

MINUTES OF THE SAFETY AND EMERGING ISSUES COMMITTEE  
NORTH CAROLINA BOARD OF TRANSPORTATION  
RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA  
October 7, 2009

* Bob Collier, Chairman	Conrad Burrell	John Collett
* Andrew Perkins	* Wanda Proffitt	Nina Szlosberg
* Stan White		* In Attendance

\* Also attending: BOT Chairman Doug Galyon, Arnold Lakey, and Gus Tulloss

The meeting of the Safety and Emerging Issues Committee was called to order by Chairman Collier and the September 2, 2009, minutes were unanimously approved.

Betsy Williams, Powell Bill Program Administrator provided handouts and gave a presentation on the 2009 Powell Bill allocations. The Powell Bill Program has grown from the 1951 first allocation of \$4.5 M distributed to 386 municipalities to the 2009 allocation of \$131 M distributed to 507 municipalities. Over the years the tax on each gallon of gas has gone from ½ cent per gallon, to present of 1-3/4 cents tax on each gallon of motor fuel. Each year on May 1<sup>st</sup> a qualifying package is mailed to each participating municipality and an informational package is mailed to each non-participating incorporated municipality. At this time, there are 507 municipalities in the program and 44 incorporated municipalities that do not receive Powell Bill Allocation, either by choice or they do not meet the criteria to receive funding. Once each municipality establishes its eligibility, the allocation is issued by check or electronic transfer by October 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. The municipalities are pleased that they have received some funds; they were less than last year due to the economy and we hope this will increase over the next year. Of the amount available for allocation, 75% of funds are based on annual estimated population certified from the Secretary of Revenue by the Office of State Planning. The total population for 2009 was 5,050,664 an increase of 3.46% from previous year; 25% of funds allocated are based on certified miles maintained by the municipality. For 2009 a total of 21,664.57 miles were maintained by the municipalities with a 1.55% increase from the previous year. The Powell Bill allocation for 2009 was \$131,798,133.63 distributed to 507 municipalities, making the per capita \$19.57 and per mile \$1,520.89. The Powell Bill funds shall be expended for the purpose of maintaining, repairing, constructing, reconstructing, widening of local streets, traffic control devices, and sidewalks within the corporate limits that are the responsibility of the municipalities. Legislation was also passed to allow municipalities to use Powell Bill funds on the State TIP Program. Each municipality large or small can take their allocation and accumulate their funds up to 10 years; this is how the smaller municipalities are able to do a larger project. A Powell Bill street can be dirt, gravel, or paved with an average width of 16ft and open to be used by the general public at all times. Ms. Williams discussed in detail the purposes for which Powell Bill funds can and cannot be used.

Kevin Lacy, State Traffic Engineer gave some background information, provided handouts, and introduced the two speakers. Joel Cranford, Municipal and School Transportation Engineer discussed the Federal Safe Routes to School Program and Sarah O'Brien, Interim Safe Routes to School Coordinator discussed the NC Safe Routes to School Program. Federal Safe Routes to School Program was created by SAFETEA-LU in 2005 which allocated \$612 M to states for 2005-2009. The funds were for infrastructure and non-infrastructure around elementary and middle schools in a two mile radius. NC was given \$15.6 M; it is 100% grant with no local match required. At least 70% must be spent on infrastructure and at least 10% must be spent on non-infrastructure which leaves the other to be shared between the two. Purpose of the program: 1) enable and encourage children to walk/bike to school, 2) make biking/walking to school safer and more appealing, thereby encouraging

a healthy and active lifestyle, and 3) facilitate projects and activities in the vicinity of schools that will improve safety and reduce traffic, air pollution, and fuel consumption. International Walk to School Day is today, October 7th and we have several schools in NC participating. Fewer kids are biking and walking and more parents are driving. Mr. Cranford discussed the FHWA program guidelines and desired outcomes. Every school faces a different challenge. The elements of Safe Routes to School Programs include: 1) Engineering, 2) Education, 3) Encouragement, 4) Enforcement, and 5) Evaluation. Mr. Cranford discussed the 5 E's in detail. North Carolina has been working on their Safe Routes to School Program since 2005-2006. North Carolina's Program has 4 components for municipalities and organizations across the State to participate in the Safe Routes to School Program: 1) Competitive Grant Reimbursement Program, 2) Division Fund Program, 3) Action Plan Service Award, and 4) Community Workshops. Ms. O'Brien discussed each in detail. Status of where we are today with the program: Competitive Grant Reimbursement Program: 1<sup>st</sup> cycle – 6 demonstration projects, 5 non-infrastructure projects, 16 action plan service awards; 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle – 13 infrastructure projects, 9 non-infrastructure projects. Division Fund Program: 42 project requests received, 13 projects approved, all Divisions have submitted at least one request. Program Status: 196 schools impacted, 5.54 M infrastructure awarded, \$992 K non-infrastructure awarded, 2 non-infrastructure projects complete in Shelby and Davidson, 1 infrastructure project complete in Division 14.

Rodger Rochelle, Manager Transportation Management Branch provided a synopsis and gave a presentation on public private partnership for staffing at Randolph County Visitor Centers. General Statute 136 requires that we concurrently notify the BOT, Chairs of Senate and House Appropriations Committees, and Chairs of Joint Transportation Oversight Committee; we have done that and we have implemented a public private partnership approach to visitor center staffing in Randolph County on I-73/I-74. Following our procedures, we advertised the project and received two proposals from interested vendors. We had a Technical Review Committee thoroughly evaluate these proposals and came to a consensus on the highest ranked proposal; we are currently in the process of negotiating final terms of that agreement. The highest ranked proposer was Safety Concierge Services, which is 100% female owned historically utilized business located in Asheboro, NC. Under this proposed agreement Safety Concierge Services will staff the visitor centers 362 days a year with extended hours during the summer travel peak periods and special events. They will also provide security, custodial, and maintenance services at these two visitor centers and they intend to provide free traveler related information as well as the possibility of Wi-Fi service at the visitor grounds. They are going to assist the traveling public with travel related information including travel alerts as well as tourist attraction information. These services will all be provided free of charge to the Department; in exchange the DOT will allow use of a limited amount of space at the visitor centers for them to operate and to display sponsor related information, all travel related information. The sponsors will be contacted by Safety Concierge Services; they will pay the vendor for displaying their materials. The sponsors in effect are funding the vendor's cost to maintain and staff the visitor centers. Chairman Collier will be reporting this to the Finance and Programming Committee this afternoon as the state law requires it to be reported to the full Board.

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:40 am.

Respectively Submitted,

Tonya B. Morgan