

Meeting Minutes

**Salisbury Wicomico Metropolitan Planning Organization
Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
March 9th, 2005**

**City of Salisbury/Wicomico County Government Building
125 North Division Street, Salisbury, MD
Room 302**

Attendees:

TAC Members:

Ray Birch, City of Salisbury Public Works
Jim Thompson, Maryland State Highway Administration
Tracey Gordy, Maryland Department of Planning
Mike Pennington, Tri-County Council
Lenny Howard, Maryland Transit Administration
John Redden, Wicomico County Public Works
Mike Nixon, Maryland Department of Transportation

Others:

Jack Lenox, Director, City of Salisbury/Wicomico County Planning
Mary Ellen Gray, SW/MPO staff, City of Salisbury/Wicomico County Planning
Riggin Johnson, Shore Transit
Karen Berrier, Shore Transit
Gary Pusey, City of Salisbury/Wicomico County Planning
Ron Spalding, Maryland Department of Transportation

Discussion

Ms. Gray opened the meeting at 1:05 PM and welcomed everyone.

Members and other attendees introduced themselves.

Ms. Gray reviewed the agenda and asked whether anyone had any suggestions for deletions/additions to the meeting agenda. There were none.

Organizational Issues

Ms. Gray reviewed the SW/MPO's Prospectus and By-Laws which included the role of the TAC and the need to have a Chair and Vice Chair. Mr. Spalding added that an additional role of the TAC members is to be a conduit for communication to their Board members and visa versa.

TAC members agreed to further discuss the issue of Chair and Vice Chair at a later meeting.

Shore Transit

Ms. Gray reviewed the discussion from the last Board meeting on this issue (please refer to the February 28th, 2005 meeting minutes) and turned it over to the Shore Transit representatives for further discussion. Mr. Hart was out sick so Mr. Johnson, Ms. Berrier and Mr. Pennington filled in. Mr. Johnson reiterated the issue of the significant increase in ridership over the past couple of years and reviewed the operations of the system which included:

- there are six (6) routes which run on a loop – can look into the feasibility of running a linear route which would be less costly
- the yellow and green routes have the least ridership and there's a question as to whether changes should be made to these routes

Mr. Pennington reiterated the concern with the budget in that they have increased costs with no increase to the budget. As a result, with no changes, Shore Transit will be in a deficit situation in FY '06. Would like input from the TAC and the Board on what is considered essential and non-essential services as well as recommendations on operations. Also, since the Board has regional representation, the MPO is a good planning entity that he would like to work and build a relationship with.

Discussion

Mr. Howard indicated that due to the requirements of 5307 funding, any potential cuts can't target a certain population such as the physically challenged or the elderly and funds have to be used in the Metro area.

There was quite a bit of discussion regarding possible cuts and ways to potentially raise funds as well as a desire for more specific analysis of route information (i.e. number of riders on which route and frequency of routes, etc.). The TAC concluded that there are some recommendations to explore which include:

- 1) Would like to keep the trust of the current ridership which has grown to include folks who have come to depend upon Shore Transit to get to and from work and school.
- 2) Would rather routes be consolidated and/or service hours cut rather than eliminate a route.
- 3) Would like Shore Transit to continue to explore partnerships with such entities as Wor-Wic College, Salisbury University, Purdue, Purdue stadium, Wal-Mart and the shopping mall.
- 4) Would like to continue to work with DART.
- 5) Shore Transit should continue to talk with the municipalities that are served by Shore Transit for potential funding opportunities.
- 6) Any cuts in routes and service hours should be based on an analysis of operations data.

Discussion of Long Term Transportation Plan

Ms. Gray indicated that there is some funding available out of the FY '05 UPWP and for FY '06 for consulting services. Mr. Spalding reiterated his discussion with our Federal partners who indicated that the Long Range Transportation Plan needs to be completed by October 1, 2005 and that our Federal partners stand ready to lend assistance to help this MPO meet this deadline. In addition, he also indicated that he would work with our Federal partners to articulate the required elements of the Long Range Transportation Plan as well as invite Neel Vanikar of the Federal Highway administration to attend the next TAC meeting. Mr. Spalding also indicated that he would get a copy of the Hagerstown Long Range Transportation Plan including their Scope of Work to Mr. Pusey which would provide a good framework for the SW/MPO Long Range Transportation Plan.

After discussion, the TAC concluded that it makes sense for Mr. Pusey to put together a draft Scope of Work and see what elements lend themselves to being contracted out for the TAC to review. Mr. Pusey will work with Mr. Spalding and Mr. Nixon in between this meeting and the next to put this together.

Next meeting agenda items include:

- Discussion of next steps for the Long Range Transportation Plan

Next meeting is scheduled for **March 30th 2005 from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM** at the same location.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 PM.