

Coalition for Regional Public Transportation **Joint Leadership Meeting**

Date: Thursday, November 29, 2007
Time: 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.
Location: Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce offices

Meeting Notes:

Co-chairs Chuck Winder and Mayor Garret Nancolas welcomed the group. Introductions were made. Mayor Nancolas said he was encouraged with growing support for the local option and using the money for both roadways and transit. Winder stressed that finding adequate funding is a bipartisan issue.

2008 Draft Legislation Update

Ken Burgess of Veritas Advisors said that there has been a lot of feedback both locally and statewide about the first draft of the proposed legislation since the Coalition's Oct. 5 meeting. He said there were some major concerns and minor concerns with the draft legislation. He explained that the rewrite of the legislation would result in a document that reads much better and addresses many of the concerns.

Burgess said some of the concerns about the proposed legislation include:

- The structure of the Regional Transportation Authority and the amount of authority the RTA would have.
- The incompatibility of the board governance structure with certain areas of the state.
- A lack of clarity that any local option tax revenue would supplement, not replace, existing revenue sources.

Coalition members were told that the \$200 a million a year deficit in roadway funding identified by the ITD Forum on Transportation Investment in 1995 has now grown to about \$240 million a year.

Burgess said the next step in regards to the draft legislation is to convene a team of people to rewrite it. It is hoped this can be accomplished in the next two weeks. The team will include representatives from the Association of Idaho Cities, the Idaho Association of Counties and the Idaho Association of Highway Districts. All three groups have "conceptually agreed" to the legislation, Burgess said.

Winder told Coalition members that this legislation allows for local people to decide how to spend the money in their region. Burgess said that most of those people contacted about the proposed legislation support the concept of local sales tax authority.

Nancolas stressed that this legislation provides local residents control over their own destinies and that boils down to a quality of life issue.

Gen. Jim Brooks asked that the legislation be changed so as to require a summary, rather than a copy of the entire financing plan, be sent to every voter in the RTA district.

Steve Ahrens noted that the list of contacts made that was provided to Coalition members focused heavily on local groups and asked whether that will be outreach to other counties in southwest Idaho. He was told yes.

Coalition Organizational Update

Burgess said efforts were continuing to transform the Coalition into more of a statewide group. He said adding roadways to the funding recipient list has resulted in more interest and support in other parts of the state. He said plans were being finalized to add three or four more co-chairman from other parts of the state.

Burgess said he and others also are working on the messaging and outreach aspects of the Coalition. He said he hoped to schedule an event to introduce the redrafted legislation and the new name and makeup of the Coalition in the next several weeks. He also said there will be a Coalition website.

Other comments during the meeting:

- Mayor Dave Bieter said he was concerned that the bill requires both a supermajority (two-thirds) approval by voters to implement a local option sales tax and that any tax would sunset in 20 years. He said that the Coalition should not keep both provisions in the legislation. The mayor noted that resort cities in Idaho only require a 60 percent approval by voters to implement a local option tax. Burgess told the mayor that the supermajority requirement was needed to get the bill heard in the House Revenue and Taxation Committee. Ray Stark provided a history of the bill introduced in the state Legislature in 2007. He said legislators do not care about the voter percentages required for other tax levies.
- Matt Stoll said the redrafted legislation needs to be more general in terms of the board makeup in order to allow regions to set up a structure that fits their individual needs. He said at least one area in the state expressed concern that as written now, the legislation would affect a collaborative effort that they currently have set up.
- Dave Zaremba said public transportation users are an important group that needs to be educated about the work of the Coalition. These people can be used to spread the word, Zaremba explained. Kelli Fairless stressed that VRT cannot advocate for the legislation, but can educate the public concerning options that are available.
- Charlie Rountree said the preamble to the bill needs to be cleared up and made more concise.

Wrap-up

Winder urged Coalition members to spend some time to read the proposed legislation to determine their comfort level. He said the Coalition needs to take a vote on the final draft. Winder also urged groups such as the Idaho Conservation League and Idaho Smart Growth to become active in promoting the legislation.

The next Coalition meeting will be scheduled when the final draft of the proposed legislation is completed.

Coalition members in attendance

Co-chair Chuck Winder, The Winder Co.
Dave Bivens, ACHD

Co-chair Mayor Garret Nancolas, Caldwell
Jim Books, City of Eagle

Mayor John Betchel, City of Wilder

Tom Dale, Nampa Mayor

Mayor Dave Bieter, City of Boise

Rick Yzaguirre, Ada County Commissioner

Tom Ryder, Downtown Boise Association

Mark Dunham, AGC

Coalition Resource Group members in attendance

Brian Ballard, HTEH

Ken Burgess, Veritas Advisors

Mark Carnopis, Valley Regional Transit

Elaine Clegg, City of Boise

Roy Eiguren, VRT

Kelli Fairless, Valley Regional Transit

Dale Higer

Matt Stoll, COMPASS

Rachel Winer, Idaho Smart Growth

Steve Purvis

Terri Schorzman, COMPASS

Lyn Darrington, Gallatin Group

Ray Stark, Boise Metro Chamber

Others in attendance

Sabrina Bowman, ACHD

Eddie Kovsky, Idaho Business Review

Cynthia Sewell, Idaho Statesman

Charlie Rountree, Meridian City Council

David Irish, HDR Engineering

Justin Hayes, Idaho Conservation League

Susan Bradley, NFBVI

Phil Bandy, City of Eagle Council

Paul Woods, Ada County Commissioner

Joe Kunz, BCASWI

David Zaremba, Meridian City Council

Cecelia Hockett, ACHD Commuteride

Mayor Tammy DeWeerd, city of Meridian

Hannah Naito, KIVI-Channel 6

Kirk Montgomery, ACHD Commuteride

Jim Tibbs, City of Boise

Ross Mason, Id. Dept. of Health & Welfare

Randy Kyrias, ITD, Division of Public Transportation

Steve Ahrens, Steve Ahrens Custom Communications

Next meeting: TBA