TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TELECONFERENCE

Lone Star Room
4000 Jackson Avenue
Austin, Texas

Thursday, June 30, 2011

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT BY TELEPHONE:

Michelle Bloomer, Chair
J.R. Salazar, Vice Chair
Al Abeson
Christina Crain
Glenn Gadbois
Brad Underwood

STAFF:

Eric Gleason, PTN Director
Bobby Killebrew, PTN Deputy Director
Kelly Kirkland, PTN
Ginnie Mayle, PTN

ON THE RECORD REPORTING
(512) 450-0342
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MS. BLOOMER: We'll go ahead and call the meeting to order. The first item on the agenda is approval of the minutes from April 13, 2011. Are there any questions regarding the minutes? Hearing none, do I have a motion for approval?

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

MS. CRAIN: Christina seconds.

MS. BLOOMER: Since we're all on the phone this gets kind of awkward. I'll just go through the list of names to avoid people talking over each other.

(A roll call vote was taken - all ayes.)

MS. BLOOMER: The minutes are approved.

Moving on to item 3, Division Director's Report, Eric, we'll turn it over to you.

MR. GLEASON: All right. I think we sent this out to you this morning. I don't know if everyone had a chance to look at it, but we had a good morning this morning in front of the commission.

We had seven action items. Six of them were awarding various kinds of grant funding totaling $63 million, a combination of state and federal program grant funds. We awarded almost 3 million transportation development credits along with those to help with some capital program purchases and allow folks to continue to
use their local resources for operating match.

We also had a minute order this morning that continued to make some adjustments within the Recovery Act program. As folks finish up projects, they have residual balances and either they are allowing us to reallocate them to another sub-recipient or they are moving it to another purpose within their own program, and so every time that happens we go back to the commission and adjust those awards accordingly.

I will say that we've expended about 82 percent of our federal program funds from the Recovery Act program, and that compares to about 60 percent nationwide, so we're doing pretty well that way. And a lot of folks are closing out their parts of that overall effort, so I'm glad to see that.

So it was a good day for us at the commission.

In July we have three minute orders on tap for that. We're going to be awarding some funds to continue the regional coordination planning in areas of the state. We've got development credit award going to the Alamo Area Council of Governments and to the Community Action Council of South Texas, and then we have some Rural Transportation Assistance Program funds, RTAP funds, going up to TAPS up in North Texas and to Kaufman Area Rural Transportation.

MR. GADBOIS: Eric, can I just jump in and ask
one slight detail question?

MR. GLEASON: Sure.

MR. GADBOIS: How much money are you asking for for regional coordination planning?

MR. GLEASON: I'm looking at Kelly Kirkland who is here with us now. How much are we planning to award?

MR. KIRKLAND: Right now, and it's still very much in the draft stage, it's just under one million.

MR. GLEASON: Now, this is not for all 24 regions, Glenn, it's only a portion of the total number of regions.

MR. KIRKLAND: Right. Many of the regions have balances remaining in this year and they're going to be allowed to carry those forward, we're going to extend those grant agreements.

MR. GADBOIS: Okay.

MS. BLOOMER: Eric, what's the average amount per agency?

MR. KIRKLAND: Michelle, I do not have that information. I'm sorry.

MR. GLEASON: We can get that out to you as soon as we look at it ourselves, no problem.

MR. GADBOIS: Super. Thanks.

MR. GLEASON: No problem. Keeping in mind it's just a recommendation at this point as well, it has to go
to the commission for approval.

The only other thing I'll mention is at the bottom of the report, the Texas Transit Leadership Seminar, this is our second seminar. We have a call for applications out right now. Again, we're trying to find and trying to have 25 individuals in leadership positions right now or aspiring to that kind of role within their agency to join us for a pretty good intensive seminar with four days now in October -- four days or three days in October, Ginnie?

MS. MAYLE: Three full days.

MR. GLEASON: Three full days in October and then two full days in January, with some in between session coaching and some self-assessment to go along with it.

J.R., who is on the phone with us, has participated in that, and we're hoping for another successful effort this year.

That's what I had on the director's report. Any questions?

MR. SALAZAR: This is J.R. I was just curious on how many applications we got. Did we get more than the 25 that you wanted?

MR. GLEASON: No, we have not, J.R. I'm beginning to shake the bushes on that one. Right now we
have 13. So we got excellent evaluations of last year's session. Honestly I was hoping to have more applications by now and we're all going to have to shake the bushes out there to get some folks to take advantage of the opportunity.

I think one of the things I'm finding is that while I really would like to see people in the general manager/transit director positions right now take the course, many of those individuals assume it's for someone else in their organization and aren't applying for that reason, so we've got to work on that.

MR. SALAZAR: Okay.

MS. BLOOMER: Eric, this is Michelle. Is it possible to share who the folks are that have participated in the past and then who you have of the 13 of the 25 so we can help you maybe shake some people, at least in our region?

MS. BLOOMER: On the first point, you can go to our website and you'll find a listing of participants for the first seminar. In terms of helping shake the bushes, I'd be glad to talk with you about that, Michelle, with respect to some folks up in your region perhaps, and others on the committee, but it's still coming together, we get an application every other day at this point, and I've got probably six to eight folks that I've spoken with...
personally that I've not heard back from them whether
they're going to apply or not.

So we're making progress. I was just hoping,
given the performance of last year's session, that we'd be
further along.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay.

MR. SALAZAR: Eric, this is J.R. Just a couple
of comments. From people that I've talked to, a lot of
the comments were I didn't think that I could send
somebody since I was part of the initial class, and I told
them no, I don't think that's necessarily the case, I
think they're going to give preference to those that
didn't participate or those agencies that didn't
participate, but I don't think that excludes you from
nominating somebody within your organization. So
hopefully that will help too.

MR. GLEASON: Well, that's good to know. We
can send something out to that effect. Thanks, J.R.

And J.R., I know you're with a lot of your
peers today, if you could use your spare time in that
session to maybe rattle some bushes, that would be great
as well.

MR. SALAZAR: I will.

MR. GLEASON: Thank you.

MR. GADBOIS: Michelle, this is Glenn. Before
we move on, it's kind of a related item but not exactly. I'm feeling a little unplugged from the transit community and providers these days. My understanding is there's a meeting of the transit providers coming up in July, and so first, do we have a calendar of those meetings? And second, if we're not doing business as an advisory group, isn't it okay if we show up at those, not necessarily to spend the whole day or to track the whole thing, but to take the opportunity to meet, greet and talk to the transit providers about what they're doing and how things are going?

MR. GLEASON: Glenn, thanks for bringing that up. It wasn't written in our director's report but I had made a mental note to myself to bring that up. We are having on July 13 down at our Riverside complex in Building 200, we're having one of our twice yearly meetings with rural program and small urban program providers. Any and all members of the committee are more than welcome to attend that session, stay for as long as you like. Obviously you can't all sit together at a table and conduct committee business, but I don't think we need to worry about that.

Michelle, in the past, has provided a brief update for the group on what's happening in PTAC; I think J.R. is going to do that this time. But by all means,
more than welcome to join us for that, and I apologize for not bringing that up.

MR. ABESON: Is it a single day meeting?

MR. GLEASON: It is a single day meeting, it will start at 8:30, I believe, and it usually concludes around three o'clock as people tend to head off to get back home that day.

MR. GADBOIS: And Eric, so that we could see a good time to show up over there that might allow for some socializing and visiting, or hearing conversation and problem-solving, can you send us an agenda?

MR. GLEASON: Yes, no problem.

MR. GADBOIS: Thank you.

MS. MAYLE: And Glenn, this is Ginnie. We have a training and events calendar on our website and it shows all the upcoming events and the meetings are listed on there a couple of months out. Once we know the date, we put it on there.

MR. GADBOIS: Super.

MS. BLOOMER: And this is Michelle. Just to also note for the other members that the TxDOT semiannual meetings, there's always one in January and July, so if you can't attend the July one, you'll have another opportunity in January.

And then before we close out the director's
report, I don't really have a question, I just wanted to 
flag for some of the other members to maybe keep in mind 
when we get down to discussion on the work plan, but 
you'll notice, Eric, you mentioned there were seven items 
taken to the commission earlier today?

MR. GLEASON: Yes.

MS. BLOOMER: Five to award funding, four of 
them to award federal funding for fiscal year 2011, and 
the federal fiscal year begins in October. We are in the 
last day of June which means we are nine months into the 
fiscal year of 2011. And so I know there's nothing you 
guys can do, but I think that's a very important item to 
keep in mind when we start talking about what our goals 
are and how we can help the transit providers in the State 
of Texas as far as sustainability goes. Getting your 
money nine months into a fiscal year makes it very 
difficult to provide service in a continuous and 
sustainable manner. So I have a lot of marks on my paper 
of what all the federal in the fiscal year 2011, thinking 
I'm glad I haven't had to wait nine months to get paid 
here at COG. That would make my life extremely difficult.

If there are no more questions on the 
director's report, we can move on to item number 4 which 
is: Discussion and concurrence with the department's 
decision to consult with transit industry personnel to
receive input related to the allocation of additional
state funds due to census impacts.

MR. GADBOIS: And Michelle, actually before we
leave the director's report, because that's the most
flexible place to raise issues, can I raise one other
item?

MS. BLOOMER: Sure. Glenn, right?

MR. GADBOIS: This is Glenn.

The commission action that you just pointed
out, Michelle, also raises in my mind a suggestion that
I'd like to put on the table, and that is that I think,
Michelle, you and maybe one other member of the advisory
group -- I'm not recommended myself, but J.R. or Al or
whoever is available -- ought to ask either commission or
commission assistants to sit down and meet with you and
talk about how we as an advisory group can help them. As
far as I understand, that level of conversation with the
commission hasn't happened in a while, if ever, and given
our statutory assignment to advise them, I would recommend
you make some time to have that conversation.

MS. BLOOMER: Are there any comments or
discussion?

MS. CRAIN: This is Christina. I think that's
a good idea, and as I've said to you, Michelle, before,
and we worked on some of the issues with the chairman, et
cetera, I'd be happy to assist with that if you think
that's a good idea, Eric, if you think that's good. Just
my two cents.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay.

MR. ABESON: This is Al. Is there any history
of events related to Glenn's proposal?

MS. BLOOMER: Not to my knowledge. Eric?

MR. GLEASON: Well, I think not in any sort of
a sustained formal fashion such as Glenn suggests, that
I'm aware of. Members of the committee have spoken with
members of the commission staff or the commissioners
themselves from time to time, but I think the notion of
sitting down where their aides and asking them how the
committee can be helpful would be a useful thing for the
committee to do.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. I think that would be a
good idea to proceed with the commissioners and/or their
aides. I also think it would be a good idea if maybe we
did the same thing with the Texas Transit Association,
sort of, Glenn, back to your point of how do we tap into
the transit industry a little bit better.

MR. GADBOIS: That's a good idea.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. So we can work on that.
And Eric, maybe you and I could work on how we go about
doing that, is it the members calling the commissioners
directly or their aides, or do we work through PTN to do that.

   I think another question I had -- sorry I'm just throwing these out there -- since I was appointed by the governor, is there any sort of feedback loop I should be doing to the governor, or other members to their elected official that appointed them.

   MS. CRAIN: This is Christina. Michelle, I would just tell you what I do with the lieutenant governor's office. From the day I was appointed I just asked who they preferred that I report, and so I've got a specific person there that I just basically send them the agenda, tell them what's happened at the meetings, just to keep them abreast of what's going on. And so I would assume, and having worked with the governor's office before, I would assume that they would basically want the same kind of thing. So I'm sure if you called over there they could tell you this is the person to get the information to.

   MR. GADBOIS: And Michelle, the same with the speaker's office, they have a transportation staff person in the speaker's office, I sat down and talked with them, we figured out how they wanted to be dealt with, and it's as much as Christina described she does with the lieutenant governor's office.
MS. BLOOMER: Okay. That's good to know because I don't know that we have something similar with the governor's office.

MR. GADBOIS: Well, they will have transportation policy staff.

MS. CRAIN: Yes, they'll have somebody.

MR. GADBOIS: And then, Michelle, back to the commissioners, I just want to suggest, as I think Christina did, it sounds like both Christina and I still have pretty good relations with commission and commission staff. Generally speaking, not on this advisory committee but on other things, it's simply a matter of calling over and asking them, and generally they can corral a couple or three or four aides to be in the same meeting, and so it would be one sort of sit-down meeting to talk with all of them at the same time. I don't think you'll get commissioners to do that, but certainly their assistants you can.

MR. GLEASON: Michelle, I'd be more than willing to help set something up for you and any other members of the committee. I obviously would think you all would happen at one time, and we can work with commission aides. Clearly, the commissioners aren't going to get together in groups because they can't, but the aides certainly.
MR. UNDERWOOD: This is Brad Underwood. I just wanted to let you know I am now joining the meeting. I apologize for my tardiness; I had a meeting that ran late.

MS. BLOOMER: That's okay. We're glad to have you onboard. And Brad, I think just for your benefit we're finishing up item 3 on the agenda.

MR. UNDERWOOD: Perfect. Thank you.

MS. BLOOMER: So we'll go ahead, based on the recommendations of the committee, and proceed with setting up some time to sit down with the commissioners or their assistants, the Texas Transit Institute, and then I'll start on my end doing some feedback with the governor who appointed me. I think that's very helpful for me.

Anything else for discussion under item 3, Division Director's Report? And maybe one thing, usually we have this item on the end of the agenda, this time I asked Eric to move it up to the top because I thought it would be helpful prior to our discussion on this strategic plan guiding principles item further on, but let me know if you agree or disagree, either on the phone or shoot me an email, but it probably would help get some of the administrative stuff out of the way first.

If there are no other questions, we'll move on to item 4, and I'm not going to repeat that title but I'll just turn it over to you, Eric.
MR. GLEASON: Thank you. I will say sometimes these agenda titles are lengthy like this because this is the language that our general counsel approves.

What item 4 is all about is, as we've talked about in the past and now that the legislative session is over, there are additional funds included in the department's budget for public transportation grants, there are additional funds to help us deal with the projected impacts of the 2010 census.

If you'll recall, the department sponsored some research that the Texas Transportation Institute and UT San Antonio and the state demographer's office collaborated on to try and anticipate the impacts of the 2010 census, and having done that, we calculated an estimate of funds needed to essentially hold current recipients of state grant funding, if you will, harmless from the impacts of the census.

And the kinds of impacts we're anticipating on the rural program side, while the whole state is growing in population pretty much everywhere, there are areas of the state that are growing more quickly than others, and because of that, they'll end up getting a larger share of the available funding based on their proportional share of the state's population. And so there will be some movement within the rural program among the rural agency
providers based on the relative rate of population growth in each of their service areas. And so some of the funding we identified is to basically hold folks harmless from the negative impact of that adjustment.

On the urban side, the impact is much greater where we expect as many as five new urbanized areas to be identified by the census, and one existing one to move from small urban up to a larger urban category, so a net increase of four urban area providers, and without any additional state funding available for those folks, obviously four more people at the table would mean that everyone else would have to give up a little bit of what they've got. And so we tried to forecast how much that would be, and those funds are in our budget.

We have to do some rulemaking, we have to take a look at the Administrative Code as it's currently written in order for us to actually target those additional funds to those systems that need it. And so we are going to be embarking on a rulemaking effort which the committee will be advising the commission on, and as a part of that, what I wanted to do was to bring together a group of small urban and rural program providers, possibly three from each area, and work with them as a group to get their input on whatever proposed modifications to the Administrative Code the department would bring to PTAC for
And if you recall, the rulemaking process, the first step is to come up with a set of proposed rules that then goes to the commission for their approval as proposed rules. There is then a public comment period, and then the rules come back for final approval, and PTAC is engaged in both of those processes.

And so what I'm looking for is some concurrence from a process standpoint on the part of the committee to have the department go off and form this sounding board, if you will, of both rural and small urban program provides to help us put together an initial proposal, if you will, of how to modify the Administrative Code that then PTAC could look at, knowing that it represented hopefully a pretty good consensus among the provider community, that he committee could then look at and say this is what we think of it, we like this, we don't like that, but based their recommendation based on that.

So I'm just looking for some concurrence from the committee on this. I think that strengthens the overall process to have you onboard with that idea so that when I come to you with it there's that structure within which it's coming to you.

MR. GADBOIS: This is Glenn. Eric, I've got some questions before I could even respond to your
question.

The first is do we have a fairly clear understanding of the systems to hold harmless, since hold harmless is a complicated factor. Because some systems were moving down a little bit with caps and some were moving up a little bit with caps, do we have some sort of assessment of what hold harmless actually means in context of the overall trends in funding movement?

MR. GLEASON: Yes, and what we did, Glenn, with that, when you get into the details of the allocation formula there is a mechanism in the formula that does limit the amount any system's amount from one year to the next can go down, and that is they can't do down any more than 10 percent.

MR. GADBOIS: Or up.

MR. GLEASON: No. There isn't one on the upside, it's just on the downside.

And so in the scheme of things that can complicate the kind of assessment we're trying to make. What we did, if I understand this correctly -- and Kelly is right here -- is we took the information that we got from the research, they created a 2010 data file of population for us by county, and we basically, looking at just the needs side of the formula, identified the impact of the change in population.
And given that it's just an estimate, it was the best information that we had at the time, but that allowed us to kind of get our arms around how big the issue might be.

MR. GADBOIS: And so we could see that to get our minds around how big you think the issue is.

And then the next question is what are the items that you think are needing or subject to Administrative Code change?

MR. GLEASON: The way the Administrative Code is currently structured, one of the elements very early up front says that the state funding gets split 65 percent going to the rural program, 35 percent going to the state urban program. That split is basically the reverse of what we need from an impact standpoint. So we have to kind of work our way through a modification that literally allows us to separate out this extra money we have for census impacts, we have to separate it out from the formula and write Administrative Code language that allows us, in my view, to work with the industry and put it where it needs to go.

That's far easier for me to say than to write code around that, but that's the general effect of what we're trying to do.

MR. GADBOIS: Believe me, I understand.
And then one question, when you call a focus
group of urban and rural providers to give the department
advice for the development of rules that we ultimately
will have to comment on, can somebody from the advisory
group, the PTAC be in that meeting?

MR. GLEASON: Absolutely. I don't have any
issue with that at all. You could also decide as a
committee that one of the members of the group should be a
committee member.

My whole intention of this is to allow us to
bring to you a product that represents some level of
consensus within the industry about how to tackle this
issue. While at the same time allowing you as a committee
to be a bit at arm's length as well to make the judgments
that you need to make.

MR. GADBOIS: Right. And it would be helpful
for us in advance to know what the hard issues are and
start wrapping ourselves around strategic implications of
those rather than having to do that all in one fell swoop
as we're engaged in the administrative rule change
process.

MR. GLEASON: Okay. That's a good comment.

MR. ABESON: This is Al. I have a question as
well. Eric, how do you propose to initiate the process
with the group that will be coming together? Is it one
where the floor is totally open to ideas or will the department be presenting several proposals based on some principles? What the content process going to be like?

MR. GLEASON: Well, Al, my view of this is it's a pretty practical exercise, if you will. I think we have a very focused objective, we have about $3.2 million in our grant funding budget for the next biennium to help us address the impacts of the census. And by practical and focused, what our approach will be this is the current Administrative Code and we need to look at that Administrative Code and look at revisions to it in a way that allows us to target these funds to where they need to go, keeping in mind that when we do this effort we won't know the exact outcome of the census. If we wait for the exact outcome, we won't have time to make the adjustment in the rules we need to make before it's time to award the next set of state funding.

The census has to make its final determinations of urbanized areas no later than April of 2012, and we typically award state funds for the next fiscal year in June of every year, just like we did today, we awarded fiscal year 2012 state funding. So in June of next year we'll be in a position to award fiscal year 2013 state funding, and in April we will have gotten from the census their final determination of urbanized areas. So we're
going to have to, in a very practical matter, I think, come up with some language in the Administrative Code that will allow us once we know the actual results of those determinations to, in a transparent and objective way, figure out how much money needs to go where.

So I don't view this as an exercise where we're really sitting back and thinking really big picture about something and what's the best thing to do. I think we have a very targeted focus for the effort. I know that the rural and small urban providers are very much in tune with this issue, we've been talking to them about it for about 18 months now, and I think it's actually going to end up being a pretty focused effort. And I think the hardest part about this whole thing is going to be writing the administrative rule language. I don't think reaching a conclusion with everyone about what's the right thing to do is going to be that hard.

MR. ABESON: That's good. So the only principle that would govern the conversation would be the language that says hold harmless. Is that correct? In other words, are there other principles that could be used to guide that discussion that could, in fact, contribute to big picture outcomes later on?

MR. GLEASON: Al, let me just take that under advisement. I think that's a good question, and maybe
after we've talked about the principles today, it may be
more clear at the end of that whether or not thee are some
other things to consider. But let me just take that under
advisement as a good comment to think about.

    MR. ABESON: Okay, absolutely.

    MR. UNDERWOOD: Eric, this is Brad Underwood.
I have a quick question. Maybe I'm jumping too far ahead
here, but I assume under this hold harmless deal that
you're talking about we'll be looking, kind of addressing
the needs of Galveston. Is that correct, or is that too
far ahead?

    MR. GLEASON: You know, Galveston is going to
be an issue, could be an issue. And the thing with
Galveston, for the rest of the committee, is Galveston is
currently classified as an urbanized area under the 2000
census, and I think most everyone believes that the 2010
census count will not find enough people in Galveston for
it to continue to be an urbanized area, and if that's the
case, then it would come into the rural program. And we
did run some scenarios as a part of our process that allow
us to understand the potential impact of that. So yes,
this effort will need to address that.

    MR. UNDERWOOD: As far as from a rural provider
and other rural providers, I know that we're concerned
about Galveston being part of the rural program. I mean,
it would make a huge significant in our funding levels, I guess.

MR. GLEASON: And I think what the Census Bureau would say that they just count people, and I guess my expectation has always been somewhere along the way that something will happen perhaps at the federal level with respect to Galveston where they will retain their urbanized area status. I mean, I don't have any basis for that other than I just think that that's something that could possibly happen.

MR. UNDERWOOD: Okay. Thank you.

MS. BLOOMER: Are there any other questions for Eric, or comments?

MR. ABESON: I'd just like to offer a commendation on the idea of bringing together the folks who are actually going to have to work with the money that's available. I think it's a great way to go.

MR. GLEASON: Appreciate it.

MR. GADBOIS: And Al, I agree with you. I like the process for the most part, Eric. I would like to pool my fellow PTAC members to see if somebody wants to be engaged in that conversation so that we can have heads-up in advance of rulemaking on what their finding some of the issues are coming out of that focus group.

Also, Eric, we should come back to the question
Al raises towards the end of this, because I actually think that that's a strong question, is hold harmless the only principle we need guiding that process.

MS. BLOOMER: And this is Michelle. Glenn, I think to your question, are you recommending that one of the existing small urban or rural members also be a PTAC member, or are you suggesting that there be an additional person solely to represent PTAC?

MR. GADBOIS: I'm hoping that somebody from PTAC will say I'm interested enough in this topic to where I'll attend that or those focus group discussions and relay back to the rest of us at our next meeting or whenever kind of what the issues/concerns were, that everybody is comfortable with the decision.

You know, if in fact Eric is right and everybody is comfortable with the decision and there aren't any hard spots except how you write the rule, then that helps greatly. Right? If there are concerns or discussion that we ought to know about along the way, it would be helpful to have those in advance of the more formal rulemaking process.

MS. BLOOMER: Right, and I agree with you. I guess what I'm asking is we currently have a rural transit provider on PTAC and a small urban on PTAC. If one of those individuals were to serve on the committee
representing one of the three slots for small urban and rural.

MR. GADBOIS: That would work for me.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. Then I guess, Eric, that really gets back to you for selecting the three small urban and the three rural. Again, I also think it's a very good idea of going out to the industry and asking them how they would like to make that hard decision of splitting up the money.

Just one thing I think we have to be careful of is when selecting those three representatives that it's a broad representation and that they're able to look at it from a regional or a statewide standpoint and not just from their system's standpoint. But I think if we can do that, I think it would be good.

I would also like to think it's a great idea because PTAC really helped move forward and get the additional $3 million, so I feel like we did a lot of the hard work but ask them to do the really hard work of how to divide it amongst themselves, but I would be interested in what their thoughts are of how to do that moving forward. And then I guess we'll leave it up to the PTN staff to figure out how to actually put that in rulemaking language.

MR. UNDERWOOD: Michelle, this is Brad
Underwood. I think it's an excellent idea and any time you're going to get rural providers involved in helping them decide on how they're going to split up those funds, you're going to have more buy-in, more understanding, people are going to be more with the program. And if we're talking about having a PTAC member involved in that committee, J.R. Salazar -- I don't want to put him on the spot -- but has a vast understanding of the funding formulas, the amount of money to be distributed, kind of knows where this all came from, and to me, he would be an excellent representative for this group.

MR. GLEASON: And since nobody can see each other at this meeting.

MR. SALAZAR: I tell you what, thank you, Brad, I really owe you one.

(General laughter.)

MR. GADBOIS: I thought Brad was going to volunteer himself and then he volunteered you.

MR. SALAZAR: That's kind of what I thought, too.

Actually, two things. One is I agree with all the comments that are being said. I think that we need to get buy-in from the communities that we serve, and so I'm fine with that, and if we're looking for a rural member, then I'm fine with serving on that as well.
I will say, kind of getting off track of what we're talking about, Eric, and filling all the seats for PTAC, I do think that we need to think about the areas of Texas, because I think we have the Dallas area -- and I guess what I'm trying to say is I'm the farthest west and I'm in Central Texas, and so when we come to a point of maybe having more PTAC members or committees or that kind of thing, I think we need to be aware that we need representation from that area.

MR. GLEASON: Yes. Thank you, J.R.
MS. BLOOMER: Good point, J.R.
MR. SALAZAR: Nothing against the Dallas person.
MS. BLOOMER: I guess it depends on how the rest of the state looks at the regions, but you have myself, Christina, Al who are physically located in the DFW area, and then Brad is not too far off, we can reach him in an hour, and you're not that far west, J.R.
MR. GADBOIS: And Austin ain't that far south.
MS. BLOOMER: Well, it's further, but there's even further south and further west, and so I think perception would go a long way as far as buy-in amongst not just the three rural or small urban providers that are serving on that working group but for the entire small urban and rural folks if there's much more broad
representation.

MR. GADBOIS: Although that isn't just an Eric thing.

MR. SALAZAR: I agree with that.

MR. GADBOIS: Each one of you have gotten appointed by somebody and that somebody probably still has appointments to make.

MS. BLOOMER: And Eric, do we know which appointees are left?

MR. GLEASON: I believe we do, yes. We need an urban provider and I'm thinking we need a general public or a user. Glenn, you're a general public?

MR. GADBOIS: Yes. I think we had this conversation last time. As I remember it, Eric, the lieutenant governor has two or three appointments they need to make.

MR. GLEASON: Yes. They have two: they need an urban provider and they need a user, I believe.

Christina, you're a general public member, if I'm not mistaken.

MS. CRAIN: Right. But they still have those two they need to make?

MR. GLEASON: Yes.

MR. UNDERWOOD: This is Brad. I believe I sit as the urban representative for the lieutenant governor.
Correct?

MR. GLEASON: You were appointed by the speaker.

MR. UNDERWOOD: I'm sorry. You're right. I apologize.

MS. CRAIN: So Eric, say that again, because I'll email the person over there that I correspond with just to make sure that somebody is on top of that.

MR. GLEASON: You know what, Christina, I'm going to have Ginnie double check when we get back to the office. I'm sure one of them is an urban area provider. Let me put it this way: there's a provider position -- let me speak about this accurately. There are three provider positions on the committee: we have J.R. who is rural, we have Brad who is a combination of small urban and rural, and so in my way of thinking and our way of thinking, to provide balance, we need an urban provider. But the only requirement is that they be a provider as far as the Legislative Code goes.

And then let us double check on the second one to make sure we've got that right. And then we still have one more I think needs to come from the speaker. I'm pretty sure that's right.

And then, Al, I think your term is coming up in September.
MR. ABESON: Right.

MS. BLOOMER: And Eric, maybe what I'm hearing from the committee is if we can figure out which positions we have vacant and who is to appoint them, maybe we can take a more active role. Because I think you've sort of been given direction to just continue on as is, and maybe what we can do from a member perspective is get in touch with the lieutenant governor and the speaker and possibly with potential individuals they might want to consider. Because I know when the governor's office called me they were looking for suggestions for other appointees that they could make, so maybe we could help them out a little by suggesting folks either to them or having folks get in contact with them that may be interested in getting appointed.

MS. BLOOMER: And Michelle, I think we probably need to try to circle back to the agenda.

MS. BLOOMER: We're back.

So I think, if I'm hearing the committee correctly, so I think we've had discussion and generally I think there's concurrence. Do I have a motion for the department to move out to consult with the transit industry?

MR. ABESON: This is Al. I would make that motion.
MS. BLOOMER: A second?

MR. UNDERWOOD: This is Brad. I would second that with Glenn's recommendation about having a member of PTAC join that committee.

MS. BLOOMER: Al, do you accept the friendly amendment?

MR. ABESON: Sure.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. And then we'll go ahead, and all those in favor.

(A roll call vote was taken - all ayes.)

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. Moving on to item number 5 on the agenda.

MR. GLEASON: Michelle, can I suggest to you that we flip 5 and 6 at this point. 5 I think is a fairly substantive conversation, 6 I'm hoping we can get through it pretty quickly and then we can spend the rest of the time on 5.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. If there are no objections, we'll move to item 6: Nomination of a member of PTAC to serve on the department advisory committee related to transportation development credits.

MR. GLEASON: At today's commission meeting the commission approved direction to the department to form a formal rulemaking advisory committee to assist the department in looking at the current rules for
transportation development credits, and that minute order
that they approved establishes a seven-member rulemaking
advisory committee, and one of the members of that
committee is someone from PTAC.

The general background for this effort is that
there is an interest in trying to understand how the
department can sort of maximize the benefit, if you will,
of having transportation development credits.
Transportation development credits generally get earned or
accumulate because of toll road investment. It's the
combination of the investment itself and some ongoing
exenses associated with that.

And so right now the last time I had a number
from anyone, the department had about 1.7 billion -- with
a B -- transportation development credits, and those can
be used, development credits can be used to draw down
federal program funding from the Highway Program and from
the Transit Program. And we have used them quite
extensively in the past for public transportation
purposes, as you know, and there is an interest generally
in the department of expanding that use and exploring ways
that they can use those development credits to draw down
Federal Highway Program funding.

So this is going to be a very important effort,
a comprehensive effort to look at the current rules.
Clearly public transportation has an interest, and so the committee is on the rulemaking advisory committee because PTAC has a person there, and there is also a slot for an individual from a metropolitan transit authority, so one of the large metros in the state will also have a position on the rulemaking advisory committee.

I don't have a time frame for the effort for the committee today. I spoke with John Barton, assistant executive director, and he envisions an effort that might involve, he said, three four-hour meetings of the advisory committee, so that gives you a sense of the level of that. Now, I don't know if it's going to be three or four, but I think the idea is to bring the group together for long periods of time when they do get together so they can accomplish a lot of work.

So it doesn't seem as though it's going to be a lot of work stretched over a lot of different meetings, but rather work that's trying to be done in some fairly focused meetings. What I don't know is how long the department is envisioning to take to get to proposed rules and then the three or four months you need to add to that for the rulemaking process itself.

There is a general recognition by the people who have been involved in this conversation so far that there is a need to preserve the historical use of
development credits for the public transportation program
and I think there's an opportunity as a part of this
conversation to explore expanding the application of
development credits to public transportation in other
areas of the state.

So with that, I will turn it back over to the
committee and I would like to leave the meeting today with
an action by the committee of nominating someone.

MS. BLOOMER: Eric, this is Michelle. Can you
share with us who the other five representatives are?

MR. GLEASON: The areas that are called out --
and I don't have the minute order in front of me but Bobby
does, so here it is. This is verbatim from the exhibit on
the adopted minute order: three members, each one
appointed by the three metropolitan planning organizations
with the largest local balances of transportation
development credits, and so a local balance refers to the
areas that are actually generating the development credits
to begin with, so the Dallas-Fort Worth area, Houston,
Austin, those would be your three; one member appointed by
the Public Transportation Advisory Committee; one member
appointed by a non-transportation management area MPO; one
member appointed by a metropolitan transit -- it says
provider, the intention is a metropolitan transit
authority, a large metro; and then finally, one member
appointed by a city that partners with the state on
transportation projects. That's the membership.

MR. UNDERWOOD: This is Brad Underwood. Can I
say something really quick? This to me is a huge, huge
thing for the simple fact of rural and small urban
providers rely heavily on TDCs for matching their capital
projects, such as buses, and I don't know if I speak for
everyone but this is one of the single issues this year
that could be just absolutely monumental for public
transportation.

I think we need to be very serious about who we
nominate for this and really someone who has a little bit
of experience and understands the whole combination of
working of TDCs. It's kind of a complicated issue until
you really kind of wrap your head around it, and to me,
this is huge for public transportation providers because
without them it would be very difficult for us to get our
capital projects funded. And so this is something we need
to take very seriously.

MS. BLOOMER: Brad, this is Michelle. I
completely agree. I think it's very important, based on
the existing use of TDCs. I also think it is extremely
important on future and additional uses of TDCs. So not
only sort of protecting how TDCs have been used
traditionally which I think is the general consensus that
has been floated so far, but I also think it's extremely important for the small urban and rural providers, as well as regional coordination to think of the opportunities going forward with that 75 percent generated by the regions, that we don't lose out on any opportunities for those funneled to either the highway side or the large metropolitan transit authorities because a highway project or a large MTA could disappear 1.7 billion in TDC credits fairly quickly.

So I would agree, I think it's a very important topic.

MR. GADBOIS: This is Glenn, and I'll just urge that as somebody who worked on the legislation allowing these to be used in the first place and then worked with transit providers across the state this has been one of those key little pieces that once transit providers were able to start using development credits that really solved a lot of problems. And so for those on PTAC who don't understand that or this is an esoteric issue, trust us, this is probably one of the more important issues we'll deal with this year.

MR. ABESON: This is Al. I think, as I understand it, we have three members of the committee who are very, very closely involved in providing transportation: we have J.R., we have Michelle, and we
have Brad. And I think that the experience, knowledge and personal commentary that any of these three people can provide to this committee would be vital, so I would propose consideration of those three people as the potential representatives of this committee on that committee.

MR. GADBOIS: And Al, I want to suggest a slightly different take, not to exclude what you've said or the people that that applies to for consideration, but given the list that Eric read, there are going to be a number of transportation providers on there that use toll credits now and have an interest in them. What I would suggest is particularly unique to PTAC and that PTAC can contribute to that conversation is what Michelle suggested, we need to see if we can't find somebody in there that's able to participate actively in the conversation about how to use toll credits into the future in a very productive, if not innovative, way. And that can be our important contribution.

MR. ABESON: I guess I understand what you're saying in terms of the contribution the individuals can make, but I feel very comfortable that Brad and Michelle and J.R. could, in fact, make that contribution from the very real perspective of day-to-day doing it.

MS. BLOOMER: And Glenn, this is Michelle.
Just to sort of tack onto what you were saying, I understand there will be three MPO representatives, one from Austin, DFW and Houston, and I can't speak for Austin and Houston and I don't know who the DFW rep will be, but back to my concern earlier is if you take all the priorities -- and we're looking specifically at DFW -- my concern from a PTAC standpoint would be that transportation, and specifically small urban and rural transportation, doesn't always rise to the top.

So I think even though we have representatives and there will be an MTA representative -- and I'm not sure how I feel about that either -- I would agree with Al that I think we need somebody who has some experience actually using the funding and then who can further think outside the box of how we've traditionally used it to how if we could just get a little crumb of the 1.7 billion how we could be very strategic in using that to meet our ultimate goal.

Eric, can you tell us again how much time were you talking about previously? You mentioned focus meetings, a couple of actual meetings or conference calls?

MR. GLEASON: Well, please bear in mind I think this is still coming together. When I asked John Barton what kind of a commitment does being on this committee represent, he said that people should think about three
four-hour meetings. So I think without pinning anybody
down to that exact schedule, I think what it tells you is
they're going to try and focus the meetings with longer
meetings to get more done, and respecting the
geographically diverse membership of the committee when it
comes together, not try and require a lot of meetings to
get the work done but rather try and do it in a smaller
number but each one will be a little longer. That's all I
know right now.

MR. GADBOIS: So Michelle and Al, I get the
point that you're making about making sure that small
urban and/or rural is well plugged into the discussion and
PTAC may be the only place that that would happen, the
only way that would happen. So here's what would help me
feel more comfortable is if whoever from PTAC agrees to do
this they add to the work plan not just the three
meetings, four hours, but they're committing to a separate
meeting with some other key people who have the ability to
think creatively about this, particularly Morris and
Krusee. And I'm happy to help make the arrangement on
that meeting if that's what needs to happen, but I really
do think we need to have some creativity in this
discussion about the use of development credits and the
people that were named thus far will be there representing
their specific, I suspect -- we don't know who they are so
I'm not sure about this -- I suspect will be there representing a particular interest.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. And Glenn, back to your point, I think the PTAC representative will be representing all of PTAC as well as all small urban and rural transit provides in the State of Texas.

MR. GADBOIS: I just want to make sure whoever is doing it is going to agree that they'll also, at the right time in the process, get a sit-down with some of the smartest minds on transportation who understand development credits intimately from a big picture perspective, who think creatively about how --

MS. BLOOMER: Did we lose Glenn?

MR. GADBOIS: No. Glenn is here. Can you not hear me?

MR. GLEASON: We lost your thought.

MR. SALAZAR: This is J.R., and I agree with all the comments that Glenn is saying and Brad is saying, and I can't think of anybody better than Michelle, if she's willing to accept that nomination, then I guess I'm going to make the nomination that we have Michelle Bloomer, our chairperson, on that committee.

MR. ABESON: I think there's a nice logic in that recommendation, J.R. In addition to the fact that she serves as the chair of the committee, she obviously
has exactly what I'm looking for in terms of the sophisticated day-to-day or as the rubber meets the road knowledge of the potential use, big picture use of transportation credits. So I would clearly support your suggestion.

MR. GLEASON: Michelle, this is Eric. If I can suggest to the committee, I think that North Central Texas COG is already going to have a member on the rulemaking advisory committee, and I think it could prove awkward for the advisory committee to have two staff people from the Council of Governments on there. I'm just thinking that might be a little awkward. So I would ask the committee to consider that.

I think Michelle would be a great voice and a great advocate, I just think there's some practical issues with it.

MS. BLOOMER: Two thoughts. Prior to this I did speak with Michael Morris in the event this happened, and he didn't seem to think there would be a conflict.

My other concern is, back to my original point, I do transit here in the Dallas-Fort Worth are, and transit is great, but when you put it up against highways, toll roads, TDM, ITS and a lot of other things, it's not always the highest thing on the list. So I understand having two people from the DFW MPO area might seem like
there's double representation, I'm not sure that would be
the case. But I don't have an issue either way as long as
our PTAC representative can clearly sort of stand our
ground as far as small urban and rural goes, and I don't
want the DFW region or any other region or highway side to
sort of overshadow transit and relegate us to something
other than where we should be which is an equal partner to
any other mode in the state.

MR. ABESON: I would add this thought, that as
the chair of PTAC, Michelle doesn't bring her agency to
bear on what we do on behalf of the state, and I think
that very same representation would the presentation as to
why -- that and the other things we've said about her
qualities and knowledge is why Michelle would be effective
and logical on this particular committee. So I feel very
comfortable in supporting J.R.'s suggestion once again.

MR. GADBOIS: Al, I completely agree with you,
and Michelle, you've got my added instruction.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay, Glenn. Sorry, I'm having a
hard time on the phone.

MR. GADBOIS: This is Glenn. I completely
concur with Al and J.R.'s nomination of you if you're
willing to serve, and just ask that you add to the
workload the meeting to make sure you're thinking as
strategically about opportunities as possible. If you
need me to help loop Krusee into that conversation, I
will.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. Are there any other
thoughts or questions?

MR. ABESON: This is an action item, is it not,
Michelle?

MS. BLOOMER: Yes. I just thought before I
proceeded. Then we have a motion and a second to
volunteer myself -- thank you, guys -- for the
transportation development credit rulemaking. We'll just
go down the list.

(A roll call vote was taken - all ayes.)

MS. BLOOMER: With the added note that per your
request, Glenn, make sure I work with all members of PTAC
as well as some of the other smartest minds on this issue
in the state.

MR. GADBOIS: Thanks.

MS. BLOOMER: Now going backwards to item 5:
Review and discussion of the draft PTAC strategic plan and
guiding principles. Eric, do you want to introduce the
item?

MR. GLEASON: I will. And I think what we're
looking at is a set of guiding principles. The
conversation generally we've had in the past I think began
around a strategic plan and pursuing a strategic plan.
When we got together in April for the workshop, the conversation was about is there work the committee can do around perhaps a set of principles that it could adopt to help guide its efforts, and at least in my view, not necessarily take on the burden of producing a strategic plan.

So we went away from the workshop in April with the direction to try and pull together what we thought some example principles, guiding principles might look like. We sent those out to you last week and so I think today what we want to do is kind of talk about the notion of guiding principles, whether this idea is looking like it could be useful for the committee. The examples we've provided you with really were nothing more than just examples to try and get the committee thinking about this approach and trying to see if you could imagine how a set of principles like this might help in your work on items as they come before you.

This is just a discussion item today, and what I could suggest to the committee is we could go a couple of different directions on this. We had hoped, I think, to get these out to you earlier than we did, and I think at the workshop we may have talked about getting them out to you earlier enough so that you could get individual comments back to us so that when we got together today for
the meeting we could have a revised set of principles reflecting those comments. The time frame didn't allow us to do that, we didn't get them out until late last week.

So today's conversation can simply be individual members reacting to what we have here and we can take notes and go back and put something together that reflects those comments. The committee could try and orchestrate sort of a committee discussion of these things, but it is not an action item, and so we can proceed today any way you want.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. I think what I'd like to do, it's not an action item, we could just go ahead and open it up for general discussion or reaction from the committee members, and if somebody wants to start.

MR. ABESON: This is Al. I spent quite a bit of time with these trying to clean up language that made sense to me, but more important than that was what was missing for me was a clear statement as to what the purpose of these guiding principles were.

As you said, Eric, I had no idea how we were going to proceed, so it may be that my comments are not going to be very useful, but I see this as material that would serve the current committee and future members of the committee hopefully over time to guide into the future back to the big picture that we talked about at our
meeting in Arlington as well as earlier today.

And so I'm uncertain first of the specific language that would define what the purpose of the guiding principles was, and then I played with some language and I've shared that with Michelle late yesterday. And then I went through and did kind of fairly heavy editing or rewriting of some of them and still was lacking in kind of a feeling of comprehensiveness. For example, nowhere is there reference to personnel, personnel recruitment, personnel retention, personnel training, which I think there should be a principle about the quality, the quantity of the people that we are investing in or should be investing in to lead the operation of these transit systems around the state.

So I guess in conclusion, I'm a bit confused myself as to if these principles are ones, as stated and as revised by me, at least, to get us to the goal that we talked about in Arlington, and I'm not sure those comments are terribly helpful.

MS. BLOOMER: Thank you, Al, for kicking it off.

Just to tack onto that, I think my biggest question I had, Eric, I think the guiding principles lay out the how we're going to try to do something. What I'm sort of missing and I think Al was hitting on is the what,
what are we trying to accomplish as a state as far as public transportation is concerned, and why. I mean, why do we think it's important, why does TxDOT and the legislature spend $30-some million a year, what are we trying to accomplish? Are we trying to accomplish service coverage across the entire state, or are we trying to leverage the limited amount of resources we have to provide the most number of trips? Because I'm not sure that those two goals are the same.

MR. GADBOIS: And Michelle, are you done?


MR. GADBOIS: I guess my sense in looking through these is kind of what Al reflects and definitely what you reflect. I'm a rather tangible person, and would rather focus on work plan and getting that started quickly than spending the next six months to a year talking about principles and refining those. Although Al's statements helped me to understand why those might be useful to have.

As a consequence, my response was a different direction than Al's so I'll just throw that out on the table for consideration as well. I would suggest with some refinement to principles that we could come up fairly quickly with principles we can agree to broadly to guide us, but that our focus ought to be on, even if it's kind of an incremental approach, ought to be focused on a work
plan, what is it that we could do over the next six months that would make PTAC relevant and helpful to some of the major challenges that are facing public transportation.

And so I would like to propose that we think about a much more specific action-oriented process than what's being proposed by these general principles.

MS. BLOOMER: Glenn, this is Michelle. I know I agree with what you're saying. Before we can have an action-oriented plan -- which I definitely think we need -- I also think we need to sort of answer those questions about what we're trying to do and why we're trying to do it, and then the action-oriented plan gets to the how, and the time frame in which we're going to do it, six months, a year, would get to the when.

MR. GADBOIS: And I'll agree with that, but what could we do to get -- that's action -- what could we do to get to the what and the why.

MS. BLOOMER: I think maybe what we can start to do, and I think one of the questions is how much time do we want to spend on putting the planning piece together, but I think if we don't know where we're trying to get to, it's going to be hard to figure out what we're going to do to get us there, so maybe we take the next couple of meetings or months.

And Eric, we're such a small committee, it's
kind of hard to break us up into a subcommittee. Could
two or three members sort of work together to try to
narrow down or answer the question of the what and the why
and then we can share that with the larger committee at a
meeting in about a month or two, and then starting putting
together the how, the actual work plan steps?

   MR. GLEASON: We've done subcommittees before
and the committee can create subcommittees to pursue work.

   MS. BLOOMER: Is there a way we could do it
where it's less formal than a subcommittee so we don't
have to have an agenda that's published?

   MR. GLEASON: I think we can make that work, I
think that's fine. We will try and make it as informal as
we can, for sure.

   I do think that the committee has to take --
and unfortunately it's not on your agenda today so we're
going to have to work around that -- but I think the
committee probably does need to take action to form a
subcommittee, and that's not on your agenda today. And so
that's a formal action that can be out there, but in the
spirit of trying to move this along, I think we can
probably be responsive.

   I think the way to do this, guys, is if each of
you continue to express your ideas and interests to us as
individuals, then we can assemble those as staff and
continue to sort of produce a product that we can send out
to you as individuals and you can comment on it and we can
make progress that way. Sorry to be so bureaucratic about
it but I think that's probably how we have to do it.

Bobby has got a suggestion.

MR. KILLIBREW: Good afternoon. This is Bobby
Killebrew for the record.

Another suggestion the department can do, we
can work informally with a small portion of the total
committee, and then as the department we can respond back
to PTAC at its next regular meeting with a report from the
department. And that will still allow us to have direct
committee action on this item.

MR. GADBOIS: So the department forms a
drafting committee through the department?

MR. KILLIBREW: We don't actually form
anything. We just work informally with a couple of PTAC
representatives to further shake this out, and then at
your next meeting we come back with a more drafted item
that the whole committee can look at and take action on if
they want to.

MS. BLOOMER: I think that's a good
recommendation, sort of where I was going, Bobby. And I
think what I'm looking for is something that helps us
address the questions of the who, what, where, when, why,
how and how much. And we know how much money the state spends every year for public transportation, I guess I'm just looking for the what and the why and then what sort of targeted action-oriented stuff we can take to get to your point, Glenn, to help move the state in that direction.

So we probably need to give the department some guidance on who would like to participate in that informal discussion with them to put a little bit more to this.

MR. ABESON: This is Al. I would volunteer to help with what we have been calling the guiding principles piece. In terms of the work plan, I would defer to others who are actually delivering services.

MS. BLOOMER: Go ahead. Sorry.

MR. GADBOIS: This is Glenn. I was going to volunteer Al and myself to work on that since we're the ones kind of jumping in and showing interest.

MS. BLOOMER: I think that would be good to help us answer the big questions and then we can all sort of add some of the specific items when we come back next time.

Is there anybody else that would like to participate?

MR. GLEASON: I think we probably need to leave it at two.
MS. BLOOMER: Two, okay.

MR. GLEASON: Michelle, if I could before we leave this topic, I need to kind of check in with the committee on something. When we talked about this at the workshop I think the conversation was around we've identified items for the committee work program, we've talked about working on development credits, we've talked about looking at the 5310 program, we know we've got work on the formula coming up, there's interest in working on coordination.

And I thought that the idea behind the principles was to try and pull together a set of statements, if you will, that represented the various interests or the set of interests that the committee has in advancing public transportation in the state, so that when we are looking at transportation development credits, for example, we can ask ourselves how is it that development credits can be used, you know, for example, with principle 1, to help enable strong, viable public transportation systems, or number 5, how can they help us adequately maintain and expand critical transit assets.

So what we're doing is not necessarily trying to capture a vision, if you will, or an end state or a general statement of where we're going with public transportation as much as can we capture the interests
that the committee has and get those into some statements, some principles, if you will, that whenever a topic is in front of the committee from their work program these principles can be on the table and the committee can be going back and forth, depending on the topic, and using the principles to help shape their recommendations on the topic.

So that's where we were trying to go with this piece and I thought that was the sense of the committee from the workshop.

MR. ABESON: Eric, this is Al. Let me read to you some language that I wrote yesterday, because what you just said is very consistent with my own thinking in anticipation of what we were doing.

MR. GLEASON: Okay, good.

MR. ABESON: See if this works for you conceptually. In order to fulfill its mission, the PTAC has adopted the following guiding principles. The members of PTAC feel that these principles establish the foundation for the work of the committee and should be reflected in all recommendations brought forward for consideration by the commission, department, and as appropriate, the legislature.

Does that do it for you?

MR. GLEASON: That does it for me, but I'll
leave it up to the committee. I think, Al, what you said there is totally consistent, and you said it much better than I did, with what I was trying to go for.

MR. ABESON: How about the rest of the committee, and Michelle, does that reflect the intention of this document?

MR. UNDERWOOD: This is Brad Underwood. You made perfect sense, Al, you summed it up, it was good.

MS. CRAIN: I agree. This is Christina.

MR. ABESON: I'm not hearing from our chair.

MS. BLOOMER: I was waiting for everybody else to have their comments.

Al, I think that goes a long way. I think the one thing I'm still feeling is missing is, I guess my concern is I would not disagree with any of those six principles listed there, I think those are all things that you could get anybody to say yes, I'm for that. I guess my concern is knowing that we have very limited resources, how do we prioritize amongst those principles, and if we have to make a choice between 1 and 6, how do we do that? Do we have something to go back to look at that helps us go okay, well, I believe sustainable and livable communities are a good idea. Nobody is going to say I think they're a bad idea -- at least I don't think they'd say it in public.
My concern is should we be trying to buy recycled paper and build LED buildings and do a lot of the initiative under sustainable, livable communities when we have basic needs and functions that we can't yet meet. And so I'm coming at it from experience because with our regional coordination plan we had it very broad and general, we thought that was great because everything could be then linked back to our plan and derived from it, but what we've found is that is true and what it's done is it's made it very difficult for us to prioritize and be strategic about what we're actually doing in sort of a systematic matter, because everything gets put into that bucket as yes, it meets it.

MR. ABESON: But in the final analysis, you did have to make decisions using that plan, and so you said well -- I presume you did this -- if we do this activity, we support this initiative over that one, it's because we think, one, it will stimulate more activity, two, it will achieve success more quickly, three, it will in total have greater impact. I mean, if you have the principles then you can apply them to each decision with some kind of an assessment as to the outcome that will be achieved. Isn't that right?

MS. BLOOMER: Right.

MR. ABESON: I think you can do that to some
degree with what -- not all the language we were given by
the state, but for example, to use your example,
sustainable, livable communities, I added to that to
recognize and incorporate appropriate provisions for
public transportation. So I wouldn't include that without
something about transportation in it.

Maybe I'm beating this too much here on the
phone. What I would prefer is that if the committee is
comfortable with having Glenn and I go forward, I would
share what I've done with Glenn, and perhaps, Michelle,
you could add your comments, and anybody else could do the
same and let us go to work on a draft with whoever Eric
would like us to work with from his office, and get the
ball rolling.

MR. GADBOIS: Before we kick it off, Al -- this
is Glenn -- let me just ask you another question that will
help clarify for me and maybe give other people a chance
to make sure they're in agreement on.

Actually, I like the language that you
proposed, I'm a little more comfortable with the broad
principle statements given your conversation about them
thus far, but here's still the question I have so help me
understand how it works.

When we're looking at the 5310 program, for
example, we're going to agree to all these principles, I
agree with Michelle, everybody is going to agree to these principles broadly. How does enabling strong, viable public transportation system get us to make a decision on what's successful in a 5310 program?

MR. ABESON: Well, one way I would respond to that would be to say -- again, I have to use the words I've got here, but I have establish and sustain effective, strong public transportation systems that meet the needs of all Texans that use public transportation. I would operationalize the word "effective" for one thing. I would operationalize the word "sustain." What do those words mean in terms of what should the 5310 program demand over time in terms of will it in fact sustain over time meeting whatever standard we establish, and the same for effective.

I would guess that there are some 5310 programs out there that are a whole lot better than some others. Some would meet our test for effective and some wouldn't. So that would be a basis on which one could make decisions as to what should the 5310 program look like for the entire state.

MR. GADBOIS: Hang on just a second because I want to finish this and check with the rest of the group. So if the rest of the group, Al, agrees then what I'm hoping we will get to is that next step that you just
described, not necessarily for 5310, but add to these the additional layer of how these principles can apply to help us do our business, our work plan. And if we're going to do that as an outcome and everybody agrees that's what we should be doing, then I'm happy to participate in that.

MR. ABESON: That was going to be my hope. The last thing I want to do, particularly at this point in my life, is do stuff that's meaningless, so I hope that it really does have the capability of enabling the committee, as I said earlier, over time to establish priorities and to evaluate activity in relation to those priorities.

MR. GADBOIS: Okay. Is the rest of the committee comfortable with us helping the department to draft that?

MS. CRAIN: This is Christina. Yes.

MS. BLOOMER: This is Michelle. Yes. I think you two definitely have some very passionate interest in this, so we will leave it to you.

What I would like to ask is if we can sort of get something back out to the committee say by mid August, if not sooner.

MR. ABESON: This is Al. Eric, who would you like us to liaison with in your office?

MR. GLEASON: Kelly Kirkland will be the contact. I'll be pretty engaged in this as well, folks.
Kelly and I kind of tag-teamed on this.

MR. ABESON: How about we start, later today I will forward to you, Glenn, and to Kelly and to you, Eric, what I drafted yesterday, and everybody can go at it. Or I could send that to the whole committee for that matter. What's the preference?

MR. GLEASON: Let's keep it within the working group for now, and let's plan on, as we talked earlier, trying to bring this thing along significantly and then get it in front of the full committee in a more formal way.

MR. ABESON: Okay.

MR. GADBOIS: Okay. And can I suggest a deadline? We're shooting our work to be done by the end of July.

MR. ABESON: Sounds good to me.

MR. GLEASON: If I can just complicate that a bit, Glenn. I'm going to be out of the office the last two weeks of July, so I might be more helpful to this process if the deadline were the end of the first week or second week in August.

MR. GADBOIS: End of first week of August. How about that?

MR. ABESON: Well, I'm going to be done with it by the end of August because then I'm taking off. I'm out
by the end of July and I'm taking off, so I'd like to be
done by the end of July.

     MR. GADBOIS:  Al, you and I will get our work
done by July and then it goes to the department and they
can get their work done when Eric gets back.

     MR. ABESON:  And we'll just let Eric go on his
vacation guilty as hell.

     (General laughter.)

     MR. GADBOIS:  Bottom line is this is a
department thing, so you can deal with it when you can
deal with it.

     MS. BLOOMER:  I think that sounds like a great
schedule with some concrete time frames.  And then Ginnie,
maybe we can start thinking about our next meeting no
later than the end of August so we can wrap this up before
Al leaves us.

     MR. GLEASON:  Ginnie just walked back in the
room, she had to leave to make a phone call, but I think
she heard all of that, Michelle.  And we will start
looking at a date out there toward the end of August, if
not then, then very early September to get this back in
front of the committee.

     And I had begun drafting some discussion pieces
for each of these principles, sort of my thinking of how
they might come into plan in some of the committee's work,
and I will share those with Glenn and Al and I'll flip those to them pretty quickly, and so that will help them sort of think through the next step as well.

MR. ABESON: And could I have Kelly's email address?

MR. KIRKLAND: Yes. It's kelly.kirkland.

MR. ABESON: K-E-L-L-Y?

MR. KIRKLAND: That's correct. @txdot.gov.

MR. ABESON: Thank you.

MR. KIRKLAND: You're welcome.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. Are there any other items for discussion on item 5? IF not, we'll move on to item 7, public comment. Ginnie, do we have anybody signed up for public comment?

MS. MAYLE: No, we don't.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. We'll move on to item 8, confirm date for next meeting which we'll do at a future time, I guess, via email?

MR. GLEASON: Yes.

MS. BLOOMER: Okay. So no action is needed there.

And then the final item is adjournment of the meeting, and I need a motion, a second and all in favor.

MR. GADBOIS: Glenn so moves.

MS. BLOOMER: Second?
MS. CRAIN: Christina seconds.

MS. BLOOMER: And we can just all in favor say aye.

(A chorus of ayes.)

MS. BLOOMER: Thank you all.

(Whereupon, at 2:40 p.m., the meeting was concluded.)
CERTIFICATE

MEETING OF: Public Transportation Advisory Committee
LOCATION: Austin, Texas
DATE: June 30, 2011

I do hereby certify that the foregoing pages, numbers 1 through 66, inclusive, are the true, accurate, and complete transcript prepared from the verbal recording made by electronic recording by Nancy H. King before the Texas Department of Transportation.

7/14/2011
(Transcriber) (Date)

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