



## CUTR Advisory Board Meeting CUTR Board Room/Teleconference

July 29, 2009

### MINUTES

The meeting was held via teleconference. Board Chair Kimberlee DeBosier called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. and welcomed board members and guests. Self-introductions of participants were made as follows:

#### ***Advisory Board Members and Designees***

Kimberlee DeBosier	Norman Mansour	Chris Stahl
John Forney	Jo Penrose	Bill Sheppard
Marion Hart		Thornton Williams

#### ***CUTR***

Dennis Hinebaugh	Steve Reich
Pei-Sung Lin	Phil Winters
Ed Mierzejewski	Joel Volinski
Steve Polzin	

***Others:*** Sally Patrenos

***Approval of Minutes:*** Minutes of the April 2009 meeting were approved.

#### ***Chair's Comments:***

Ms. DeBosier welcomed Thornton Williams to the Board. Thornton related that in 1990 he was hired as general counsel by Ben Watts, a very dynamic Florida Department of Transportation Secretary. With his technical background in the sciences, he became interested in transportation concepts and issues and has been involved in the field since that time.

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

- Earl Durden, one of our previous award recipients, will speak at our student and faculty seminar on September 14<sup>th</sup>. Board members are invited to attend the seminar and lunch.
- Congress is working on authorization of the new transportation bill and our local representative, Kathy Castor, has included both of our requests (continuation of our National Bus Rapid Transit Institute and creation of a metropolitan transportation institute that would focus on national

issues related to MPOs) in her list of items that she would like included in the next transportation bill.

- Ed met with Senator Martinez's staff and they have indicated their strong support.
- Senator Nelson also asked for our requests; it's not clear if he will endorse them.
- CUTR continues to work on the mobility fee concept that was initiated under contract to the Department of Community Affairs and subsequent to the passage of the Senate Bill 360, the continuation is being funded by FDOT; this is a very important project in which we're dealing with a very complex issue.
- A team that includes CUTR, the University of Buffalo, and Calspan Research was successful in a national competition and will participate in one of TRB's strategic highway research program projects related to in-vehicle driving behavior. Pei-Sung Lin will lead our portion of the project and will receive almost \$2 million.
- Last week USF had a broadcast/press event for which Phil Winters was primarily responsible. We have a demonstration project here on campus in conjunction with a division of Enterprise Car Rental. People on campus who do not have access to a vehicle will have the opportunity to rent a car for a short-term as needed. We will evaluate different aspects of the program.
- Recently our National Bus Rapid Transit Institute hosted a workshop in Salt Lake City with over 170 people in attendance. They continue to gain not only local recognition but also national and international recognition.
- In past meetings we had discussed legislation proposed by the Florida MPO Advisory Council to create the Florida Transportation Revenue Study Commission for which CUTR would provide the staff support. Unfortunately that measure failed in this legislative session. The Council may try to move forward with a modified version that includes a technical study by CUTR with some form of technical oversight committee that would not involve a formal commission with gubernatorial and legislative appointees.
- The funding picture at USF continues to be somewhat muddled. On the one hand, with the addition of the Federal stimulus funds as well as tuition increases, USF as a whole looks fairly stable. On the other hand, CUTR has some concerns about policies that our Sponsored Research organization is proposing. Some of these could negatively impact CUTR in terms of the portion of indirect funds that we are able to earn. We continue to face budget issues, but the Dean and Vice President of Sponsored Research continue to protect our interests.

***Board Member Updates:***

**John Forney:** Recent signs show that the general environment for the economy is improving and that will hopefully improve the funding for USF and funding for transportation projects of all sorts. When the Florida Cabinet met in Tallahassee yesterday, the Department of Revenue reported that for the last three or four months revenue estimates for tax collections for the state of Florida had met their estimate. Because state budgets are based on estimates of revenue collections, we now have an understanding of what revenue collection should be going forward. Other reports indicate that the economy is beginning to turn around.

**Sally Patrenos:** Concerning the reauthorization in D.C., it looks like they want to make fewer pots of money with less flexibility while the main push by states has been to give them more flexibility. There is a continuing bill and another bill that would drastically restrict the P3, both of which need to be watched carefully. All tolls would be set at the federal level and before you could enter into any P-3 agreement, it would have to be approved through the US DOT. With the time sensitivity of agreements and deals being negotiated, if an entity made an agreement with a state agency and knew that they still had to

receive approval from Washington, this could stifle the industry. The Senate version is yet to come and there seems to be no real hurry on that side.

**Legislative Updates:**

Ed Mierzejewski reported that Senate Bill 360 passed and time will tell what that means for all of us in the industry. CUTR is working very hard on the mobility fee provision in Senate Bill 360. Thornton Williams reported that MPOAC legislation failed because the Sunrail got caught up in the debate at the end of the session. Regarding the economy: in several meetings with the DOT it was reported that analysis shows that the turnpike is finally getting more cars going through, closer to their adjusted projections and that the loss of tolls has bottomed out. Another interesting statistic, since January more lights have been turned on than turned off, another indication that the economy is beginning to rebound.

**Awards Dinner:** Ed reported that Senator James Hargrett, Jr. is the 2009 recipient of the CUTR Transportation Achievement Award. The dinner will be held on Wednesday, October 28<sup>th</sup> at the Marshall Student Center Ballroom. Letters were sent to all of our sponsors for the last several years and we will continue to call and e-mail them to encourage attendance. The Board requested that Lynn Federspiel send out a list of past sponsors as well as this year's sponsors.

**New Business:** There was no new business.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

**Next Meeting: Wednesday, October 28, 2009, 1:30-4:30 p.m.  
Followed by the CUTR Transportation Achievement Award Dinner,  
5:30 p.m. reception, 7:00 p.m. dinner and program**