

MINUTES

RAC Region 2 Conference Call 2013 Summer Meeting Planning 9/26/12

Attendees: David Jared (GA), Cindy Smith (MS), Sandra Larson (IA) , Skip Paul (LA), Joe Crabtree (KY), Mark Morvant (LA), Mike Sanders (SC), Darryl Dockstader (FL)

David Jared opened the meeting using last month's planning conference call minutes and action items to start. The two big topics were local arrangements and agenda planning for the 2013 RAC summer meeting in Baton Rouge.

Local arrangements—Mark Morvant mentioned that he had contacted Meghan Wozniak of AASHTO and asked her for information from the previous two conferences in Vermont and Utah. Meghan has sent the registration roster from Burlington, but hasn't sent budget figures for the last two meetings. LDOTD is handling the financial end themselves because this is easier than working through AASHTO. They are budgeting based on what will be collected (registration and vendor fees) and therefore need no seed money. Because of the many conferences LADOTD personnel put on, the Baton Rouge Hilton waived the down payment requirement. Sandra told Mark that any leftover funds from previous years are generally passed on for use for the next conference. Sandra also said that Camille Crichton-Sumners may have budget figures. She advised Mark to try to contact Meghan one more time, and if he does not receive a response from her, to let Sandra know.

Mark will have the budget ready for us in the next few months and hopes to keep the registration costs the same as in previous years. The hotel contract is signed, and LDOTD knows the cost of meals. They are still looking into an off-site event for Tuesday evening. Sandra advised that we take cost and perception ("how would this look on the front page of the paper?") into account when planning the event. Skip said that industry might share in the event costs. LDOTD will present options to the group for input at a later date.

Agenda Planning—Darryll and David discussed agreement on content, then coming up with a theme. We need to consider ideas for session topics and the best order for sessions. David had reviewed last July's agenda, in which the Peer Exchange Success Stories session got bumped for SHPR2, so we would like to include that for 2013. Arkansas had good peer exchange last month and might be a candidate for presenting in this session.

We discussed the time slots for RAC/CUTC and RAC101 on Monday morning vs. those of the task forces and decided that RAC101 will follow RAC/CUTC on Monday morning, then leave the

task forces to the afternoon so people travelling can make them. Skip said that 8-15 new people are usually present at RAC meetings, and with TRB generally paying only for 3 nights, we could look at alternatives such as Sun-Mon-Tues for people who need the early sessions. LDOTD is also planning to record the RAC101 session for future availability on the RAC website.

We discussed again the High-Value Research (HVR) and the fact that a concurrent poster session and reception did not work well before. We would like to revive the 4-minute, rapid-fire Sweet 16 presentations. Posters can still be done at another time. We could do the rapid-fire session on Tuesday, then give the HVR/"Sweet 16" awards on Wednesday lunch in lieu of a local speaker. Mark said that posters are being done for TRB anyway, and that the rapid-fire presentations may generate interest. The posters, while not formally presented, could be displayed and possibly stimulate more conversation.

We talked about for Tuesday afternoon possibly a plenary session for SHRP2 implementation status, success stories, etc. Sandra thinks this is a good idea and said that an article highlighting SHRP2 deployment projects is being prepared. The group thought of dropping the CEO session, but Sandra advised that this session was the highest-rated part of the last two meetings. If we keep the CEO session, we need to come up with guidelines on what to talk about. The panel of CEOs in Salt Lake talked about engaging your CEO in research. One or two CEOs did talk about how they deployed research and solved problems. We need to figure out which CEOs would be interested and willing to come. This will likely be based on research personnel's degree of interaction with CEOs in their agencies and CEO availability. Logistically this session may need to be on Tuesday morning as it was in Vermont, to accommodate the CEO's.

The Tuesday morning welcome session should be tied in with the overall theme. This could be where we introduce the theme for meeting: what are attributes that mark a successful research program, how is that achieved, not one-size-fits-all, attributes in common. This is also a good time to cover the management/deployment theme.

Wednesday afternoon we only need one session—Research Tools (databases etc.), Peer Exchange Success Stories, Future Research Management/Staff Skill Sets—to be decided later. We will leave the time slots for the regional meetings unchanged.

Mark suggested making a matrix for which LDOTD has a template, starting with Burlington's format and the few edits that David has made. We can first input the sessions that are constant from year to year, then figure out the number of slots to fill and topics and who will organize sessions, focusing on the theme and applicable topics. The 2013 TRB annual meeting theme is deploying transportation research.

The only concurrent sessions in Burlington were on Thursday morning, which might not be a good time for this. Wednesday might be better. We could come up with parallel sessions for the Research Tools session, like the Peer Exchange Success Stories. Darryl cautioned that with concurrent sessions we need to keep audiences in mind and take care to ensure there is not

much overlap (e.g., management vs. more hands-on technical). For example, the SHRP2 and HVR sessions don't need to be concurrent, so we may move SHRP2 to Wednesday afternoon. On the topic of research management tools, the Burlington session on this dealt more with tools that were national in scope. For the 2013 summer meeting, we would like to see tools used in the day-to-day management of individual programs.

Skip said that the Administration Task Force suggested having something for new members on Sunday night in which a group of veteran members could greet the new ones and offer to mentor them. This could be in the form of a planned event or just an informal dinner invitation. We need to identify and touch base with those new people who do not have a mentor in Region 2.

Action Items: Mark is going to send out schedule matrix, and everyone will fill in their ideas and send these to David at least a week before the next conference call. David will synthesize the results and distribute them before the call. Due to scheduling conflicts, the next call will be 10/31/12 instead of 10/24/12. Skip said to wear costumes!