

**MINUTES OF MID-YEAR COMMITTEE MEETING  
TRB Committee ABG10, "Conduct of Research"  
MAY 25-26, 2005  
Keck Center  
Washington, D.C.  
Laurie McGinnis, Chair**

**Attendees:**

Laurie, McGinnis, Mark Norman, Kim Ferroni, Michael Bonini, Jason Bittner, Wes Lum, Dick McReynolds, Marci Kenney, Sue Sillick, Lieska Halsey, Monique Evans, Bill Carr, Dena Gray-Fisher, Gary Frederick, Bonnie Osif, Deb Elston, Bill Bannister, Matthew Mabey, Shannon McDonald, Dick Long, Sue Lodahl, Felcia Young, Nelda Bravo, Mark Dunn, Matt Moore, Barbara Harder, Ed Seymour Additional Attendees on Day 2 Chris Hedges, Lisa Pogue

**MAY 25**

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

**Laurie McGinnis**

Laurie McGinnis welcomed committee members and friends in attendance. She remarked how pleased she was about the attendance and how much she was looking forward to the working sessions that had been designed into the agenda. Attendees then introduced themselves, sharing a personal and professional highlight from the past year.

**GOALS FOR MEETING**

McGinnis reminded attendees that the primary objective of the 2005 midyear meeting is to advance the six goals that have been developed by the committee through its strategic planning process. Each team will have time during the working sessions to work on developing and implementing plans for the highest priority strategies.

Teams were asked to make sure that the following was accomplished by the end of the working sessions:

- Modify, add, or eliminate strategies to add detail to the strategic plan, as appropriate. Define the products we want from the strategy and the actions required to deliver the strategies.
- Prioritize the strategies
- Recruit/assign volunteers
- Determine target dates for completion

When determining specific actions to execute the strategies, teams were encouraged to consider proposing a synthesis, writing an NCHRP problem statement, planning a session for the annual meeting, planning a workshop or conference, and creating recommendations to TRB management. McGinnis then challenged the teams to be forward looking and long range in creating some of their strategies.

Each team will document their plans future progress using a template created by Team 3 leaders, Dena Gray-Fisher and Bonnie Osif. In addition, Monique Evans will take the lead on determining the appropriate updates to the Strategic Plan.

## **WORKING SESSIONS**

Teams 2, 4, and 6 met in breakout sessions during the morning. Teams 1, 3, and 5 met in breakout sessions during the afternoon. Each team discussed the draft strategies and action items. Copies of the final action strategies, timelines, and assignments in matrix form will be prepared by each Team Lead and made available on the website.

## **MAY 26**

### **WORKING SESSION TEAM REPORTS**

Reports included an overview of Team break out sessions and additional attention to items that need discussion.

**GOAL TEAM 1** Shannon McDonald, presenter  
*Strengthen research and successful implementation by providing information, programs, and practices on related critical issues.*

Team Lead: Debra Elston

Added one strategy. Last two strategies overlapped with other groups.

Strategy 1: Provide information on quality design, methodologies and approaches.

The group discussed what projects/activities that might be included and felt it was up to the organization to decide. Recommend focusing on the balance of basic and applied research. Theoretical research was identified as a separate category from basic and applied research.

Actions: Identify methodologies for basic, applied and theoretical research. Ed Seymour is the lead for this task and has begun collecting information. It is recommended to use the CoR as a clearinghouse of methodologies. Much of this information is currently available in pamphlets and reports. The web site and outreach activities need to guide people to these available tools. A link needs to be made to FHWA's advance research activities. Jason Bittner and Shannon MacDonald will work with Ed.

Strategy 2. Develop a process and guidelines to review research results and products.

The goal is to improve consistency in review and reward criteria. Bob Benke and Wilf Nixon are proposed as lead and Mark Norman is also a resource for this. Deb Elston will contact them. If a process is in place by August 15<sup>th</sup>, TRB could use it in their paper review for the Annual Meeting. The committee suggested categorizing papers by type of project or product (e.g., market ready or not...). The committee discussed whether a strategy or action item targets tools that help authors improve the quality (expectations) of papers. The committee decided it was a two-step issue and that we can begin by influencing improved quality is through the review process.

The Team removed issues related to reviewing research projects for now but recommend revisiting it in the future.

The group discussed whether the strategy should include guidelines for presentations. The issue has also been raised at the AASHTO Standing Committee on Quality.

Strategy 3 – Foster increased participation through research program peer review and exchanges.

It is recommended that the CoR sponsor a panel session on Peer Exchanges at the 2006 TRB Annual Meeting. The session will discuss lab reviews and peer exchanges. Marci Kenney is lead on this. Monique is a volunteer. An outline has been prepared with identified speakers.

Strategy 4. Actively promote the implementation of research programs through the development of information on how to package research results to be user-friendly.

Decided this belongs to Goal Team 3. The Team did identify a report that should be included in Goal 3.

This Strategy was modified to address research measurement tools beyond NCHRP project 20-63 sponsored by AASHTO's RAC. The intent is to encouraging a broader range of tools. Information from 20-63 needs to be shared with the CoR. Ed Seymour is lead for this.

## **GOAL TEAM 2** Gary Frederick, presenter

*Promote the following seven keys to building a roust research program defined in NCHRP Synthesis of Practice 280: 1) Found in on Trust, 2) Market Boldly, 3) Root it in Economics, 4) Make Deals Unabashedly, 5) Insist on Accountability, 6) Embrace Policy Research, and 7) Empower Staff.*

Team Leads: Gary Frederick and Barbara Harder

Strategy 1 and 3 were combined and reworked to read: Create a series of outreach materials related to the seven keys and make it available or present at appropriate venues and identify and examine issues and conflicts that prevent the seven keys from being fully utilized. Include intro to research as well as CEO level materials. Try to include customer feedback options on the web.

The basic premise is that, in order to promote the 7 keys, we need to get the information out. A question was raised about whether we can do a video streaming session on the 7 keys and other sessions? Mark Norman responded that TRB wants to find ways to use the TRB communications portfolio to do things like this but it is fairly expensive to do this.

When creating marketing tools, the Team felt that electronic media would be better than a road show.

The original NCHRP Report on the 7 Keys (280) is not currently available electronically. Mark will inquire about posting a PDF. Once on the web, links should be established from other websites.

Barbara will look into doing presentation about the 7 Keys at SCOR. Matthew Mabey will look into other e-tools.

Strategy 2 – Plan a series of TRB sessions around the 7 Keys.

The Team felt the trust element should come up annually. The Team will continue to develop more sessions. A panel discussion on performance measures is planned at the 2006 TRB Annual Meeting. Barbara Harder lead on this. There is possible partnership with the performance measurement committee.

FHWA is willing to develop a poster and hand out materials related to the 7 Keys in exhibit area. The pamphlet on the 7 Keys is currently out of print and needs to be reproduced. Mark Norman will look into the timeline for printing up the brochure. The pamphlet could be distributed at the FHWA booth. The committee also discussed including the pamphlet in the registration materials or in the annual meeting book. Mark Norman discouraged this, but didn't say no. The book includes a lot of information already. Other ideas proposed by the committee included:

- to develop a poster session around the 7 keys at a future meeting. The 7 Keys could be illustrated with good project examples.
- Develop brochures for each key.
- Develop a key award.

The 7 Keys have previously received enthusiastic support from some pro-research CEOs at AASHTO. It would be beneficial to target CEOs in our outreach. Wes will talk with Victor Mendez about bringing this up at the fall AASHTO meeting. Bill will take to NASTO, encourages other members to do so with AASHTO regional meetings.

**GOAL TEAM 3** Bonnie Osif and Dena Gray-Fisher, presenters  
*Utilize communication strategies that deliver appropriate information to TRB and other members of the research community in a timely manner.*

Team Leads: Dena Gray-Fisher and Bonnie Osif

Strategy 1 – Collect information and disseminate through inclusion in the website on CoR sponsored activities.

Bonnie Osif will also reach out to other committees in the section to find items of common interest that could be posted on our web site. The Team will also look at archiving tools. Bonnie Osif will work with Education committee to develop TRB session on these tools. Sue Sillick and Bonnie Osif Lead.

Strategy 2 - Coordinate content of the CoR newsletter and website with other committees in the section.

Effort will be made to use the newsletter to reach out to new groups. The Team also will revisit website design. Dena Gray-Fisher and Jason Bittner are the leads for this task.

Strategy 3 - Sponsor an interactive “how to” workshop in cooperation with the Education & Training committee on communication strategies for research managers and administrators at the TRB Annual Meeting.

There is cross over with some of following actions listed below. In addition, the task includes review of the web site and tracking of web site use. Dena Gray-Fisher and Jason Bittner are the leads for this task.

Strategy 4 – The strategy will focus on marketing the T2 toolbox. This product will result from a Pooled Fund project and is 24 months away. Michael Bonini is the lead on this Pooled Fund project on this. The TPF project will be in solicitation soon. Goal 1 also included T2 Toolbox in their team discussion. Additional gaps in research implementation outside of tech transfer need to be kept in mind.

Strategy 5 - Develop a guidance checklist for researchers and research managers on implementation. This will likely be in the T2 Toolbox. Bonnie Osif has collected information from six states. The information will be posted on the web site.

Questions for this task group:

- E-session format: how do you request one?  
Send Mark Norman an email. TRB only produced 12 e-sessions out of 500 sessions in 2005.
- Once e-sessions are posted on site, do they have a shelf life?  
Not decided yet. All still on the site.
- Are pod casts appropriate? (Pod discussion: Using an IPOD to record a discussion and then posting it on a web site for downloading.)  
Mark Norman wasn't sure, TRB has not been asked before. Permissions from those involved would need to be obtained.
- Is it a burden to maintain the website on the server?  
Jason Bittner: It is not a problem at this point. However, the site was not really set up for external marketing tool, but was intended to be a committee site. The new expectations may raise new issues.
- How will we do list management? As we're promoting CoR, we need to think about maintenance of lists.
- A reminder: We need contributions from all members for the website and newsletter. First articles need to come from Goal Team leads.

**GOAL TEAM 4** Jason Bittner, presenter  
*Improve research networks, partnerships and liaison relationships.*

Team Lead: Jason Bittner

The Team Combined Strategies 1, 2, 3 and 5 into a new Strategy 1: Establish liaisons between CoR and transportation research organizations to improve awareness of the breadth of transportation research needs, understand the 7 Keys of a Robust Research Program, and create awareness of research networking tools. Three categories of customers are identified:

1) Transportation research program managers. Specific programs with which to establish liaisons include AASHTO's RAC, CUTC, TIG, and RITA.

- Formally establish liaison role, begin transferring information between committee.

- RAC – Monique Evans
- CUTC – Jason Bittner
- TIG – Kim Feroni
- RITA Planning Team – Bill Bannister

2) The transportation research community. The goal is to market information on research networking tools, the 7 Keys of a Robust Research Program. Lead: Jason Bittner.

- Survey CoR membership and friends for organizations we are involved with in order to identify opportunities to informally liaise.

3) Organizations with which we want to develop partnerships. The goal is to increase awareness of the breadth of transportation research focus areas, the quality of transportation research, and research networking tools. Lead: Leni Oman. Volunteers: Jason, Bittner, Deb Elston, Nelda Bravo, Shannon McDonald. Copy Mark Norman and Laurie McGinnis.

- Develop a session for the 2006 TRB Annual Meeting on Thursday morning to promote networking and discover opportunities for partnering.
- Develop marketing materials to support this action.

Strategy 2: Develop a session at the 2007 TRB Annual Meeting on successful partnerships. The Team discussed how to develop the session (to develop model partnership or to identify projects that demonstrate the elements that have a strong correlation with successful partnerships). More work needs to be done to define our actions steps.

**GOAL TEAM 5** Dick McReynolds, presenter  
*Coordinate research agendas-topics, processes, and activities.*

Team Lead: Dick McReynolds

This goal had 5 strategies; Strategy 4 on the Mid-Year meeting is complete but also transferred to Goal 6.

Strategy 1: Identify and publicize research topic areas and strategies of major organizations using central web site.

Dropped identification of gaps and replaced it with actions which advocate research topic areas to decision makers. The Team planned 3 products, described below. The owner of this task is Matthew Mabey. Leni Oman and Matt Moore are volunteers.

- Develop a web site that includes links to transportation research from major agencies included. Consider establishing a link off TRB Home Page. The Team recommends including most DOTs, modal administrations and other agencies that link to transportation work (such as the Corps of Engineers, DOE, EPA, etc).
- Develop a brochure for wide distribution that describes the research focus areas and improve understanding of transportation research needs: goals are to minimize duplication and leverage funds. This promotes a one-stop shop sort of concept.

- Invigorate the Research in Progress (RiP) data collection. Encourage state DOTs to enter projects. Also encourage UTCs and federal agencies. Jason noted that UTCs don't have direct access to website and need to submit information through states. Also want to encourage non-traditional partners to use RiP to find out what is going on.
- The fourth suggestion did not receive a consensus from the team and will not be developed further at this time. The suggestion is to develop a proposal/problem statement for a project documentation/management database that will improve RiP data. It was suggested the site would include more characteristics of projects and be somewhat like the Pooled Fund web site. Tools would need to be included to automate uploading of data, such as web crawler tools. The Team felt this was a longer term task and will need funding. If we pursue an NCHRP project, we'll need a state sponsor or AASHTO Committee. Another concern was that it's a struggle to get folks to use current web sites.

DISCUSSION: Member states do use the Pooled Fund and RiP sites. It would be good to find ways to link to other organizations research better. It would be nice to have tools to help direct people to the work we are doing. We should investigate if there similar links in other organizations. This is an issue that can be forwarded to RAC and UTCs.

There is a federal site that agencies need to upload information to. Deb Elston will track down the website.

Concerns were raised about long-term maintenance of such a site. Team supporters responded that the idea is to automate system uploading rather than have to re-key data.

Strategy 2: Publish a "how to" guide for researchers and administrators that describes state timelines and research management processes.

The target audience is DOT administrators and the non-DOT community. The guide will build on a WSDOT folio and add data to it. Dick McReynolds is lead for this task.

Strategy 3: Develop a manual to identify and describe all mechanisms available for funding transportation research.

Builds on same concept but will include information from other agencies and get links to funding sources. Dick is lead.

Strategy 5: Compile and publish in the newsletter all available research agendas, processes and activities.

Identify and develop newsletter articles about innovative strategies for research agendas, processes and activities. Some ideas the Team discussed include: how companies format messages in their annual reports (ex: IBM Annual report; other report formats Nina McLawhorn has collected); elements of the WSDOT folios. Shannon MacDonald also mentioned a NJDOT's project that would be pretty innovative.

**GOAL TEAM 6** Michael Bonini, presenter  
*Ensure a qualified, diverse and active committee.*

The Team reviewed strategies for the goal, prioritized them, and identified actions and owners of each action, and set target dates for completion.

The first priority of the Goal is to increase participation in the committee. Each committee has 25 members, we currently have 20 filled. The Team looked at start dates – who's incoming and leaving. CoR has 1 to 3 members that will be rotating off in the next year. The goal for membership is eight government representatives, eight Academicians, eight representatives from the private sector, two international members, and two young members.

Also the Team looked at geographic distribution of membership. Want to know not only where they work but what they do within the organization to promote diversity – looking for folks that are involved with functions in support of the committee work. The Team will develop a matrix to capture member characteristics and will be updating the sign up sheet in order to capture more data.

The Goal is to identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities/resources. The Team will also review TRB committee lists for modal connectors and will check to see if the other committees have strategies to identify new members. They also discussed that government might include other types of government organizations rather than just transportation. Membership may include other organizations such as professional societies or non-profit organizations. To improve geographic distribution, the CoR will be targeting West Coast participation. Michael Bonini is the lead for this task.

Strategy 5 – Assign an existing committee member to all new members to serve as a mentor.

Bonnie Osif will lead this task. Specific actions include: Review TRB committees and outside organizations for mentoring programs. Establish pairing, the intent is to identify committee members who are willing to mentor new members. In particular, members who are interested in serving as mentor to international members. Hope to have mentors available for the 2006 mid-year meeting. The Team will consider time/place that encourage attendance of new members and the mentors. The Team considered the Section meeting or NRAC meeting. CoR members do want to partner the committee meeting with the TRB State Rep meeting when possible.

Discussion: Encouraged to develop mentors for friends of the committee, not just members – perhaps as part of succession planning.

TRB's goal is to automate the membership process and to link to resources such as marketing.

The Team added a strategy – *Well designed mid-year committee meetings not only for CoR but all committees.* Michael Bonini and Laurie McGinnis will create an informational packet for new members and friends that will include the CoR newsletter, Section information, and agendas/notes. This material will also be used as part of mentoring program and marketing efforts.

Discussion: We should investigate interest in teleconferencing/video conferencing. The Tech Transfer Committee has a document on how to get involved – both for Annual meeting and Midyear meeting that we should review. The sign in sheet should gathering information on a person's willingness to participate. A model to consider is the RAC 101 prepared by NCHRP to

assist new members (serving as staff to the National RAC). Mentor volunteers: Bonnie Osif, Monique Evans, Sue Sillick, Laurie McGinnis, Leni Oman, Dick McReynolds.

## **NEXT STEPS/FOLLOW UP**

Team leaders need to complete their initial matrix by June 10.

CoR decided to work with the strategies and action items that we have now rather than adding new items. The strategies and action items will not be reworked until next year – and this is intended to be tweaking. The Strategic Plan needs to keep completed items and postponed items on the list so we have a living history. In two years, coincident with the TRB State Rep meeting, CoR will conduct a more extensive review/rework.

## **POTENTIAL 2006 ANNUAL MEETING SESSIONS**

Next year's Annual Meeting theme will be "Transportation 2025 – Getting There from Here." Demographic, economic and technology trends; putting research results into practice; 12 cross cutting issues are all areas for potential sessions. Committee millennium papers are another source.

Sessions proposed include:

Team 4 – Session on extending the partnerships

Team 2 – 7 Keys session

Team 1 – Peer review

Team 3 – How to use technology for presentation management on the web. Education committee may be a co-sponsor.

Need descriptions of these sessions to Laurie by **June 15<sup>th</sup>** for forwarding to TRB. Let Laurie also know if the session should be an e-session.

## **WEBSITE NEEDS IDENTIFIED**

What's new

Each team

Conference presentations

7 Keys

presentations

reports

brochure

e-cast of 20-63

Who We Are

Mission

Membership

Member profile

Contact

How to Join

Resources

Other links  
Strategic Plan  
Meetings –  
    Agenda  
    Timing (ours and others)  
    Minutes  
Newsletter  
Mentor  
Research Contacts (clearinghouse)  
Research Methods, Review Processes, Funding

Committee info will be accessed through a link

Recommend that a link be made from the TRB Home Page lefthand nav bar to the Transportation Research Resources (how to do quality research, contacts and clearinghouse).

Be aware of the two types of information on web site:

    Committee work (primary objective)  
    Education of the transportation community (also important but second step)

Need to identify others that will support Jason in web page design and management. Initial design team is Jason, Dena, and Laurie. Team Leads will support the Design Team. Team Leads will gather info from their teams.

## **TRB STAFF REPORT**

**Mark Norman**

In his report, Mark Norman provided a handout on what's new at TRB. One issue of note: TRB has a Technical Committee looking at the TR News and paper review process. The impetus was a number of concerns presented by academic community and issues associated with tenure, etc. The Technical Committee surveyed academic and practitioner communities. Survey results found both communities agreed except for the final destination of papers (presentation only or publication in TR News). Recommendations have been developed and final decision will be made at committee meeting in Woods Hole in June. Proposals included substantially changing *TR News* but the Technical Committee decided not to do so. It was determined that the value added of combining practitioner and academia together was greater than issues suggesting change. The Technical Committee also plans to keep a paper copy. Users are not ready for an electronic version only.

The process of accepting presentations and publishing a portion of them will be maintained. The Technical Committee discussed conducting double blind rather than single blind review. The Committee leaned toward double blind but after further consideration and process issues, decided to stick with single blind process. They will also continue with the current review process rather than develop a continuous review process (volunteer chairs did not feel continuous was manageable). Thirty percent of papers are accepted for publication, the Committee felt this was adequate. So the general direction is to fundamentally retain *TR News* processes. Some steps will be taken to address concerns of academia. A new task force will be established for

ongoing guidance and will include academia and practitioners. An outreach activity will be developed to explain the process to academia for purposes of how it fits in to tenure decisions. Other improvements include guidance on review process to improve consistency in quality, improved access to TRR papers on the web to facilitate electronic access and ways to improve ISI factor (number of times references are made). In light of this, sponsors now have full access to papers back to 1996 (about 5000 papers). Author access will also be provided through a secure website.

Statistics on annual meeting were included in written reports.

Mark also provided updates on services to sponsors and updated list of staff leads in Division A.

## **RESEARCH AND EDUCATION SECTION REPORT**

**Wes Lum and Bill Carr**

We are part of Policy and Operation Group (POG). The new chair of POG is Bob Johns. This committee sponsors the Wooten Award on Policy Achievement. They have been talking about the triennial strategic plan updates – CoR will need to do one in a year.

Critical issues – work force has been identified as a topic for discussion at 2006. Also one on Collaborative Government.

There is a document on the TRB web page on principles of working with volunteers (under Leadership Guide).

Anne Canby gave a report – poster sessions have been working well and, in fact, are getting better air time with presenters than regular sessions.

Still need to improve the diversity of TRB committees – particularly with young people.

Need to find a way to provide travel for young participants – need scholarship or sponsor presenters for emerging professionals.

## **REVIEW OF 2005 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES**

**Laurie McGinnis**

Ms. McGinnis asked if anyone had questions about the minutes from the 2005 annual meeting that were distributed in February. With no questions, the minutes were approved. She thanked Monique Evans for preparing the minutes of the meeting.

## **ROUND ROBIN**

Not conducted due to time constraints.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Ms. McGinnis thanked members and friends for their participation and adjourned the meeting.