TEXAS TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING

Friday,
February 25, 2011

Room 1A.1
200 East Riverside Drive
Austin, Texas

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

MICHELLE BLOOMER, Chair
AL ABESON
GLENN GADBOIS
J.R. SALAZAR
BRAD UNDERWOOD

TxDOT STAFF PRESENT:

ERIC GLEASON
GINNIE MAYLE
INDEX

AGENDA ITEM                  PAGE
1. Call to Order 3
2. Recognition of service for the members whose terms expired September 30, 2010 and welcome to newly appointed members 3
3. In accordance with 43 TAC Section 1.82(b)(1), elect chair 4
4. In accordance with 43 TAC Section 1.82(b)(1), elect vice chair 4
5. Approval of minutes from September 8, 2010 meeting 6
6. Discussion and possible action on PTAC Work Plan as relates to Transportation Code Section 455.004(a)(1), which charges PTAC with advising the commission on the needs and problems of the state's public transportation providers, including the methods for allocating state public transportation money 22
7. Division Director's Report to the Committee regarding public transportation matters, including an update on items the department has been involved with and a recap of Texas Transportation Commission action regarding public transportation projects
8. Public Comment 52
9. Confirm date of next meeting 52
10. Adjourn 53
MR. GLEASON: I'm going to get the meeting underway, and then we'll go right into our first order of business, and elect our chair and vice-chair. But I'd like to call the February 25 meeting of the Public Transportation Advisory Committee to order.

My name is Eric Gleason. I'm the Director of the Public Transportation Division at TxDOT. Before we go into the agenda, I do want to recognize those folks whose terms did expire in September of last year, and who have not been reappointed to the committee -- Frank Castellanos, Vince Huerta and Janet Everheart, and thank the three of them for their service.

And just as an update for the folks, on membership, we are still looking for two appointments out of the Lieutenant Governor's office and one appointment out of the Speaker's office. So I'm hoping that those will be forthcoming. But I'm not sure where my expectations should be with that, now that the session is underway. Anyways, let's go on, number 2.

Let's go on to number 3 and our first order of business for the meeting, in accordance with the TAC, will be to elect a chair, and so I'm thinking that I'll open the floor for nominations and if you make a nomination, I'll need a second. So, nominations. Glenn.
MR. GADBOIS: I'd like to nominate our well-practiced past chair to continue, Michelle Bloomer.

MR. GLEASON: Michelle Bloomer. Do I have a second?

MR. SALAZAR: This is J.R. I will second.

MR. GLEASON: Do we have other nominations?

(No response.)

MR. GLEASON: Hearing none, can I have a vote?

All those in favor of Michelle Bloomer being chair of the committee?

(A chorus of ayes.)

MR. GLEASON: All right. We have four ayes and one abstain, and I guess at this point I can turn the meeting over to you, Michelle, since we now have a chair.

MS. BLOOMER: All right. Thank you, Eric.

MR. GLEASON: Congratulations. All right.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. Then moving on item 4, electing a vice-chair. I'm sorry.

MR. ABESON: Congratulations, Michelle.

MS. BLOOMER: Thank you, Al.

MR. GLEASON: Al, this is Eric. We are going to have to ask you to speak up if you can. We have a court reporter here. It is a little hard to hear you.

VOICE: Can you turn up the volume.

MR. GLEASON: We are going to up the mike.
MR. ABESON: Okay. I will.

MR. GLEASON: There you go. That's perfect.

MS. BLOOMER: Wow. Okay. Item 4, electing a vice-chair in accordance with the TAC. Do I have any nominations for a vice-chair?

MR. ABESON: I'd like to nominate J.R.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. We have a nomination for J.R. from Al, and do I have a second?

(Simultaneous discussion.)

MR. UNDERWOOD: I'll second.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. We have a second from Brad. All those in favor say aye.

(A chorus of ayes.)

MS. BLOOMER: Anybody opposed?

(No response.)

MS. BLOOMER: No. Okay. We have a chair and a vice-chair.

MR. SALAZAR: Thank you very much.

MS. BLOOMER: All right.

MR. ABESON: Congratulations.

MR. SALAZAR: Thank you.

MS. BLOOMER: Congratulations.

MR. UNDERWOOD: We guess. Yes.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. Moving along, item 5 on the agenda is approval of the minutes from the September
8, 2010 meeting. Do I have a motion to approve the
minutes?

MR. SALAZAR: This is J.R. I move to approve.

MS. BLOOMER: And do I have a second?

MR. ABESON: Is that all? Yes.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. I have a motion and a
second. All those in favor?

(A chorus of ayes.)

MS. BLOOMER: Anybody opposed?

(No response.)

MS. BLOOMER: The minutes pass. All right.

Item 6.

(Simultaneous discussion.)

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. We are going to go ahead
and skip item 6 and go right to item 7, the Division
Director's report, and then we'll come back and open it up
for discussion on item 6. Eric.

MR. GLEASON: Good morning, and welcome to our
new members, Brad and Glenn.

MR. UNDERWOOD: Thank you.

MR. GADBOIS: Thank you.

MR. GLEASON: We sent out a Director's Report
as is our custom. It is -- fundamentally, it is just a
summary of recent commission action, and I won't go over
that in too much detail.
We did have a good day at the commission yesterday, with four minute orders passing, and the significance of that is, that two of them actually begin to get out the federal fiscal year '11 funding, based on Congressional continuing resolutions.

And we were waiting for apportionments to come out from the Federal Transit Administration. We got those, I think the second week of February, and so, now that the CR is almost done, we have got the ability to spend the money associated with that.

And then, as in past years when the balance of the apportionments come down, we'll get that out as quickly as we can. We did structure the 5311 minute order in a way where I do not need to go back to the commission to award the balance of those funds. They did approve the ultimate allocation of the 20.1 million.

And so, once we get those, we'll be able to just modify the agreements that we have. Just amend those to include them.

MR. GADBOIS: And Eric, the continuing resolution was six months? Is that --

MR. GLEASON: I actually think it was through March 4.

MR. GADBOIS: Okay.

MR. GLEASON: It is about five months, really.

ON THE RECORD REPORTING
(512) 450-0342
It is like 42 percent or 43 percent of the year and that is actually exactly what they have done, I believe the last two years. It has been like that and so, we'll continue to move ahead on those apportionments at they come out.

We are not -- we don't have anything scheduled for the commission at either the March or the April meetings. There are some rail related that are, I think, being finalized in April.

I'm not sure that those deal with anything of significance to the public transportation arena. They are related to the Department having established the Rail Division, trying to get all of the rules in one place for that.

So a little bit about TxDOT reorganization. I'm sure that all of you are aware of the conversations and the recommendations of the Restructure Council that have been presented to the commission. You know, what I'll say about that for this committee is that, if you follow the history, beginning with Grant Thornton and their recommendations.

And then you look at the Restructure Council recommendations from a public transportation standpoint, I would highlight that they are in -- in the Grant Thornton recommendation, the Public Transportation Division.

ON THE RECORD REPORTING
(512) 450-0342
responsibilities were merged with Aviation and Waterways into a new division. In the Restructure Council recommendation, the Aviation and the Public Transportation Division remain as separate divisions.

And the report calls for an increased emphasis on activities, including public transportation, as a part of the future for the Department. So I think it is an encouraging step forward and it is consistent with conversations at the Department with respect to the strategic plan as well.

You know, I'm not going to get into some of the administrative changes, and things like that. I think you all can follow that on your own, but I think from a policy standpoint, I thought that was significant.

I'll mention that -- we have talked about this in the past. The Department and the rural and small urban providers have been working on a Texas Transit Leadership Initiative now for I guess, almost two years. A year and a half to two years now.

One element of that was a leadership seminar that was conducted by the Eno Center for Transportation Leadership. We had our first seminar in October, with a follow up day in January. So we have completed that.

We have 24 leaders from rural and small urban systems who have finished that training and the feedback
we are getting, the evaluations we are getting, suggest that we really hit the mark in terms of the content, and the instructors and all of that.

So we are moving to provide a second seminar session later on, this calendar year probably, again, beginning in October, and then, with a follow up, one to two-day session in January. So we are very encouraged by that.

MR. GADBOIS: Eric, this is Gadbois. The seminar content, since I'm not familiar with that. What was it?

MR. GLEASON: Yes. It is -- how we got to the content Glenn was, we actually spent time surveying existing leadership skills and background. So we knew what folks brought to the table and then we looked at what already existed out there from a leadership training standpoint and we tried to create something that was different than that.

And really, I think the key thing about it, and the key uniqueness to it is that it is a leadership training seminar that really is focused on individuals kind of discovering for themselves the strengths and weaknesses they have in leadership. Rather than coming to the table with you know, Seven Habits of Effective Leaders.
Now, there is nothing wrong with that approach, but there is a lot of that out there and so, we didn't want to duplicate that. We were trying to do something different and so they talked about a lot of things like, strategic planning and workforce development, and performance measurement.

But they do it in ways that, I think, really helps them understand for themselves as individuals how they want to approach it. There is also an individual leadership skill assessment that is done and we provide four hours in total of individualized coaching for each participant with Barbara Gannon from the Eno Center for Leadership, and her assistant, Paula Kellogg.

So there is a lot of individualized things and that is the really distinctive part of it.

MR. SALAZAR: And I was actually one of those. This is J.R. I was one in the leadership seminar and I agree with everything that Eric was just saying. It was fantastic. It was very reflective, and Ginnie was there as well.

And it really gave us time to look and focus in on what we have going and just to see how we go about our day and how we become more productive and less stressful, and there are so many things that can go on and go on, but I can tell you, it was just -- as a matter of fact, Brad
and I were talking about that this morning. It was fantastic.

MR. UNDERWOOD: I had not -- I did not attend this one, but I helped work on that. I was -- this is Brad Underwood. I forget to say who I am here, but anyway, I have been a part of the Eno Foundation.

I attended that last April, and just from a whole -- Dr. Gannon and the whole Eno Foundation is considered as a premier leader, industry leader in training and coaching and I think it is a great program. I was very pleased.

I had a staff member that attended. My operations director -- and she still, to this day, is implementing some of the things that she learned in October, and bringing that back to our staff as well. And I can't say enough good things about it. I thought it was a huge thing, a huge step in the right direction.

MR. GLEASON: Brad attended a national version of this that Eno has run for some time now and we just took it and kind of crafted it for Texas.

MR. GADBOIS: All right. So to summarize, this is Gadbois. To summarize, and make sure that I have got it right, the objective is to help the leadership in transit agencies around this state to have the opportunity
to hone skills and tools and kind of rethink innovatively about how they do leadership.

And you all found that incredibly helpful in doing that. Is that an accurate summary? Okay.

MR. UNDERWOOD: That got it perfect.

Absolutely.

MR. ABESON: Related in some ways. Is there anything going on in terms of recruiting people to the field of public transit?

MR. GLEASON: Al, this is Eric.

MR. ABESON: Yes.

MR. GLEASON: Not from the state level. Not from my standpoint. We have talked. I have an advisory committee of seven, I think it is seven leaders, who are helping us design this transit leadership initiative, of which the seminar is just one piece.

A whole other area that we have talked about, but we have not really moved out on, is this recognition that we need to have some sort of a deliberate and strategic emphasis on bringing people into the industry. Beginning with community colleges and college programs.

And then actually ultimately this leadership initiative is a program that is really there for the entire spectrum if you will, the entire length of their leadership career. So there is a recognition that we need
to do and I don't know to what extent at the individual agency level. Agencies might be going out and recruiting.

MS. BLOOMER: This is Michelle.

MR. ABESON: I guess that is potentially an area of needing yet to be dealt with. Is that correct?

MR. GLEASON: Yes. And we have a lot on our plate. But yes, that is one area that the committee, I think, really, there is a lot of energy around that.

And it is just -- it is not only for leadership. I think there is a real recognition that at all levels within the organization, there is a need to try and deliberately cultivate, particularly with our community colleges workforce, for transit.

MR. ABESON: Thank you.

MS. BLOOMER: And this is Michelle. I was just going to say, I think you hit on something. I think that is also an important area is, how do we get people interested in the transit field, and how do we really get the process for -- I mean, I don't know how many people grow up and say, one day I want to be a transit manager.

And I don't know how it is in other parts of the state, but I know in our region, we just -- we have two new executive directors that don't have a transit background.

And so how do we get people who say, I want to
be a transit manager, or a executive director of a transit
agency, and then how do we give them the skills that if
they don't necessarily come from that background, to be
able to fit in with all of the funding programs, and
everything they need to know? Okay.

MR. UNDERWOOD: And Michelle, just to add to
that comment, I believe that we first -- this is Brad
Underwood. We started that process.

I think it was a very high number of survey
around this -- was it only like 83 percent of the people
that are executive directors or presidents of
organizations did not have a transit background. I mean,
they didn't plan on going into transit. They just kind of
found themselves there for whatever circumstances. I
think you make a very valid point, though.

MS. BLOOMER: And just to add on to that. This
is Michelle again. What we find as staff of an MPO is, we
spend a lot of our time sort of reeducating. It is to the
point where we have gotten down the “We are the MPO. This
is how you get your funding. This is your TIP, the STIP,
the cycle down.”

Because every time a new executive director
comes in, the transit manager or somebody will bring them
in, and we'll, you know, try to -- but that is trying to
cram about ten years of information and knowledge into an
hour and a half meeting.

And so it is constantly trying to inform and educate and help them through that process. So anything we can do to ease that transition would be beneficial. Are there any questions for Eric?

MR. GADBOIS: I want to go back to one, and hopefully this is a quick question and not a huge discussion. The Rail Division.

MR. GLEASON: Okay.

MR. GADBOIS: The Rail Division. Do they have an advisory committee for the Rail Division?

MR. GLEASON: I do not believe that they do.

MR. GADBOIS: Okay.

MR. GLEASON: But --

MR. GADBOIS: Here is the corner of my question is, the Rail Division does more than public transportation. They deal with the freight side of things. Historically, that is most of what they have done.

But they are getting into the business more and more of public transportation and, at a minimum, the question is, what conversations have you all had about coordinating you know, PTN and our work with Rail Division and their work.

MR. GLEASON: This is Eric. I have had one
conversation with administration on this exact issue, anticipating down the road that as the Rail Division got into what I would consider to be public transportation issues as well, not being necessarily divided you know, bus versus rail. I mean, it is public transportation.

I thought that we needed to think about this committee as an appropriate place for policy type conversations as it relates to that portion of the Rail Division. Because you're right. A lot of it is freight side stuff, and all of that. In fact arguably, the majority of this.

But there is this -- everyone is really excited right now about high speed rail, and the passenger side of things and so I'll have that conversation again and mention that it was brought up here, and the next time we'll meet, I'll report back on what I --

MR. GADBOIS: Well, and the mass model is almost always walking transit, rubber tire transit or something like that.

MR. GLEASON: Integration.

MR. GADBOIS: They are not real into the integration, and especially, you know -- I mean it can be better in a number of different ways.

If they already have an advisory committee, you know, you could do it one way; if they don't have one, you

ON THE RECORD REPORTING
(512) 450-0342
can do it another. I'm just wanting to encourage you to think about and have those conversations and you know, talk to us as appropriate.

MR. GLEASON: Why don't we -- actually, that could be a great transition into our next agenda item as something of interest to the committee, and so --

MS. BLOOMER: Can I, before you move on to number seven, can I just ask the question, to follow up to the commission action on the 5311 yesterday?

MR. GLEASON: Yes.

(Simultaneous discussion.)

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. I slept since we did all of the work regarding the 20.1 million and above and I just wasn't sure in reading the minute order, and then seeing the funding amount. I know we don't exactly how much money the state will get in 5311 money, but wanted to know how we were addressing -- because it is in the Administrative Code now, correct?

MR. GLEASON: Correct.

MS. BLOOMER: The twenty. So we are going to award the 20.1 million based on the existing formula, and then the difference between the 15 percent for inner city bus, but up to 15 percent for TxDOT admin, but no more than 10 percent for commission discretionary --

MR. GLEASON: Of the overall.
1 MS. BLOOMER: Of the overall.
2 MR. GLEASON: Including the 20.1 million.
3 MS. BLOOMER: Right. The 10 percent is taken
4 off the top.
5 MR. GLEASON: Right.
6 MS. BLOOMER: What do we know, if any, will be
7 left between the 20.1 and all of the set asides, and when
8 will that be distributed?
9 MR. GADBOIS: If I can, just to catch up.
10 Because even this wasn't clear. Did the commission
11 approve the PTAC's recommendation on the cap for
12 discretionary? I mean, is --
13 MR. GLEASON: Yes. It wasn't furnished that
14 way, but, yes. The way it generally releases, that of the
15 total amount available for distribution to the rural
16 transit program. So minus administrative expenses, minus
17 15 percent set-aside for inner city bus. So the total
18 remaining amount available, no more than 10 percent can
19 be --
20 MR. GADBOIS: That is passed as a minute order?
21 MR. GLEASON: Yes.
22 MR. GADBOIS: Okay.
23 MR. GLEASON: So that is in the Administrative
24 Code now. That is a rule, and so, whatever year, that
25 leaves us with a question. It says, no more than 10
percent. So how much is the actual amount.

And that is actually a topic. I'm not sure I have got it down here, but I think it is a great area of policy conversation for this group to have. In terms of when we might be in a position to know. It is whenever the balance of the apportionments come out.

I would not anticipate having to make a decision at the commission level before May. Just the way things have rolled out the last couple of year. I don't think we'll be in a position any sooner than that. So we have got some time to talk about that.

MS. BLOOMER: And that is not the commission discretionary part? That is the --

MR. GLEASON: That is right. It is how do we get our arms each year around, is it 90 percent? Is it 93 percent? Is it 97 percent? Because it can be -- it just says that the discretionary amount can be no more than 10 percent. So it leaves that open every year for discussion.

MS. BLOOMER: As to what? Up to the 10 percent we take for commission discretionary. Which then determines how much you have left to --

MR. GLEASON: Right. And so I think it would be appropriate, and, actually, why don't we just shift to the next item.
MR. GADBOIS: Well, can we not, for just a second? Because my understanding of this item is this gives us great flexibility for discussion. So if we can, let's just stay here.

MR. GLEASON: Actually, okay. Well, this or the second one.

MR. GADBOIS: Okay. But let's just stay here for a second to make sure that everybody is comfortable with that conversation.

MR. GLEASON: Let me just -- we can talk about topics. We can't do anything that looks like any kind of --

MR. GADBOIS: What? And all I'm looking for is catch up exploration, thinking about it. So on the commission -- on the Code now, regarding commission discretion, are there any parameters for how that discretionary money can be used, besides that it must be for public transportation?

MR. GLEASON: Not on how it can be used. And we call it commission discretion, and I have always taken a little bit of exception to that. Because the commission has to distribute it either on a pro rata basis, or as a result of a competitive call. Discretion suggests that they can just decide.

MR. GADBOIS: Right.
MR. GLEASON: So I'm okay with that.

MR. GADBOIS: Okay.

MR. GLEASON: But sometimes, that communicates a little more latitude than they have.

MR. GADBOIS: So the only restrictions are, as I understand it, that it has got to be for public transportation, that the commission has to make a decision on that particular pot of money and that it either goes pro rata or for a competitive call.

MR. GLEASON: It has to be for a non-urban area, public transportation.

MR. GADBOIS: Non-urban? Okay. And those are really the only four restrictions?

MR. GLEASON: For all practical purposes.

MR. GADBOIS: Okay. Perfect. Thank you.

MS. BLOOMER: And, I think, with that, we'll move into item 7 or 6, the next one, which is a discussion of our possible work plan, and I think we can discuss similar of the topics in general.

One thing I did want to throw out, though, to think about is, last time what we did -- and I think it would be beneficial, as we have sort of a workshop where everybody actually got together in person. The last time, we did it in DFW. We can do it anywhere.

TxDOT provided a really nice handout that had a
lot of the basic information, I think that would be very helpful and I use the reference a lot. I think that might be helpful.

And as part of that, we had a discussion, a really in-depth discussion about what we wanted to focus on as PTAC. So I think -- I mean, we can do that today, and throw some of those items out. I think the last we heard, the 5310 program was probably one thing we wanted to look at next.

I heard that from the PTAC members that were on the committee last year, as well as from some folks at the summer annual meeting, not this January one, but the July one, and I have heard since, since we have got through a recent 5310 program funding process, that that might be something that PTAC could take a look at.

But I thought we could just open it up to what your ideas were, at least out of the workshop, what items we would like to cover, and then, if you had any ideas. I heard of a couple of others that we might want to talk about as well, since the last meeting, I think it was in September or October.

MR. GADBOIS: This is Gadbois, and I'll just jump in. I'm happy to do a workshop, as long as we get it scheduled in time to get everybody there. I think it is important for it to be a face-to-face conversation with no
And, we count on our new leadership to help kind of plan that out, and make it as constructive a conversation as possible, and not just -- I'd like to encourage us to think about something. In looking back at the work done from PTAC the last year, there is a significant tension here.

And the transit is facing generally, and frankly, we all kind of fall into, and that is fixing kind of the immediate problems dealing with the immediate issues. You know, 5310 allocations to whatever. There is also, I think, incumbent on us, as the smart people in the room, or those at least appointed to think about it, a larger issue of what is public transportation.

We need to start thinking about doing in the future for its long term success and that is a radically different conversation than how do we manage the funds that we have available now, and continue to cut that pie as equitably as possible.

To talk about everything from enlarging the pie, to new trends that include more than the operation of systems. How that manifests itself for rural, for small urban, for urban.

And start thinking about where this Department might be able to help guide the industry and itself to
face those new trends in the long run and I'd hope that somewhere on our work plan we have some time and focus to look at the larger issues.

MR. ABESON: This is Al. I appreciate that comment and I wonder to what degree would our focus on implementation of the strategic plan that has now been adopted, at least at the major policy level, how do those two things mesh?

And I remember on the strategic plan from last year, what was supposed to happen next -- and Eric, I know you will correct me if I'm wrong, was at the Department administratively, there were going to be the adoption of, I guess, strategies, or implementation approaches, whatever, to actually accomplish that plan, and the plan is for how many years?

MR. GLEASON: This is Eric Gleason. The strategic plan is a five-year plan, and so that is --

MR. ABESON: That five years would not necessarily cover the comment just made, but is that a step along the way?

MR. GLEASON: It could be. Yes. The commission has adopted the Department's strategic plan at 2011 through 2015, and if you study the history of these, I think this one is a significant departure from previous ones in a number of significant ways. Mostly, in its
recognition that the Department does need to be more multi-modal in its focus.

It does recognize that its decision making processes need to be more collaborative and, I think, if you go through it, there is lots of opportunities in it, to highlight sentences and statements that we could take from it, and have a public transportation conversation about.

And what hasn't happened, administratively since we last met was specific direction to each of the divisions to go ahead and develop one. The Department is focused on developing performance measures, too, that are called for in the Department adopted strategic plan, but I'm certainly open to structuring a work program over time that would allow us to look at some of the issues that -- or all of the issues that Glenn has brought up.

You know, I think we'll just have to get our heads together, perhaps in a workshop setting and figure out a timetable for doing that. Because we also do need to do the other things that are important committee business. But I would agree. I think -- and actually, it would be helpful to us to have the committee to get into that kind of a mode of conversation, where we can actually have constructive dialogue around these issues.

MR. GADBOIS: And this is Gadbois again. To
put a point on this, Michelle, for example, in North Texas, and she is not the only one, but North Central Texas uses a whole lot of tools, value capture tools, TIP, that sort of thing. You know, looks at partnering on coordination. Looks at a lot of different ways of increasing the pie.

And given how much we have struggled in this state over how do we fund our systems to the extent that we can start thinking about not just the programmatic money, but the other options that are already being utilized somewhere and can those messages be transferred, is an important conversation for us to have.

And Al, I think you're absolutely right in pointing it out. The strategic plan, and my read on it definitely allows us the latitude to do that and so the only question is kind of balancing, do we have the time and the focus and when -- the logistics.

MS. BLOOMER: And I think I wanted -- this is Michelle, to talk to your comment, the one on the Rail Division. I was reading one of the weekly articles that comes out from the commission from Amadeo and it says, the Rail Division has a strategic plan, or they have like a work plan.

And I wrote off to the side, do we have one for public transportation? And I haven't had a chance to read
the Rail one, but I think that would be something that
might address your -- where are we trying to get to in the
longer term.

And then how do we programatically address
some of the issues now that help us move in that
direction. Because I think that is where I'm coming from
on the 5310 issue. Is, we have a program, but how does
that coordinate with the JARC program, the New Freedom
program. How does that coordinate with the coordination
plan.

Because we are finding entities that aren't
part, you know. So, I think if we have that bigger
picture, that might help us on the day to day items,
figure out that maybe the direction they had, because we
know where we are ultimately trying to get and, right now,
I don't know that we have that.

But how do we find the balance between the big
picture and the day to day? And that is something that I
have trouble with every day in my regular job as actually
getting the day to day work done, but still having --
spending enough time figuring out where I might try to
take my folks, while they are all busy trying to get it
all done.

MR. GADBOIS: And then responding to Michael
Visones [phonetic].
MS. BLOOMER: But I do think that is a good point, and I know, Al, that was something you were very interested in, as part of the strategic plan is, what is the next step after adoption of the Department strategic plan. How do we take it down to public transportation? So maybe we can add --

MR. ABESON: Yes. This is Al again. I just like to think that if there is going to be movement on implementation of the strategic plan, and some of those initiatives will relate to more immediate satisfaction and more long term concerns, I think that we should take advantage of overcoming the inertia which typically occurs with a brand new set of ideas.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. So going forward, we would like to, as a committee both work on long term sort of visioning and where we are going, and guidance.

MR. GADBOIS: I don't think we are there. I think my suggestion was yes to a workshop, and at that workshop, we ought to struggle with how we might do that.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. Any other thoughts on the workshop? Right now, we have one, two, three, four, five, six members?

MR. GLEASON: Yes. Our hope had been that we would have it when we have a full committee, but I think
it is no longer useful to wait. I think we need to move ahead and so we will -- we have already been talking about needing to do something like what we did last year in the transit capital of Texas, Arlington.

MS. BLOOMER: You're all welcome back.

MR. GADBOIS: I object.

MR. GLEASON: So we'll -- I'm sorry, Michelle.

I know you sympathize with us.

MR. ABESON: As long as it doesn't require a ticket to get in.

MR. GLEASON: And I think we were thinking about the April time frame, or early April time frame for that. So we'll put our heads together and get some dates out. That is always first thing, is get some dates and then we'll work interactively through Michelle on an agenda for that.

And you know, from our standpoint, it is an opportunity to bring everyone up to speed on some fundamental issues that the committee will need to address. One of them being the formula. Now we have a certain amount of existing experience on the committee as it is today. So we'll shorten that one up a bit. We spent quite a bit of time on it before.

But we are going to -- I do envision as part of the next year, taking the time to open up the formula a
bit to address some of the census impacts that we anticipate. So it will be helpful for folks to understand. Why it is the way it is today, and how it works today without necessarily judging it as being bad or good. It is the way it is.

You know, there is a reason for it. We can talk about whether or not -- some things that need to change.

MR. GADBOIS: As Michelle is working on that workshop, I'm happy to volunteer to brainstorm with you, if you want that. You just prompt and let me know.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. Thank you. I think we definitely need to follow up on the Census.

MR. GLEASON: On the what?

MS. BLOOMER: On the Census.

MR. GLEASON: Yes.

MS. BLOOMER: And what is going to happen with that? And thinking that a SWOT analysis of all of our transit providers, sort of -- what are our strengths and weaknesses and what can we do I guess, better advertise, but, you know, we do provide a service.

I think a lot of people don't realize what a good service we provide and to how many people they have provided it. Sort of transit seems to be the afterthought and it is not just of the state.
It is, I mean -- and in our Central Texas region too. You say public transit, and everybody thinks rail. So how do we elevate public transit to that level where people realize the critical role it does play, and how we, as a committee, help do that, and help those states providers do that?

And then, what are those plans [phonetic] that are coming, either existing or coming down the road that we know and how can we help them prepare for them before they get here?

And the Census is one of those. You know, trying to, this time around, think a little bit further about what the options might be, what might happen, and how we can help respond to them now, instead of after it happens.

MR. GADBOIS: And what was your request to try to have that for the workshop?

MS. BLOOMER: I think that could be -- if we could -- Eric is looking, shaking his head, no.

MR. GLEASON: I have given, with all due respect, I think given what you're asking for is a significant undertaking, probably with a lot of value and I'm not sure what, if anything we could do on it, between now and then.

MS. BLOOMER: But have it as a topic for
MR. GLEASON: Absolutely.

MS. BLOOMER: At the meeting. Not necessarily come to the meeting --

MR. GLEASON: Well, I was trying -- I think that is what -- yes.

MR. GADBOIS: And clearly defining what we want, I think is a great thing, a topic to have for the workshop, but my follow up question was going to be Eric, you don't do anything like that now, do you? In which case --

MR. GLEASON: No. Not in a formal kind of way. We spent a lot of time running from one fire to the next and it is this diversity within our systems that is a challenge and a strength for us, in terms of you know, what is on the table and what is being dealt with. So we struggle as anyone does, in finding the time to do the longer term strategic planning.

MR. GADBOIS: Okay. So, a matter of timing. I love that idea as another topic for the workshop, but the Department. you said, is right now engaged in developing metrics for the strategic plan.

MR. GLEASON: The metrics are in the strategic plan.

MR. GADBOIS: Specified?
MR. GLEASON: Performance measures that were adopted specifically in the plan.

MR. GADBOIS: Okay.

MR. GLEASON: And so we are all working on the processes we are going to use to develop them, and how often we are going to report it, and when the first time — that's what it is. It's not anything new. It's just -- the plan goes through and how to reach the goals.

MR. GADBOIS: Okay. So our real question is, what kind of performance metrics and description of need, description of state of transit do we want to have, in addition to performance measures that are already in there. Is that --

MS. BLOOMER: I'm not sure. I think, if I understand it, the strategic plan has performance measures in it. You're working to develop what those are, but they are on a very broad scale.

MR. GLEASON: Yes. There are. In the strategic plan, there are a specific set of performance measures that relate at a very broad level.

MS. BLOOMER: Right.

MR. GLEASON: To being able to, in some fashion express how the Department is doing toward achieving the goal. Now some of them, because they are at such a great level, we'll find to be more useful than others.
And I think if you look at some of the ones that relate to public transportation in there, you will realize that okay, that may say something that is important about it, this issue at a state level, but it really doesn't give us much to work with in terms of understanding who is doing well and where we might need to put an emphasis. Okay.

Now, they tend to be rather black and white. Now there are some in there that are very good, like the condition of the statewide fleet, a vehicle. Now we may -- I'll say this, and then we will -- in my view, under the maintenance goal for the Department, it now includes a statement about maintaining the condition of the transit fleet. That is big. Because it used to be about road maintenance.

But we now have -- one of our interests is now linked to a critical and core goal of the Department. That is good stuff, and so, I think we have got some doors opening. It isn't perhaps anywhere near what we think it should be yet.

But I see some opportunities to open some doors and there is nothing that prevents us from going beyond those specific performance measures and getting some others that are more helpful for us.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. And I think that is a good
point. I think what I'm thinking with the SWOT analysis is sort of a bigger picture, and this is what I struggle with in my day job is, you know, in 20 years, what should transit in the DFW area look like? And what am I doing today that helps me get a step closer? And then what is that framework?

And I'm thinking, that is something that would be helpful at a state level, for TxDOT. You know, what does TxDOT envision public transportation looking like in ten, 15, 20 years and then how are the programs we currently have helping move us in that direction?

And then I guess there is specific performance measures, X number of people served. But what are those things? Do we still want to have urban, rural public transit divisions. Do we want to have multiple in a count -- you know, what is the bigger vision, and how do we help everybody get there.

MR. SALAZAR: What a great question. Eric has the answer to that, too.

MS. BLOOMER: I didn't say it was easy.

MR. GLEASON: Well, one of the things we'll talk about with that is, you know, it is critical. Is it a TxDOT plan? Or is it something bigger than that? I mean, clearly we have a goal and the state has a set of interests in how the systems develop, and what they
accomplish.

But our interest may not be perhaps as specific, for example, as whether they are big, small, little, whatever. You know, because at a state level -- so and you know, so who is the plan for? And you know, that is a good conversation too. Because it is interesting to go that way and it is very helpful to actually ask it from that standpoint. And how much are we biting off, you know --

So anyway, so, yes, to a workshop, and we can bring any or all of these topics back with some game plan on how to talk about them more extensively. If I could suggest that, if there is any sort of emphasis, or as you look at the page we have got here, any sense of one being more important than the other.

That is probably not a useful question at this point, but it would be helpful, even in the context of a workshop.

MR. ABESON: This is Al. On the work plan we have in place -- we have the bullet by coordination planning and as the older committee or seasoned committee members know, this is of great importance to me. I wonder if we could put on the agenda for the workshop kind of an update of where TxDOT feels the coordination is working and I'm not trying to get at holding anybody individually
responsible, but where is it going well? Where is it not going well? And can we then think about some ways that, to use the word we used last year, incentivize further development of coordinated service provision. Is that something that can be added to the agenda, or refined in terms of the agenda?

MS. BLOOMER: Al, this Michelle. I definitely think so, and I think it gets back to that bigger question of how do we do the big picture, and some of the day to day, and maybe we can, at the workshop, strategize a little bit more of how we would like to do that.

Because I think a lot of these items are all interrelated. Like, where I'm coming from on the 5310 program, in asking for that to be an item for discussion. I think it gets back to coordination, and what we are trying to achieve, and so maybe it is a larger discussion of what actually is the longer term vision for public transit and TxDOT, and how does regional coordination planning play into that.

How does the 5310 program play into that? How did the -- the coordinated call, and the [indiscernible]. How do they fit into that bigger picture? Because my frustration is, I think we have a vision of where we are trying to get to.

But then we are doing all of these independent
programs that aren't necessarily coordinating with each other, and moving us in a forward direction. So I definitely think we can leave the coordinated planning on there and maybe we lump in the 5310, the TARC and New Freedom programs in there. I don't know if we can do all that, and take up the funding formula again.

MR. UNDERWOOD: Well, that was I was about to say Michelle. It is pretty difficult to talk about those things, without talking about the funding formula. Because that is where it all starts.

MS. BLOOMER: And if you're going to talk about the funding formula, you have to talk about transportation development credits.

MR. UNDERWOOD: I'm teasing.

MS. BLOOMER: So that is where we struggled. The prior committees, you know, all of these items are so interrelated, but we felt that if we didn't tackle them one at a time, we were going to have a difficult time getting a year into it, and not having any measurable outcome to show for a years worth of activity.

And so that is why we sort of tackled the 5311, the discretionary. Then we tackled the Legislative Appropriation Request, and so maybe at the workshop we can talk about as well, the new committee, if the desire is to sort of try to bite off little pieces of a bunch of items.
all at once. Or pick one, and really attack it, and move it forward.

Because you're right. I don't think we can really take all of it. It is sort of like regional coordination, and I originally called it the big burrito. There is no way you're going to sit there and just down that thing.

MR. UNDERWOOD: Right.

MS. BLOOMER: You have to take little pieces of it, and move something forward. Otherwise, we would sit there, and we just -- we wouldn't get across the goal line on anything.

MR. GADBOIS: And since we are still talking workshop, I think, it helps me to think about it, in that most of these items have some relationship to the long range, to the whole burrito, and then most of them have some kind of immediate aspects that you just need to work on, right.

The whole burrito thing is probably an incremental process. We won't get things, big picture things settled in one three hour meeting. I mean, we won't, but we may be able to clearly define where we want to go over the next year, well enough to then give guidance to staff on, we need this information to refine this piece of it. You know, on and on.
As a consequence, if we think about the workshop, in terms of trying to frame where we want to go long term, and kind of what the incremental steps are, and then how we deal with these immediate pieces, funding formula, that sort of thing. Then I think we'll be much more productive in our three hour session.

That may also give us some time to start digging into funding formula. You all may all be up to speed enough to where the funding formula is going to pop quickly, but I seriously doubt it.

MR. GLEASON: I think our workshop last year was six hours.

(Simultaneous discussion.)

MR. GADBOIS: With six hours, we can solve a world of problems, you know.

MR. ABESON: This is Al. The only thing I would add to that is that we also use a filter of a likelihood of actually being able to accomplish something. Maybe that is self evident, but the big picture, I absolutely agree with that, but when we take off the next set of pieces to get to the big picture, I want us to think about where are those areas where time and circumstance suggest we might actually make a more rapid difference.

MR. GADBOIS: I agree.
MR. ABESON: And again, I'll just pick on coordination for the moment. There does seem to be a fair amount of national interest and, I think, in this state as well, on coordination.

So it may be, that because the time is right, the circumstances are right, we have the three federal programs at least as of today, that that might be a priority. Because we can make a difference there fairly quickly. And I just want to add that filter, because I think it is important.

MR. GADBOIS: This is Gadbois for the record.

Heads are nodding.

MR. ABESON: Well, I'm glad.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. So we are looking at early April. So between now and then, we have some time to all individually think of other items, and maybe ideas for the longer term vision or the frame and, Al, we know we'll keep coordination on there.

And if anybody wants to add anything or take anything off, just, I guess, let Ginnie know. Okay. Were there any other items for discussion today? This is really sort of our initial kickoff meeting, I guess.

MR. SALAZAR: This is J.R. I just had one question. I know that for the last year or so, we have been talking about transparency. It is a big issue with
TxDOT and I guess my question is, I have talked to a few people and they say, well we don't even know when PTAC meetings are. So my question is, do the notice of PTAC meetings go out to the providers?

MR. GLEASON: We do not typically, because I don't have a distribution list beyond the committee. It is published in the register as happening. That is a requirement we made, but we can, you know, we can look at that.

I would, I guess it would be -- I'd be interested in the committee's suggestion on a distribution list as well. It is not just the providers, but it would be the stakeholder group, inclusive of that, I'd think and that is certainly a reasonable, a frequent suggestion.

MR. SALAZAR: Fair enough.

MR. GADBOIS: Isn't the regional coordination list probably the largest? I mean, that would include providers.

MR. GLEASON: I don't know anymore. That is a good place to start, for sure. We have so many different lists that -- it can be real mind boggling.

MR. GADBOIS: Sure. Send them to all.

MR. GLEASON: Well, then some will get three. Whatever it is.

MR. GADBOIS: Well, you know, seven, it takes
to hit people's consciousness.

MR. GLEASON: We will talk about that, and see what seems to make sense to us, but I think the notion of broadening the --

MR. GADBOIS: Okay.

MS. BLOOMER: I think that is a good point.

J.R., I think another -- this is Michelle for the record. I think another good option too, is for PTAC members to know, and be made aware of other items that are going on, related to the transit providers, like the semi-annual meeting.

There is a regional coordination meeting on March 8th. Any way that we can sort of get tapped in, if we weren't already, like J.R. and Brad, by going to those meetings, and just sort of listening and participating and hearing what the transit providers have to say, I think is beneficial as well.

MR. GADBOIS: Do we ever record our open meeting?

MR. GLEASON: Yes. I think we have to explore that with our counsel, to see what issues that might raise.

MS. BLOOMER: I think we are -- well, having had to participate in the Open Meetings requirement as part of being appointed by the Governor and doing the
certificate and everything, we are fine, and you can correct me, because I was multi-tasking, for the record.

    MR. SALAZAR: Yes. You're going to have to wait about 20 minutes, and they will never know.

    MS. BLOOMER: Is that, as long as we don't conduct business of the committee, we should be fine, but yes, we might just want to double check. Because it kind of scared me a little bit, you know.

    MR. GADBOIS: Well, and it is easy enough, with advanced notice, it is easy enough to -- for anybody to go in, to one of those meetings, to let Ginnie know, and Ginnie to post it. Right? I mean, at the City, we do that all of the time. For organizations that are getting counsel on, that are getting together and subject to Open Meetings.

    MS. BLOOMER: Or you know, we don't all have to go. I go, I have gone to the last couple of semiannual meetings, just to get a PTAC update, to try to put a face on, we are here. This is what we are trying to do. We are here for you. Please let us know, you know, what we can do.

    But just like, Glenn, if you just go to any of the public providers in your region, or public meetings, anything like that, just to sort of, how we can also tap in, instead of expecting the providers to the same.
MR. GADBOIS: Although Eric, you made a face, and I just wanted -- I like the idea. You made a face that looked like you have some clarification or concerns. So I'm going to push for that.

I understand that we ought to, as PTAC members, be reaching out and talking to the community. I think that would be a good thing.

I also, though, think it is easy enough if we happen to find four is a majority now, five? If we find a meeting such that we know five are going to be there, that we simply you know, with a week's advance notice, can publish that and have no problem on Open Meetings. That is my understanding. That is, where you were having the look of question.

MR. GLEASON: Well, I think, if I can, this is Eric. I think, I have to use my poker face. Al, you couldn't see that, so you're at a disadvantage.

MR. ABESON: I truly am, and I'm missing a lot.

MR. GLEASON: I know. And I think my expression was probably related to trying to think that through with respect to the Department having what I'd call a business meeting.

Where, for example, on the 8th of March, as Michelle mentioned, we are pulling the lead agencies in to talk about coordination and we have enough room for two
people from each lead agency, and the effort is, should have a very close and intense conversation of how things are going, and what we need to do differently. And where I was giving you the face was trying to imagine a situation where we ended up posting something in the Register somehow, of a meeting and whether or not they would open up these meetings to anyone who might like to come. It was more of a -- I don't quite understand this completely yet, but I understand the spirit of the comment. I was kind of working through the details in my mind.

MR. GADBOIS: And this is Gadbois. As my mother-in-law often says, I think from attendance today, using the regular public notice, that you're borrowing trouble to suggest that anybody is going to show up simply because you publish something. Number one, but regardless of that, let's just see if we can't figure out how we can make sure and do open meetings and get out and talk to the public more.

MS. BLOOMER: And just to follow through. I wasn't suggesting all PTAC members go to the March 8th, but I think it is an opportunity for -- normally, I'd just send my regional coordination planner.

But being on PTAC, and knowing that two folks can go, and having a yet unfilled planner position, I
think I'd like to go to that. Both as the lead agency for regional coordination of our region, and as a member of PTAC. Just to see what everybody else is saying about it, what can we do in our region.

But then, what information can I then bring back and share with the rest of my fellow PTAC members, related to that? And if you go to something similar, do the same. You could do the same thing.

Not necessarily, we have everybody from PTAC go to the March 8th meeting, or another meeting, but we all try to get our little tentacles out there, and then bring that information back and share it.

MR. GLEASON: As long as we can have a conversation about our meeting purpose, and what we are trying to do, and all of that, and if I can, from time to time, I might suggest that the dynamic we are trying to create in a meeting is such that -- you know, we really want -- and I'm glad you're coming on the 8th, because I need you there.

But I mean, we really want -- we have got some issues to work through with that program, good and bad and we need a constructive, forceful dialogue amongst the leads to figure this thing out.

MR. GADBOIS: Now, back to process. Because that is the big question that I need to deal with. So
Michelle goes to a meeting and she wants to make sure we all understand what was talked about at that meeting, so that we at PTAC have the benefit of her participating in that.

How does that happen? Is that an email sent to Ginnie, and then Ginnie can send it out to all of us?

MR. GLEASON: We can do that.

MR. GADBOIS: Just physically --

MR. GLEASON: I think that is a good way to do it. You know, what the committee has to watch out for, is any kind of a dialogue that would -- email that begins to look like the committee is making a decision.

VOICE: Daisy chain.

MR. GADBOIS: Yes. That is what I want to make clear is, Michelle can't just send it out to us directly and we can't reply all and start talking about it, and so I just want to make clear how that actually happens.

MS. BLOOMER: And this is Michelle. Eric will let us know, going down that road. That got yanked back. I think probably the best thing to do it nicely, I think probably the best thing to do would just be at the next PTAC meeting, or the next workshop, maybe we can have an item under general discussion where people who attended meetings in the past can just share.

And that way, we don't run into that issue of
conducting business, when we shouldn't be, but, yes, and I rely on Eric to make sure, keep me in line.

MR. GADBOIS: And I personally would rather emails, just when they happen. But we all have to understand, we can't turn that into an email conversation.

MS. BLOOMER: Right.

MR. GLEASON: Right. Exactly.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. I had an item, and it has escaped.

MR. ABESON: While you're thinking, this is Al. I wonder if it would be possible to get the minutes from each of our meetings, more closer to when the meeting has occurred. Frankly, at my age, I have difficulty remembering all that went on today, in terms of when we next meet. Is it possible to get them earlier?

MS. BLOOMER: Ginnie whispered sure.

MS. MAYLE: Sure.

MS. BLOOMER: And Al, it is not just you. By the time I get back home tonight, I pretty much will have forgotten a lot. Which is why I write a lot of notes. Would it be possible -- what is a realistic turnaround time from the date of the meeting, do you think? Because do you rely on the court reporter's report?

MS. MAYLE: This is Ginnie. The reason I send them out when I do, is to refresh your memories, closer to
the next meeting date. That is why it has always been
done closer to the scheduled meeting. Like, I send it out
this week for today's meeting and what you're asking is to
have it closer to the meeting where the topics were
discussed. The session occurred.

MR. ABESON: Correct. I don't want to create
an undue burden on anybody, but it would certainly be
helpful to me.

MS. MAYLE: It isn't, but I can get them out
closer after the actual meeting date.

MS. BLOOMER: So maybe like, get them in 30
days, or generally around 30 days from the date of the
meeting?

MS. MAYLE: That is doable.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. And, Al, we also have the
transcript. I don't know if you have ever had the
pleasure of going back and reading that.

MR. ABESON: I have, a few times, and I
understand why we are not exposed to them each time.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. Because we have had to go
back a couple of times, just to reference to it. For
Ginnie and I to recall to our memory what action we
actually did take in the minutes. So okay.

Thirty days from today. I don't even know what
today is, the 25th. So sometime around the end of March
which will probably be really close to when we start
talking about April maybe. So it might not work out
quite. It might not work out exactly like it did today
where we get it before the next meeting.

Okay. And it still hasn't come back to me, Al,
but thank you for stalling for me. In my old age, if I
don't write it down, it goes flying out. Okay.

I think the next item will be for Ginnie to
send us some possible dates in early April for the
workshop and then if any of the members have any ideas on
how we can structure the longer term framework or vision
discussion, and then the more short term specific items to
work on, to just email those to Ginnie.

And, if not, is there any public comment? All
of our public?

(No response.)

MS. BLOOMER: Hearing none, confirm the date of
the next meeting. We will do that via email.

Do I have a motion to adjourn the meeting?

MR. ABESON: So moved. This is Al.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. Al, I have a first.

Brad, do you want to second it?

MR. UNDERWOOD: Second.

MS. BLOOMER: I have a second. Anybody
opposed?
(No response.)

MS. BLOOMER: The meeting is adjourned. Thank you, Al.

MR. ABESON: Thank you all. Bye.

(Whereupon, the meeting was concluded at 11:05 a.m.)
CERTIFICATE

MEETING OF: Public Transportation Advisory Committee

LOCATION: Austin, Texas

DATE: February 25, 2011

I do hereby certify that the foregoing pages, numbers 1 through 54, inclusive, are the true, accurate, and complete transcript prepared from the verbal recording made by electronic recording by Nancy King before the Texas Department of Transportation.

3/04/2011
(Transcriber) (Date)

On the Record Reporting
3307 Northland, Suite 315
Austin, Texas 78731