



CUTR Advisory Board Meeting CUTR Board Room/Teleconference

April 29, 2009

MINUTES

Because of conflicting schedules, the meeting was held as a teleconference. The meeting was called to order at 1:45 p.m. by Board Chair Kimberlee DeBosier who welcomed board members and guests. Self-introductions of participants were made as follows:

Advisory Board Members and Designees

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|---------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Kimberlee DeBosier, Chair | Debbie Hunt | Chris Stahl |
| Walker Banning | Ysela Llort | |
| John Forney | Manuel Rose | |
| Marion Hart | Bill Sheppard | |

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| Ed Mierzejewski | Steve Polzin | Joel Volinski |
| Lynn Federspiel | Steve Reich | Kristine Williams |
| Dennis Hinebaugh | Lisa Staes | Phil Winters |
| Pei-Sung Lin | | |

Others: Brad Thoburn

Approval of Minutes: Minutes of the January 2009 Meeting were approved.

Chair's Comments: Ms. DeBosier expressed appreciation to those who had prepared presentations for this meeting. The Board will look forward to these presentations at the October meeting.

Director's Report: Dr. Mierzejewski presented a brief report on CUTR's activities since the last meeting. Highlights included:

- Because of the tightness of the State Budget, the DOT Research Office can no longer overmatch our Federal NCTR funds. As a Federal Tier I University Transportation Center, CUTR receives a nominal \$1 million, but after various federal take-downs, we actually see \$800,000-900,000. In the past the DOT matched with a full \$1 million but now will match dollar for dollar with the actual federal dollars.
- CUTR is becoming re-engaged with Miami Dade County, thanks to Ysela Llort, and we're negotiating several new assignments. Efforts are underway to extend our general services agreement with the County.

- As Congress begins discussion of the reauthorization of the transportation bill, CUTR has been invited by Kathy Castor's office to submit several ideas for her consideration for inclusion in the next transportation authorization bill.
- CUTR is working with the USF Foundation to become eligible for the 50% state match for the Georgia Brosch Memorial Scholarship. CUTR is eligible for the 50% match when the endowment reaches \$100,000. CUTR is also looking at ways to productively use funds in the Foundation operating account to support other activities.
- Approximately 39 national/state/local agencies have expressed an interest in the transportation assistance device for people with cognitive disabilities. The MacDonald Training Center in Tampa has expressed interest in using TAD with their clients when it becomes available to the public.
- Legislation proposed by the Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC) would create the Florida Transportation Revenue Study Commission to study state, regional and local transportation needs and develop new and innovative funding options. CUTR staff would provide assistance to the Commission to accomplish its goals. This bill has passed the full Senate and could be heard in the House within the next few days.
- A team from the Western Transportation Institute at Montana State, the University of Vermont and CUTR staff have been selected by FTA to administer the National Technical Assistance for Alternative Transportation in Public Lands. This project is about providing public transportation and other types of transportation in national parks and public lands.
- USF and all the state universities are waiting for the outcome of the legislative session. It will be several months before CUTR will know how our budget will be affected, but we remain cautiously optimistic.

Board Member Updates: John Forney was recently in Washington, D.C. and reported that financing transportation infrastructure has seen some interesting developments in the last few months as markets, in some ways, have improved, but in some ways have made transportation funding more difficult than otherwise has been the case. There's considerable money flowing down to the local level and a lot of that's going to be used for transportation projects. The stimulus money is competitive and Florida is working hard to get its share. Folks are working hard to make sure that the I-4 connector gets funded as part of the stimulus money, but there are more priorities than there are dollars. There are some things important to the Tampa Bay Area and the State of Florida that should benefit from the stimulus money.

In Washington, something beneficial to transportation funding is the new twist on allowable bond issues by local governments. Local governments typically can issue tax exempt bonds to finance their needed infrastructure but the tax exempt bond market for a lot of technical reasons has been bad in the last few months; much worse than it should have been relative to everything else that's going on. So many local governments felt that they could not access the money they needed to for capital improvement programs. The Federal government put a program in place called **Build America Bonds** which said that local governments could access taxable bond markets which had been a little healthier than tax exempt bond markets; it's more expensive interest rate but it allows them to collect a rebate from the Federal government in the amount that will compensate them for the higher interest rate they have to pay for those projects. It appears to be a very successful program to help local governments. Florida,

to date, has not taken advantage of this program but it is anticipated that Florida entities financing some of their infrastructure needs will use Build America Bonds.

On the negative side, to follow up on comments made at the last meeting, the public/private partnership projects have been going through a rough spot because those projects depended on some financial techniques that are really out of favor in the current environment—heavy use of debt, heavy use of leverage, heavy use of interest rate—all those are bad words now.

Additional State and Federal Legislative Updates:

- Ed Mierzejewski reported that CUTR has been trying to keep track of the growth management legislation that seems to be changing every day. Walker Banning reported that there's a lot of movement underway, a lot of negotiation going on—Secretary Pelham issued a statement that he originally supported some of the concepts in Senate Bill 360 but his newspaper reported yesterday that he no longer supports that bill.
- Ed also noted that there is a bill that may pass that defines any area of over 1,000 people per square mile as being urbanized and being exempt from any concurrency consideration. Since this doesn't seem to necessarily capture the essence of urban, the latest version included an additional provision that areas had to have over 5,000 population. Even so, there are a lot of residential subdivisions that meet that criteria. Walker Banning noted that it's the urban areas where relief should be given to encourage development. The fear is that a lot of suburban/rural areas will be opened to unbridled development without the ability to collect funds to help pay for that development.
- There is a provision that the Legislature continues to be interested in exploring the mobility fee concept. CUTR has been working with the DCA on the mobility fee concept. There is a bill to have work continue and prepare a report for the Speaker of the House and President of the Senate by the end of the year.
- Kristine Williams reported that the mobility fee does offer some promise. Her group is researching the possibilities of its application, primarily looking at methods of incorporating more sensitivity to VMT, vehicle miles traveled into impact fee calculations. It does offer some promise, but in terms of equitably allocating costs across new development, a continuing concern is that reliance on new development to fund transportation infrastructure and services is not going to be sufficient, particularly in these economic ups and downs. A more equitable approach would be something that looks at a utility fee or some other mechanism useful for funding infrastructure and services including transit operations within our redeveloping urban areas—allocate some of those costs to the user and not just to new development. We are looking at several options—tax increment financing; another idea might be to add a utility fee option as a local option within a backlog authority. We will present some of these ideas to our stakeholders group at a second meeting in Tallahassee. We are testing some of the tiered VMT-based impact fee concepts in Alachua County.

Report of the Award Committee: Kim DeBosier reported that the committee recommended Senator James Hargrett as the 2009 Transportation Achievement Award recipient. Senator Hargrett has been a long-time advocate for CUTR. The Advisory Board unanimously approved the selection and Kim DeBosier will contact him. Senator Hargrett has made many contributions to transportation and served as the Senate

Transportation Chair, served as the first and only chair of the Public Transportation Subcommittee, has been involved in national transportation efforts and was a speaker at CUTR's building dedication. He currently serves as Chair of the Tampa-Hillsborough County Expressway Authority.

Shifting Meeting Schedule: Because of the conflict of the Advisory Board Meeting with the legislative session, DOT board members requested that consideration be given to moving the April meeting to a later date. After discussion it was decided that beginning with the 2010 schedule, the second quarter meeting would be moved to the fourth Wednesday in May.

New Business: There was no other business.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

Next Meeting: Teleconference, Wednesday, July 29, 2009, 1:30-2:30 p.m.