

Public Transportation Roundtable Meeting Notes  
January 13, 2009  
Coeur d'Alene Public Library

**Attendees:**

Pearl Bouchard, Area Agency on Aging  
Linda Wilhelm, Post Falls City Council  
Craig Wilcox, DA Davidson/Post Falls Chamber  
Bob Spalding, CDA Tribe  
Andrew Murphy, Citylink  
Marv Lekstrum, LHD/KMPO  
Donna Montgomery, Citizen at Large  
Jeff Hutchinson, Citizen at Large  
Laurie Hassell, Citizen at Large  
Wil Butler, sitting in for Donna Hansen, Citizen at Large  
John Austin, PAC  
Jim Hail, Citizen at Large  
Jim Mangan, WHD/KMPO  
Alan Eirls, Citylink  
Helen Stephens, NICE  
Al Hassell, City of Coeur d'Alene  
Judy Gray, Id. Dept. of Labor  
Carolyn Mattoon, Dirne CHC  
Kelly Brownsberger, PFHD  
Jill Bowes, City of Hayden  
Chris Riffe, City of Rathdrum

**KMPO Staff:**

Carole Richardson  
Jenny Wash  
Staci Lehman  
Ryan Stewart

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Pearl Bouchard welcomed attendees and thanked them for attending. Attendees went around the room and introduced themselves.

**2. Approval of the October 14, 2008 Minutes**

**Jim Mangan made a motion to approve the October 14, 2008 meeting minutes. Laurie Hassell seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.**

**3. Public Comments**

No comments were given.

## **4. Old Business**

### **a. IMAP Update**

Pearl Bouchard gave an update on Idaho's Mobility Access Plan which is a process that is put together by Idaho Transportation Department Public Transportation's staff. Recently they have acquired a new consultant to work with them called KFH Group with their home office in Bethesda, Maryland and branch office in Seattle. The KFH Group met with the Local Mobility Management Network (LMMN) on Friday the 9<sup>th</sup> of January and had a great turnout. The main purpose for this meeting was to have the group identify the needs we see in the three counties; Benewah, Shoshone and Kootenai County. There was a lot of excellent discussion and the proceeds from this meeting will be coming out the first week in February.

Ms. Bouchard also reported that there will be two meetings coming up in February. One will be a follow up on the LMMN Group to set priorities based on the needs that were identified with possible solutions and another meeting on February 20<sup>th</sup> of the District Coordinating Council. The purpose of this group is to take these three counties (Benewah, Shoshone, and Kootenai County) and the two counties northbound and bring their plans together to see overlap in planning and need. All this is feeding into a plan that will be a state-wide plan for addressing public transportation needs motivated by the fact the Federal Government requires these plans in order to get certain public transportation funding into our state and local communities. The applications for funding will come out after the priorities have been identified.

### **b. Bench and Shelter Committee Update – Craig Wilcox**

Craig Wilcox of the Post Falls Chamber introduced the Bench and Shelter committee members; Linda Wilhelm, Bob Spaulding, Andrew Murphy and Ryan Stewart. He passed around to the PT Roundtable a photo of an ADA approved bench in which he will be proposing to potential sponsors. He also stated the sponsor cost of the bench would be \$450 with a five year warranty on this type of bench shown. A photo of a sample sponsorship plaque was also provided to the members for their review. Mr. Wilcox gave an update on what is needed to get this project up and running. First, is providing the exact location of each bus stop where a bench would be provided. Second is the need for insurance and third is the maintenance issue. He expressed the need to have a 'go to' person, volunteer group, or agency that would be responsible for the maintenance of the benches. The fourth piece that they are addressing is the Title VI requirements for this project. If you give an amenity to one privileged area consideration of other rural routes also needs to be in the plan.

There was a discussion among the group suggesting maintenance solutions, possibly asking for more money to accommodate the urban areas, and talking

with KCATT members to help with planning and the process involved to place benches at the most used stops as well as placing in disadvantaged areas.

### **c. Transit Center Location Study Update – Ryan Stewart**

Ryan Stewart reported on the status of the Transit Center Location Study. KMPO has gone through the request for proposals (RFP) advertisement process and received five proposals from several local and one out of the area consultant firms. A RFP evaluation committee was formed of which Pearl Bouchard, John Austin, and Andrew Murphy sit on and on December 11 they evaluated the proposals. Two of the consultants were equally scored and the team met once again, requested some clarification from the firms and Mr. Stewart stated that he is in the process of checking references. Mr. Stewart also stated that KMPO staff will come back to the Board in February with a recommendation to authorize the Executive Director to negotiate and execute the contract. The timeline for this project is a bit behind schedule, but KMPO staff hopes to have this project done in early summer if not earlier.

Mr. Stewart clarified some questions pertaining to the transit center study stating the study is to identify the location of an intermodal transit facility for all modes of transportation. This includes the connectivity with the bicycle and pedestrian network as well as the proximity to I-90 and US95. He stated that there is an option in the RFP for the analysis of whether a maintenance and vehicle storage facility could be collocated with the transit center or sited in the near vicinity.

### **d. RPTA White Paper – Ryan Stewart**

Ryan Stewart reported that based on the Friday meeting with the KFH Group and LMMN Group needs and priorities that were stated for the LMMN Plan spoke of the need for some sort of regional coordination of public transportation in the area. Based on the request by the Roundtable for a white paper on the foundation of the State of Idaho of a Regional Public Transportation Authority and the feasibility in this region he has prepared a white paper for the group.

Mr. Stewart briefly went through the white paper touching on the legislative history, the ability to form a regional public transportation authority in the State of Idaho and the funding constraints. He stated that there is a chapter in Idaho Code authorizing counties, jurisdictions or regions the ability to form an RPTA. An RPTA is a regional oversight agency to oversee the coordination of public transportation services again within a jurisdiction, county or region. There are two RPTA's in Idaho, Valley Regional Transit and Targhee. Mr. Stewart reported that there is no stipulation in the RPTA Act in Idaho Code for funding of an RPTA and the only way to fund this program currently is from voluntary local contributions from a city, county, or other jurisdictions in that area.

Mr. Stewart indicated there have been several Acts that have been brought forward in the last few legislative sessions for strengthening the RPTA Act or completely rewriting it to allow for a strong consistent and reliable funding mechanism, however, none have been successful and Mr. Stewart states there is a good description pertaining to this in the white paper.

Mr. Stewart also mentioned there are several groups that have been spear heading this effort including the Idaho Task Force on Public Transportation, Interagency Working Group, the Public Transportation Advisory Council (PTAC), Community Transportation Association of Idaho, and the Public Transportation Division of ITD. The white paper also describes other funding mechanisms including, sales tax, property tax, impact fees, vehicle tax, and other excise taxes that could be levied to fund this Authority if the enabled by the state legislature. The recommendations in the white paper are not new ones – they are the recommendations that were adopted by the KMPO Board in the 2005 Public Transportation Plan for the region developed by Nelson Nygaard. Mr. Stewart emphasizes, though, that the recommendation is heavily held back by the lack of a strong funding mechanism at the local level.

Laurie Hassell asked if there is the potential to use stimulus funds to get the transit authority organization formed funded for some period of time until long term funds can be determined. Mr. Stewart states that the stimulus package is heavily capital oriented, but there is an item for transit energy funding to recoup some of the costs of the increase in fuel over the last few years. For now the language does not provide for any kind of long term sustaining revenue source.

Carole Richardson reported that stimulus funds will likely be limited to construction projects; however there may be other funding avenues for assessing the feasibility of an RPTA.

Pearl Bouchard commented on the recommendations not being in any prioritized order and appears that the roundtable may be able to discuss and make a recommendation on rearranging the priorities. Carole Richardson stated that one of the goals from the 2005 Nelson-Nygaard plan was to form an advisory council with representatives of key interest groups to provide the direction to the policy Board. This has been done with the establishment of the PT Roundtable. The rest of the recommendations in the earlier study did deal with the formation of an RPTA including a formation of a Policy Board – Board of Directors for the RPTA and a technical and or citizen advisory group to advise the policy board.

Carole mentioned, since KMPO staff is limited, if the PT Roundtable wants to move public transportation forward in Kootenai County, somehow we need to identify local resources and advocacy for moving an RPTA forward.

The group discussed the need, sources, and suggestions of locating and identifying people in other areas to advocate for their county.

The next step with the white paper would include more discussion with the potential definition of an RPTA area and also, to have a recommendation from the Roundtable on inclusion of jurisdictions, providers, and elected officials.

Pearl Bouchard suggested the February 20 meeting of the District Councils would be a perfect place for more conversation pertaining to the RPTA outside the Kootenai County area. Al Hassell also suggested going to the Mayor's Council of Mayors to approach this subject and provide the RPTA white paper at the meeting.

## **5. New Business**

### **a. Election of Vice Chair**

Pearl Bouchard asked the members to nominate a Vice-Chair in case there may be a meeting she may not be able to attend. Laurie Hassell nominated John Austin and Bob Spaulding nominated Helen Stephens.

**Donna Montgomery moved to have the nominations be closed. Jim Mangan seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.**

Members voted on which nominee they would like as Vice-Chair. KMPO staff member, Staci Lehman, tallied the votes. Pearl Bouchard announced John Austin won the committee vote to be the Vice-Chair of the PT Roundtable.

### **b. KMPO Non-motorized Plan**

Carole Richardson reported that KMPO is starting a county-wide bicycle and pedestrian facility plan. An advisory group is needed and a kick off meeting is scheduled for February 10<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 at the CdA Library. She stated that KMPO's long-range 30 year plan does not currently have a component that deals with bicycles and pedestrians. There will be an assessment of the existing facilities that are available, an analysis of where additional facilities are needed, and strategizing on funding. One of the primary work products KMPO hopes will be a county-wide trails map.

## **6. Good of the Order**

Carole Richardson stated that KMPO has been following discussions in Congress on the stimulus package. The House of Representatives' Transportation and Infrastructure Committee published a list of suggestions for how stimulus money may be distributed around the country. For capital grants \$11M is proposed for urban areas and 9M for rural areas. A special program called transit energy grants has been proposed to give transit providers some

relief from rising costs of fuel and help to buy more fuel efficient or alternative energy transit vehicles.

Ms. Richardson emphasized the need to assemble a list of projects that can be done quickly and are important enough to partake in some of this stimulus money. These projects need to be ready in 90 – 180 days. KMPO's preliminary list includes a \$2M transit facility and a \$55,000 shuttle bus for Citylink. The meeting was open to the members to discuss and suggest other projects to be placed on the potential stimulus list and Ms. Richardson suggested that project items can be emailed to KMPO staff after the meeting as well.

Bob Spaulding announced they received a 5311 Rural Grant for \$225,000 for a second year demand response on the tribal reservation. The grant will be used to purchase a bus and a smaller van which will run Monday through Friday to provide demand response.

Craig Wilcox asked if anyone knows of someone who would be interested in purchasing or sponsoring a bench to let him know. He stated that once they finalize the locations, insurance, maintenance plan and Title VI requirements they will be able to advertise to the public on this effort.

John Austin asked about the potential for a ferry system on the south end of Harrison to be looked at for stimulus funding. Carole Richardson responded that KMPO does not have a feasibility study for the ferry itself and that would probably have to be done first to determine the cost effectiveness of establishing a ferry system. Without this in place the project probably couldn't be delivered in the short time periods proposed for stimulus funding. She did report, though, that in the KMPO work program there is an item to start this feasibility study. It is part of KMPO's transit planning program, however, and KMPO needs to find out the final cost of the transit center study first, to determine whether or not there will be money to start the ferry feasibility study this year or not.

## **7. Action Items for Next Quarter**

Carole Richardson reviewed the action items that will be addressed next quarter:

1. Identify a volunteer to attend February 20<sup>th</sup> meeting of District Coordinated Council.
2. Approach Coeur d'Alene Mayor's Council meeting about an informational session on transit issues and a potential RPTA.
3. Finalize RPTA White Paper
4. Assemble stimulus list for transit by the end of the month
5. Include PT Roundtable members on meeting notice for the non-motorized plan advisory group on Feb 10.

The meeting was adjourned at noon.