of that conference, as well as putting up the call for abstracts and other preliminary conference information.

- ➔ **Tom** will review the general website costs for the annual meeting. This is a standing agenda item for the annual meeting.

6. **Conference Insurance – Libby Rushley.** Libby is investigating conference insurance.
7. **Conference Subcommittee Chair** – Any committee members interested in chairing the conference subcommittee should contact Libby.

TRB Committee on Transportation Planning for Small and Medium
Sized Communities Conference Planning Sub-committee
ADA30(1)
2007 Summer Meeting
Saturday, July 7, 2007
1:45-3:15 PM

AGENDA

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|----|------------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. | Welcome/Introductions | Libby Rushley |
| 2. | Chair's Report | Libby Rushley |
| 3. | 2008 Portland Conference Logistics | Tom Schwetz |
| | Dates | |
| | Hotel | |
| | Budget | |
| | Oregon DOT Commitments | |
| | Federal Commitments | |
| | Meals | |
| | Honorariums | |
| | Printing/Mailing | |
| | Registration Fee | |
| | Other Meetings | |
| | Handling Agent for Registration | |
| | Vendors | |
| 4. | 2008 Portland Conference Technical | Stacey Bricka |
| | Call for Abstracts | |
| | Schedule for Review Abstracts | |
| | Moderator Volunteers | |
| | Updates to Mailing List | |
| | Member Organized Workshops | |
| | Initial Session Map | |
| | Review of Draft Brochure | |
| 5. | Website Postings | Tom Schwetz |
| | Call for Abstracts | |
| | Initial Conference Announcement | |