



RTAC MEETING SUMMARY
June 23, 2011
Mesabi Trail Office
Eveleth, MN

Attendees:

Doug Grindall	Koochiching County
Bob Manzoline	St. Louis & Lake RRA
Alan Goodman	Area County Engineers
Denny Johnson	Mn/DOT
Steve Kniefel	St. Louis County Townships
Mike Forsman	St. Louis County
Catherine McLynn	Itasca County
Don Mohawk	Mn/DOT
Wayne Olson	Carlton County
Bryan Anderson	ARDC
Liz Sarabia	ARDC
Jon Mason	ARDC

1. Welcome and Introductions

Call to order by Steve Kniefel at 1:10 p.m. and introductions were made by the attendees. Chair Bergman was unable to attend.

2. Committee Business

Call for a motion for the approval of the meeting agenda with the annual report and work plan included. Motion by Al Goodman/Catherine McLynn; passed unanimously.

Call for approval of April 7, 2010 Meeting Summary. Motion by Catherine McLynn / Denny Johnson; passed unanimously.

3. Presentation by Bob Manzoline

Bob Manzoline reported that the trail work continues from Grand Rapids to Ely. On Highway 53, during construction they replaced the old trail on the west side; they moved it to the east side. He also mentioned several other projects that are taking place explaining that they try to take advantage of opportunities as they arise. This keeps the costs down with quick results. The tour of the facility would be after the meeting.

4. Review of 2012 Work Plan by Bryan Anderson

Bryan reviewed the budget as listed on page 1 of the FY 2012 Work Plan. He added that explanations for GIS/Functional Classification (\$5,000) and the Community Trail Implementation (\$3,000) are found on page 3. This is work that has been performed in the past and will continue in 2012.

He continued to explain Statewide Planning Participation (\$7,000) which was not as often in 2011 for the RDO Transportation Subcommittee and Freight Advisory Committee, but more for the JARC/New Freedom and 5310 programs. He also was involved in the State Aviation Committee this year.

RTAC will continue to fund the in-kind grant program in the amount of \$28,000. This amount, as in the past, can be adjusted.

Additionally he mentioned some of the activities that ARDC staff has continued to be involved with as listed on page 4 and 5. The North Shore Scenic Drive Council has received \$35,000 which will allow ARDC to provide staffing services and to work on the corridor management plan. Funding has been received for Virginia, Chisholm and Deer River Safe Routes to Schools. ARDC staff has also provided bicycle education under the Helmet Hero program. Finally, staff will continue to work with the Superior National Forest Scenic Byway Council. The Northeast Minnesota Area Transportation Partnership will also continue under another contract with Mn/DOT which is in process.

Motion to approve the FY 2012 Work Plan by Catherine McLynn/Mike Forsman; passed unanimously.

5. Review of Annual Report FY 2011

Bryan Anderson provided an overview of the annual report. There were three meetings held and an overview of meeting content was found on page 3. As the reports on the in-kind projects for FY 2011 would be presented at today's meeting, he asked for members to review page 8 which lists other meetings that staff attended during the year.

Catherine McLynn asked about Cavour Johnson becoming a member. Bryan Anderson pointed out that there a large number of openings on the RTAC – aviation (airports), rail, environmental, DNR, USFS. Several members offered possible candidates. Bryan will follow up.

Motion to accept the FY 2011 Annual Report by Doug Grindall/Bob Manzoline; passed unanimously.

6. Project Updates – Bryan Anderson, Jon Mason, Elizabeth Sarabia

The first project presented was the Hibbing Transit Study which is still being worked on by Ellen Pillsbury. Ellen will be at the January meeting to provide a complete report; Bryan Anderson asked Don Mohawk for an overview as Don served on the study committee. The study was an effort to expand and increase efficiency in transit services; Hibbing is the largest land-wise city in Minnesota. Transit service had been based on the old land use area, but there has been considerable expansion of the City; there were concerns over funding. After the needs assessment, route service was expanded to the south of the City, to the golf course, trailer park; also, had the first fare increase in a number of years. Don reported the study was well done.

Jon Mason presented the International Falls Bike and Pedestrian Plan update. This project is also awaiting finalization. There had been a public workshop which included a walkability survey. Recommendations are in 3 stages – designating pedestrian routes, enforcing sidewalk ordinances, enforcing parking rules. This project should be completed by the end of month.

The next project will have a complete update by Josh Bergstad at the January meeting. The transportation component of the Babbitt Comprehensive Plan has been completed, but the comprehensive plan is still ongoing. The component was developed for the long term as this area is undergoing considerable changes due to the possibility of major industrial development. Two key components addressed was the separation of commercial traffic from residential areas and no expansion until plan is brought up to date with the need a safer connection to Babbitt addressed.

Elizabeth Sarabia reported on the Floodwood Depot Rest Area. The rest area is unique in that the City owns the building and the land is owned by Mn/DOT (usually Mn/DOT owns both). The first area addressed was the commitment of the site to being a rest area and that commitment would be service life of a Class I rest area – 30 to 40 years. This commitment means that the City has an obligation for another 15 to 20 years. The study continued to identify other challenges and made recommendations in three areas: appearance, activities and income. Appearance involved changes

that would make the site more appealing to visitors so that they would linger instead of just stopping, using the facilities and leaving. Activities focused on marketing strategies for local festivals, recreational opportunities, possibly a bike and pedestrian plan. The income recommendations presented opportunities to generate income for the operation of the rest and included items for sale such as hats, t-shirts, adding more vending machines.

7. In-Kind Grant Project Overview and Ranking

Four projects were submitted for RTAC funding in FY 2012: Beaver Bay Trailhead Development, Orr Transportation Plan Implementation, Lake Vermilion Trail Plan Implementation, and the Ranier Transportation System Evaluation.

Lake County would like ARDC to continue the work that was started for the Beaver Bay Trailhead. The County would like ARDC to identify community needs, make recommendations to address those needs, be involved in project agreements as the trailhead center will be built soon. The project cost will be \$6,250 - \$5,000 in RTAC funds and \$1,250 in local match.

Andy Hubley has been working with the City of Orr on their comprehensive plan. Once the plan is adopted the City would like to start implementation of several of their action steps. They would like ARDC to help with trails, assist in hiring an engineering firm for the 5 year transportation plan and to assist with the annual transportation review so that projects will remain on track. ARDC will offer technical assistance as the City progresses with its implementation strategies. The cost of the project is \$8,750, the City of Orr is requesting \$7,750 in RTAC funds and \$1,000 will be local match.

ARDC staff has been working with the Vermilion Resort Association on the development of the Lake Vermilion Trail Plan which would connect the lake, residents, businesses to Cook and Tower. In order to move this plan forward, it needs to be determined if it is feasible and/or cost effective. Though it will probably be a costly project, the plan has strong support. ARDC would continue to provide technical assistance. The cost of the project is \$7,000; the Lake Vermilion Resort Association is requesting \$5,600 in RTAC funds, with a local match of \$1,440.

The last project was the Ranier Transportation System Evaluation. The City of Ranier recently quadrupled its population, increased its municipal limits from 98 acres to 650+ acres through annexation of two residential areas and an industrial park. The City has agreed to maintain and repair existing roads in these areas. ARDC staff would assist the City in evaluating the roads, assess the local transportation system, ordinances, etc. which would be included in their comprehensive plan. The cost of this project is \$14,780;

the City is requesting \$10,000 in RTAC funds and will provide the local match.

After some discussion regarding the ability to handle all four projects if funding is available, a motion to accept all four projects by Mike Forsman/Wayne Olson; passed unanimously.

8. Recognition of Denny Johnson

Denny Johnson, Mn/DOT representative, will be retiring on June 29, 2011. In recognition of Denny's commitment to the RTAC, staff presented a certificate acknowledging his service.

9. Other Business

The next meeting will continue to be held following the ATP meeting in January. As soon as that information is available, members will be notified.

Possible agenda topic will be complete streets information to learn more about them.

Motion to adjourn Doug Grindall/Mike Forsman; passed unanimously. A tour of the facility was provided by Bob Manzoline.