

Meeting Minutes

**Salisbury/Wicomico Metropolitan Planning Organization
Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
September 17th, 2008**

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

Attendees:

TAC Members:

John Redden, Wicomico County Public Works, Chair
Ray Birch, City of Salisbury Public Works, Vice Chair
Mike Nixon, Maryland Department of Transportation
Tracey Gordy, Maryland Department of Planning
Riggin Johnson, Tri-County Council
Gary Pusey, S/W MPO staff, City of Salisbury/Wicomico County Planning

Others:

Ian Beam, Maryland Department of Transportation
Gregory Oliver, Delaware Department of Transportation
Jim Thompson, Maryland State Highway Administration
Jim Dooley, Maryland State Highway Administration
Kevin Quinn, Maryland Transit Administration
Sue Knapp, KFH Group

Introduction

Chairman Redden opened the meeting at 1:10 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

Minutes

Chairman Redden introduced the first item on the agenda, which were the minutes of the Committee's May 14, 2008 meeting. Mr. Birch moved to approve the meeting minutes, and Mr. Nixon seconded the motion. All Committee members voted aye, with none opposed, and the motion to approve the minutes was passed.

Presentation – KFH Group – Shore Transit Service Analysis

Chairman Redden asked Mr. Pusey to introduce this item. Mr. Pusey introduced Ms. Sue Knapp of the KFH Group, which through funding provided by MDOT with Mr. Nixon's assistance, has been retained to analyze the services provided by Shore Transit.

Ms. Knapp provided the members with a handout entitled "Shore Transit Service Analysis." She explained that the purpose of the study was to identify ways to address

budget gaps that had occurred with Shore Transit for FY 2009. She noted that Shore Transit had addressed shortages in various ways for FY 2008, and that for FY 2009 increased fares, increased MTA funding and cost saving measures were being investigated. She noted that increased costs were caused primarily by increasing fuel and insurance costs, and an increase in the demand responsive services.

Ms. Knapp provided a background of Shore Transit's current service, including a discussion of the fixed routes and the demand responsive services. Maps were shown that indicated the locations of the fixed routes for both Salisbury and the Lower Shore. She explained that based on MTA performance measures, Shore Transit's overall performance was good as to cost-effectiveness, with the demand responsive service productivity excellent and the fixed route productivity good on some routes but not on others. The regional routes all meet MTA standards. Of the Salisbury routes, the Pink and Orange routes (South Salisbury/Fruitland and Central Salisbury) were "good," the Blue route (West Salisbury) was "marginal," and the Purple (East Salisbury), Airport, and the Green (South Salisbury) and Yellow (North Salisbury/Delmar) routes were "poor."

Ms. Knapp also summarized the cost-cutting measures that have been implemented to date, and discussed the revenue-increasing measures implemented, which included increased fares, the re-negotiation of Medical Assistance contracts and an agreement with Salisbury University and UMES to serve students for a fee.

She next discussed proposed service cuts. These included reducing Saturday evening hours on the Salisbury routes; reducing weekday evening hours on the Salisbury routes; eliminating the Yellow route; and consolidating and realigning other routes, as explained in the handout. Other possible service cuts were also discussed, to include realigning routes and eliminating certain stops with low ridership.

A public hearing will be held by Shore Transit on Oct. 14 to present these options and to hear the public's opinions. The final decisions as to any changes will be made by the Tri-County Council at a later date.

No action was necessary by the Committee on this study as this presentation was provided for informational purposes only. Mr. Pusey stated that Ms. Knapp would also be presenting the study's findings to the MPO Council at its next meeting on Oct. 1, 2008, and the Technical Committee members were invited to attend that meeting as well.

FY 2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Program – Recommendation to Council

Chairman Redden asked Mr. Pusey to report on this item, and Mr. Pusey deferred to Mr. Dooley.

Mr. Dooley went through each of the nine total project categories and explained that these categories cover projects planned to be completed within the MPO Area during the

next four fiscal years. The categories included Environmental Projects; Safety and Spot Improvements; Resurface and Rehabilitate; Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation; Urban Street Reconstruction and Revitalization; Congestion Management; Northeast Collector Road Phase II Bikepath; Small Urban Transit System (capital assistance for Shore Transit); and Small Urban Transit System (operating and maintenance assistance for Shore Transit).

Mr. Dooley highlighted some of the projects in each category and the costs associated with each one. He clarified that for the Environmental Projects, the aesthetic improvements along highways included the wildflower plantings; under Resurface and Rehabilitate, the U.S. 13 Business project at Bridgeview Street was for drainage improvements; under Urban Street Reconstruction and Revitalization, the MD 513 sidewalks referred to Cedar Lane in Fruitland; and that for the Northeast Collector Road Phase II Bikepath, this covered the area between MD 346 (Old Ocean City Road) to U.S. Route 50.

It was pointed out that funding was provided for land acquisition for Shore Transit's new facility for FY 2009 under the Small Urban Transit System – Capital assistance for transit services provided by Shore Transit. The decrease in funding by \$1 million from FY 2009 to FY 2010 reflected the purchase costs in FY 2009.

Upon a motion by Mr. Birch, seconded by Ms. Gordy, the Committee unanimously recommended that the FY 2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Program be approved by the Council.

Other Business

Mr. Pusey provided a brief update on the corridor studies. He noted that The Traffic Group, Inc., has provided a draft report of their findings on the East Side Corridor Study to staff, and staff is in the process of reviewing this for any revisions. The Traffic Group has begun work on the Delmar study, with completion anticipated during this fiscal year.

Mr. Pusey also noted that the MPO's Website is now "live" at www.swmpo.org. Mr. Redden asked Mr. Pusey to notify all committee members that the Website has been launched.

Mr. Thompson reminded everyone that MDOT's Annual Tour will be held on the Lower Eastern Shore on Oct. 21. The Wicomico meeting will be held in the evening. The Pre-Tour will be held in Snow Hill on Oct. 1 for staff persons from all three Lower Shore counties.

No action was required for these items.

Next Meeting Date/Adjourn

The next meeting date is scheduled for November 12, 2008 at 1 p.m. Mr. Pusey stated he will send out reminders and all relevant meeting materials prior to the meeting.

There being no further business, upon a motion by Ms. Gordy, seconded by Mr. Birch, with all members voting in favor, the meeting adjourned at 2:20 p.m.