

Minutes of the RAC Region 2 Conference Call—10/31/2012

Attendees: Elisha Wright-Kehner (AR), David Jared (GA), Mike Sanders, Terry Swygert, Milt Fletcher (SC), Jeff Brown, Michelle Owens, Joe Crabtree (KY), Mark Morvant (LA), Skip, Darryll Dockstader (FL) present for meeting planning portion only, Cindy Smith (MS), Vicki Morrison (FL), and Mark Greeley (FL)

Introduce New Members:

RAC Region 2 welcomes Vicki Morrison and Mark Greeley from Florida DOT. Glad to have y'all aboard!

Membership Gaps

1. **Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KTC)** is still working on getting a research coordinator. They are considering internal candidates, but there is no target date. Joe would like to see a Research Coordinator/Implementation Engineer full-time. Joe said that the Secretary has approached him and is aware of the need to fill the position.
2. **Puerto Rico**—David continues to try to contact them, but has had no luck so far.

TRB Attendance

Most Region 2 people will be attending TRB in January. Due to an expected bundle of joy arriving during that time, David will not be there, so Elisha will lead Region 2 breakout session. Georgene Geary and J. T. Rabun from Georgia may attend, or Mr. Binh Bui from David's staff. GDOT has broken out their research staff separately from Materials, and Georgene is head of the Office of Research.

Regarding Region 2 meeting at TRB, Jeff Brown suggested asking for agenda items starting now, because of people taking off for holidays. David will follow up on this.

Region 2 Mentoring

Darryll will handle any mentoring needed for FDOT. David is waiting to hear back from Jose Gomez from Virginia DOT to see if he needs any help.

Task Force Participation

The Administration & Education Task Force has an opening. Currently there are two members from Region 2, but three from the other regions, so any interested parties should let Skip and/or David know. The task force mission is posted on website. It mainly handles bylaws, website upkeep, funding updates to AASHTO manuals etc. Interested persons need to follow up with Skip or Moy. We may even need two new people to join since Skip is now RAC Vice Chair and will be leaving the Administration & Education Task Force. David urged us to join any task force that we are interested in.

Southeast Transportation Consortium (STC) Update

- **Current Synthesis Projects:** KTC is on board for warm-mix asphalt (WMA) synthesis project. The kickoff meeting is tomorrow, and Mark Morvant will be getting KTC up to date on processes. Mark is scheduling a conference call on the Value of Research synthesis. Dale Peabody expressed interest in this study and wondered if it would help the RPM web tool. The study PI has survey results. The remaining synthesis study PIs are working, and information will be passed along.
- **Annual Meeting:** The annual meeting will be March 5-7, 2013, and LADOTD will send notice out soon. They will be looking for suggestions for new synthesis projects, and at some point will put out a call for suggestions, topics, or even research needs descriptions. Some may be chosen before the annual meeting. Travel day will be Monday, March 4, and the meeting will end at noon on Thursday, March 7.
- **Possible Funding for Full-Length Projects:** Mark advised that we do not have enough funds for full-length projects, that such projects would be separate solicitations. The RAP project will be initiated this week. So far only 2 states are committed to the RAP study, Florida and Colorado. Other states can join anytime. Money will be allocated for materials in each state.
- **Synthesis Project Results:** The question was raised on how we will use and deploy the synthesis project conclusions/recommendations? We will discuss at the annual meeting whether this may take the form of training or some other product.

General Regional Business

Mark Morvant advised that the Research Performance Measures (RPM) web tool is now available for use. There has been a webinar, and Mark will see about doing another webinar in January. He encouraged everyone to try it out, and said that the presentation was on the

internet, and we should be able to find it using Google. It contains specifics on how to input high-value research (HVR) projects. Guidelines for voting on HVR projects are forthcoming.

We will have another Region 2 conference call before TRB, and David will follow up. We will discuss, among other things, agenda items for TRB breakout session.

2013 Summer Meeting Planning

Mark Greeley and Milt Fletcher left the meeting for this portion. Darryl joined it at this time.

David, Elisha, Michelle, Jeff, Darryl, Joe, Skip, Mark Morvant, Jeff Brown, Mike, Cindy, and Terry were present for the Planning Committee for the 2013 summer meeting.

Budget Figures

Mark had been waiting on AASHTO to provide budget figures, then got in touch Camille Crichton-Sumners (NJ). Camille sent preliminary estimated figures, but not the finalized amounts. In particular, we are not sure how much was spent on the off-site dinner cruise event.

Local Arrangements

Banquet

For RAC 2013, LADOTD is looking at three options:

1. Hosting an in-hotel banquet hall (top floor banquet hall overlooking city, nice venue)— This is the lower-cost event.
2. A banquet at an off-site plantation home (30 min drive), a higher-cost event.
3. A banquet with industry sponsors providing food at off-site location, a medium-cost event.

Most dollar amounts, such as conference-provided meals, are set in the contract with the hotel. We should be able to put on the banquet for approximately \$50-\$75 per person. In Vermont at RAC 2012, there were approximately 75 attendees for the off-site event estimated on the spreadsheet vs. 100 meeting registrants overall.

Reception

We discussed were to have the reception in conference area or elsewhere in the hotel, such as beside the pool (this might not be a good option in July!), near the vendor booths, or in the top-floor banquet hall. Mark asked if there were any preferences for having it near booths or not.

Audio/Visual

Mark is budgeting for audio/visual for the conference sessions and task force meetings. We do not believe that we will need it for regional unless someone is coming in for a presentation. Mark will ask other regions if they need A/V in their breakout meetings.

Agenda Planning

Theme:

Skip sent everyone three possible ideas for the conference theme:

- Transportation Research 2013 and Beyond: Collaboration, Management, & Deployment
- Program Management and Research Deployment: Best Practices for the Future
- Impacting Tomorrow Through Effective Program Management & Robust Research Deployment

We are going to vote on it, then get approval from the RAC Leadership Group. David asked us to send him our votes by close of business Friday, November 2.

Session Dates/Times/Content

CEO Session--Mark sent the conference agenda planning spreadsheet, and we referred to this. David said that we do not need many more session ideas. We all agreed that we want a CEO session, and MS, KY, and FL agreed to ask their CEOs if they would speak at this session. Darryl suggested that they speak regarding critical issues in transportation. Darryl advised that we ask them to talk about any insights can CEOs give so we can pick the best research with most impact. CEOs will be talking about critical transportation issues at the AASHTO meeting, so this will tie in easily.

Tuesday Afternoon—SHRP2 and Sweet 16: SHRP2 and Sweet 16 will both be plenary, and Mark estimates that we will need 1.5 hours for Sweet 16. HVR Task Force has agreed on and will issue guidelines on standardizing presentations. For SHRP2, we will likely need a TRB member, a state DOT person, and someone from FHWA. David will check with SHRP2, Anne Brach and/or Jerry DiMaggio. One topic of discussion will be the SHRP2 project competitive selection process.

Wednesday Morning—TRB Reps Meeting. This will likely be structured as in years past.

Wednesday Afternoon/Thursday Morning

The spreadsheet currently has Wednesday afternoon with concurrent sessions on peer exchange success stories/project management software. Wednesday 1:00-2:30 on and Thursday 8:00-9:30 am are only chances for concurrent sessions.

The discussion turned to which sessions would be plenary and which would be breakout. Sandra had told Darryl that the main divider in breakout sessions is usually management vs. technical. Joe mentioned that some conferences repeat breakout sessions. We agreed on the following:

- Mike's idea of successful research program attributes (skill sets, future needs) will be a plenary session, not breakout.
- The currently listed concurrent sessions on peer exchange success stories/project management software will remain concurrent.

The successful research program attributes session should include 3 speakers, hopefully with one each of low, medium and high program size/budget. We agreed that the session organizer should guide the speakers to focus on the attributes that make them successful, not just presentations on how each program is structured. It could be arranged for each speaker to have 15-20 minutes to talk, then have questions/comments. Joe volunteered to organize this session.

David will contact TRB for their sessions since he's already contacting TRB re: SHRP2. Elisha will head the peer exchange session since ASHD just had an excellent one.

We agreed that 1.5 hours is enough for Task Force/Regional Business Reports on Thursday, with each presenter taking 10-15 minutes apiece.

Other sessions/organizers include:

RAC/CUTC—Skip said Sandra will try to arrange that.
RAC101-- Skip/Sandra
Opening session—LaDOTD
CEOs—MS, KY, FL will ask.

Action Items:

- Mark Morvant will revise spreadsheet and send out
- Vote on themes and respond within the week. Rank them 1-3, and send votes/rank to David.
- Be thinking about agenda items for the TRB Region 2 breakout meeting in January.
- Next Region 2 conference call is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, November 27th, 2012, at 11:00 Eastern/10:00 am Central Time.