**Minutes of the Rural Technical Coordinating Committee (RTCC) Meeting**

**November 8, 2013**

**11:00 a.m.**

Prior to the opening of the RTCC meeting, Lloyd Griffin asked Gretchen Byrum to give an explanation of the roles and membership of the RTCC and the RTAC Committees. Later in the meeting Mr. Griffin said Ms. Byrum would offer information on how to progress with prioritization. Ms. Byrum stated that generally the RTCC members are town and county managers or other appointed staff members and RTAC members are elected officials. She added that one person is not eligible to serve on both committees and have voting privileges on both.

RTAC Chairman Lloyd Griffin thanked Dare County for hosting the meeting and Donna Creef for her assistance in setting up the meeting.

**RTCC**

**Call to Order**

The RTCC meeting was held in the Dare County Administrative Building and called to order by Chair Angela Welsh on Friday, November 8, 2013 at 11:00 a.m.

**Roll Call**

Chairperson Angela Welsh asked each RTCC member to introduce themselves. It was determined a quorum was present with the following in attendance:

Dan Scanlon Manager, Currituck County; Wes Haskett Planner, Southern Shores; John Stockton Manager Kitty Hawk; Greg Loy Planner, Kill Devil Hills; Cliff Ogburn Manager, Elizabeth Teague and Angela Welsh, Planners, Nags Head; Zee Lamb Manager, and Landin Holland Planner, Chowan County; Sam Barrow Planner, Edenton; Bill Rich Manager, Hyde County; Frank Heath Manager, Perquimans County; Ken Rominger (substituting for Fred Yates, Mayor) Winfall; Shelley Cox Planner, Pasquotank County; Leroy Spivey Commissioner, Tyrrell County; Jerry Rhodes Manager, Washington County; Chris Layton Manager and Andy Garman Planner, Duck; and Bert Banks, Executive Director Albemarle Commission.

DOT Personnel – Jed Dixon, NC Ferry System; Behshad Norowzi, DOT Planning Branch; Malcolm Fearing, DOT Board member; Gretchen Byrum, DOT, Division 1; Sterling Baker, DOT Division 1; Anthony Roper, DOT Division 1; Jerry Jennings, DOT Division 1.

Guest – Mary Helen Goodloe-Murphy, Outer Banks National Scenic Byway Committee.

**Agenda Approval**

Chair Welsh called for a motion to accept the agenda as presented. A motion to accept was made by Bert Banks, seconded by Wes Haskett, and unanimously carried.

**Approval of September 18, 2013 RTCC Minutes**

Minutes of the September 18, 2013 RTCC meeting were reviewed and Chairperson Welsh entertained a motion for adoption. Motion to adopt the minutes as presented was made by John Stockton, seconded by Leroy Spivey, and unanimously carried.

**Approval of Camden County’s Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP)**

Behshad Norowzi provided information on Camden County’s CTP. He explained the Plan has been adopted by Camden Board of Commissioners and following adoption by the RTAC will go before the NC State Transportation Board for action. Following review of the Camden County CTP,the Plan was put on the floor for approval and submission to the RTAC for their adoption. Frank Heath moved to recommend submitting the Plan to the RTAC for approval. His motion was seconded by Bill Rich and unanimously carried.

Chairperson Welsh presented a resolution to adopt the study of alternative revenue sources for the Ferry Division and submission to the RTAC for adoption. She explained the resolution was drafted by the Work Group made up of representatives from Currituck, Dare and Hyde Counties, as well as DOT representatives.

**WHEREAS,** the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization provides transportation planning services for the counties of Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Gates, Hyde, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Tyrrell and Washington; and

**WHEREAS**, the Albemarle RPO is located in Division 1 of the NC Department of Transportation, and

**WHEREAS**, House Bill 817 outlines the Strategic Prioritization Funding Plan for Transportation Investments; and

**WHEREAS,** Section 136-82 of HB 817 states, “The Board of Transportation may establish tolls on any untolled ferry route, the Board of Transportation must receive a resolution approved by the Transportation Advisory Committee of each affected local transportation planning organization requesting tolls on that route. No later than March 1, 2014, the Department shall hold a separate public hearing in the geographic area of each untolled ferry route and invite each affected local transportation planning organization. At the public hearing, the Department shall present an explanation of the toll setting methodology, the impact of tolling on the availability of funding for other local transportation priorities, and the minimum and maximum toll rates. After the public hearing, an affected local transportation planning organization may consider and adopt a ferry tolling resolution.”

**WHEREAS,** the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization (ARPO) has asked the state to first study alternative revenues from the following sources: Advertising (ferry naming, ferry route naming, business advertisements on televisions in lounges), concessions, leasing shipyard space for boat repair and boat dockage, WiFi fees, establishing a rental rate of ferry equipment and shipyard tours.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, be it resolved by the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization’s Transportation Advisory Committee hereby supports the alternative revenue sources for the Ferry Division.

A motion was made by Jerry Rhodes to approve the resolution and submit to the RTAC for their adoption. His motion was seconded by Leroy Spivey and unanimously carried.

Sterling Baker asked to address the Committee on this issue. He commented the process will involve upcoming public hearings from DOT and the ferry toll data will most likely change. At that time he believes a resolution should be submitted to the State. He added the resolution in place now could be offered on a FYI basis. Bert Banks asked what the process is before a final determination is made. Mr. Baker said the State will ultimately offer alternatives regarding what the funding revenues will be if tolling is in place. Each RPO has the authority to request a route specific.

Malcolm Fearing said Hatteras and Ocracoke are the areas most affected. He said State and Federal funding is declining for transportation. He said he is requesting the RPO allow DOT to go through the process explained by Mr. Baker and look at options, such as transportation grants, and how residents of Ocracoke and Hatteras could be considered for toll passes.

Following a discussion, it was the consensus of the RTCC to submit the resolution to the RTAC for a decision on how to proceed.

**Adjournment**

With no further business to discuss, Frank Heath moved to adjourn the meeting. His motion was seconded by John Stockton and unanimously carried.

**Lunch – 12:00 noon**

**Chairperson’s Report**

RTAC Chairman Lloyd Griffin asked for continuation of the ferry tolling discussion. Malcolm Fearing said although the NCDOT is trying to reduce the cost of ferry replacements, as of today, there is not adequate information available to make a decision on ferry tolls. When the proposal comes to the RPO, for a decision on tolling, there should be several options and complete information available.

Chairman Griffin asked committee members for their input regarding the ferry issue.

Sterling Baker made clear that ferry toll fees generated in this area will remain in this area.

To help in offsetting ferry tolls, one of the ideas considered is seeking corporate sponsors, the preference is one sole sponsor.

**Division One Report**

Jerry Jennings presented the Division One Report. He said the STI process starts in January and new projects have to be identified. A methodology for developing prioritizations has to be ready by April and the actual prioritization process is in the May-June time period. He stated two changes occurred this week in the prioritization process as a result of the work group presentation regarding ferries. The Board had concerns and comments, and one change approved was implementation of criteria called accessibility and connectivity. Some concerns from MPO’s are that RPO’s need to have more input than DOT.

NC DOT Projects presented are attached.

Gretchen Byrum provided Committee members with a format of a STI Plan. (See attached)

**Transportation Branch Report**

Mr. Griffin called on Behshad Norowzi to expand on the STI methology. Mr. Norowzi also explained the progress of the Comprehensive Transportation Plans, the ones completed, in progress, and the ones that are slated to soon begin.

Bert Banks said the Albemarle RPO will be receiving $10,000 additional funding from DOT and the additional funding will require a $2,500 match from the counties. He added that when a Transportation Planner is hired a budget will be developed to include the increases. He went on to say, advertisements in several publications have been used in the search for a Transportation Planner. To date 16 applications have been received and Mr. Banks stated he expects a decision to be made by the end of November, 2013.

**Rural Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) Meeting**

**November 8, 2013**

**1:00 p.m.**

The November 8, 2013 RTAC meeting held in Manteo at the Dare County Administrative Offices was called to order by Committee Chairman Lloyd Griffin.

Jed Dixon explained ferry yard operations, including types of maintenance, number of employees, expenditures, etc. He noted he had conducted a tour of the ferry repair shipyard in Manns Harbor today. In the next few months, Mr. Dixon said a new dredge should be under construction and ramps at the ferry landings are scheduled for refurbishment in Swan Quarter and Currituck.

At the request of Chairman Griffin, Malcolm Fearing reported on his visit to the Elizabeth City Coast Guard facility and the Elizabeth City airport.

**RTCC Meeting Report**

RTCC Chairperson Angela Welsh reported that the RTCC had approved recommending the Camden County CTP be put before the RTAC for approval. Butch Petrey moved to approve the Camden County CTP. His motion was seconded by Greg Loy and unanimously carried.

The ferry resolution was also supported by the RTCC and it was also recommended to go to the RTAC for approval. Following a discussion, Butch Petrey moved to delay submitting the ferry resolution until further information was available. His motion was seconded by Brandi Rheubottom and unanimously carried.

Chairman Griffin said he would appoint subcommittees to meet and come up with prioritization methods that have to be in place by the first of the year. He said once a Transportation Planner is in place they will be taking over the responsibility of coordinating prioritization efforts.

Chairman Griffin said with the resignation of Paul Martin, a Vice-Chairman needs to be appointed to serve in the vacancy left by him. He recommended appointing Leroy Spivey from Tyrrell County. Butch Petrey moved that Mr. Spivey be appointed as RTAC Vice-Chairman. His motion was seconded by Larry Lawhon and unanimously carried.

**Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting is scheduled for January 10, 2014 in Hertford at the Albemarle Commission.

**Public Comments**

There were no public comments

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to conduct, Chairman Griffin declared the meeting adjourned.