

## Northeast Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials

### DRAFT Minutes

Meeting of June 13, 2010

Wilmington, Delaware

The following handouts were e-mailed by Mr. Philip Scarrozzo (CT) prior to the meeting:

- NASTO Board of Director's (BOD) June 13, 2010 Agenda, submitted by Philip Scarrozzo (CT)
- Minutes from the January 6, 2010 BOD conference call, submitted by Philip Scarrozzo (CT)
- NASTO Treasurer's June 13, 2010 Report, submitted by Michael Baker (PA)
- NASTO Air Quality Committee Report, submitted by Michael Baker (PA)

#### **Agenda Item I:**

NASTO President Joseph Marie (CT) called the meeting to order at 3:20 PM. President Marie welcomed everyone to Delaware and thanked Secretary Wicks and the Host State for all their hard work in preparing for this year's conference. President Marie asked all attendees to introduce themselves. All US member states were represented except New Jersey. In addition, the province of Quebec was in attendance as well as Representative Ann Stubbs from the Council of Northeast Governors (CONEG).

#### **Agenda Item II:**

Minutes from Previous Meeting – the minutes from the January 6, Board of Directors conference call were read by Mr. Philip Scarrozzo. With no discussion, the minutes were unanimously approved.

Treasurer's Report – The Treasurer's report (dated June 13, 2010) was submitted by Mr. Michael Baker (PA). Key activities since the January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2010 Board of Directors conference call as follows:

- Current cash balance is \$142,972.25
- \$100k CD opened last June now stands at \$101,999.01
- Total cash on hand including CD is \$244,971.26
- 2009-2010 membership dues invoices mailed in January with 3 members outstanding as of today

Mr. Baker suggested the BOD may want to consider investing some funds in another CD and also asked for any suggestions with regard to other investment strategies. Mr. George Campbell (NH) asked if the BOD should consider treasuries as a form of investment. Mr. Baker also reminded everyone that the

Annual Conflict of Interest Certification must be signed by all officers as it is in the best interest of the NASTO organization. The treasurer's report was accepted as printed.

Air Quality Committee Meeting – Mr. Michael Baker submitted the Air Quality Committee Report from the April 29, 2010 meeting held in Philadelphia. Included in the report were the following items:

- Meeting Announcement
- Agenda
- List of Attendees
- Minutes

Action items from the Philadelphia meeting included changing the name of the "Air Quality Committee" to the "NASTO Air Quality, Energy and Climate Change Committee". This name change will better encompass future topics to be discussed. It was also suggested by Mr. John Zamurs (NYSDOT) that if the NASTO Alternative Fuels Committee was no longer active, the NASTO Air Quality, Energy and Climate Change Committee could take on some of those activities.

Nominating Committee Report and Election – President Marie nominated District of Columbia DOT Director Gabe Klein for NASTO President and NH Commissioner George Campbell as Vice-President. There were no other nominations from the floor and the nominees were unanimously approved.

SCORT – With NASTO having two available slots on the AASHTO Standing Committee on Rail Transportation (SCORT), President Marie nominated Mr. Richard Jankovich as a representative from CTDOT and Secretary Mullan (MA) nominated Mr. Tim Doherty as a representative from MassDOT. The nominees were unanimously approved by the BOD.

2011 and 2012 NASTO Annual Meeting location – President Marie confirmed that Connecticut will be hosting the 2011 conference in Mystic, CT. Also, it was determined that the 2012 meeting will be hosted by the District of Columbia if an adequate venue can be secured for the June time frames .

### **Agenda Item III:**

Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) – Mr. Michael Baker talked about the objectives for the RGGI summit, specifically, a Climate Transportation Initiative of reducing CO emissions by 30%. He encouraged the NASTO group to work together to build synergy and develop a three year work plan via a letter/declaration of intent. Also, Mr. Brett Taylor (DE) encouraged an open dialogue amongst member states and the RGGI delegates. He asked the CEOs to consider committing staff resources for some demonstration projects. Mr. George Campbell (NH) thanked Mr. Baker and Mr. Taylor for their

efforts with the current RGGI program. He noted that most RGGI funds are committed to NY State (NY currently gets 17% of the RGGI funds). Ms. Nancy Ross (NY) commented that NY is in competition with RGGI for the same pot of money.

Mr. Jeffrey Mullan (MA) stated that a letter of intent should be developed to promote a “series of ideas”. He discussed MassDOT’s GreenDOT initiative as an example. GreenDOT is Massachusetts environmental and sustainability initiative for “greening” the state transportation system by promoting three primary goals: reduce greenhouse gas emissions, promote healthy transportation options, and support smart growth development. Mr. Mullan encouraged states to sign a letter of intent, and then move to form a path forward.

Ms Carolann Wicks (DE) stated that NASTO should be clear in that we are building on what we are already doing.

#### **Agenda Item IV:**

Northeast Corridor – Mr. Alan Biehler (PA) introduced two important topics for discussion concerning the Northeast Corridor. Those topics included the Northeast Rail Plan and the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act (PRIIA). Mr. Biehler stressed that a complete Northeast Corridor Plan is needed with all required environmental permit/documents. The plan needs to address capacity and commuter rail as well. Mr. Biehler also reminded the member states that PRIIA requires Amtrak to work with States to develop a plan for sharing operating costs. Consequently, Amtrak has met with several states to present a plan for cost sharing for intercity rail lines that are not breaking even. If an agreement is not reached, it will be left to the Surface Transportation Board (STB) to decide. PRIIA requires that this plan be in place by October 2012.

Mr. David Dill (VT) confirmed that his State met with Amtrak to discuss the cost sharing issue. Amtrak had calculated Vermont’s share to be a 77% increase in cost to his state. Mr. Dill was unsure of the math that Amtrak used to arrive at this figure. Mr. Dill asked the BOD if the NASTO States would be better off negotiating with Amtrak or letting it go to the STB to decide. In conclusion, Mr. Dill said that it will be a “national disaster” if these costs are disproportionately pushed off to the states. Mr. Biehler added that this issue needs to rise to the national level as everyone is affected. Mr. Mike Lewis (RI) asked where the U.S. DOT was on this issue, and commented that this will force the locals to move away from transit.

Ms. Ann Stubbs (CONEG) suspected that there may be some split personality issues; the FRA and Amtrak providing conflicting information (?). Ms. Stubbs informed the group that per section 209 the Northeast Corridor will have an access fee for commuters and regional service and stated that: “Amtrak is pushing us to the wall”. Also it was noted that Amtrak has not adhered to any deadlines in the past, but will be

held to the funding deadline. It was noted that Amtrak is under pressure from the U.S. Government to reduce Amtrak financial needs. In summary, Ms. Stubbs requested the NASTO group to “start conversations on these very complex issues” as soon as possible and prior to the October deadline.

Jeff Mullan (MA) said that Secretary LaHood or Mr. Peter Rogoff will need to address this issue as “Amtrak is holding the DOT’s over the barrel”

President Marie asked; “what would be a good outcome for us”? And “What are the consequences of a state not participating? “Will the service go away? To sum up, President Marie suggested that the member states formulate a plan.

Ms. Nancy Ross stated: “we are moving too far, too fast”. Ms. Stubbs recommended that states carefully review Amtrak’s numbers and, more importantly, encouraged the states to know you own numbers – ridership, direct and indirect costs. Ms. Stubbs also agreed with Ms. Ross, the states need more time.

A discussion about how Amtrak calculated its cost sharing methodology ensued. President Marie felt that the accounting methodology was “off” and Mr. Biehler suggested that AASHTO demand Amtrak’s formula/methodology for computing these costs as NASTO needs this information in order to make informed decisions. All were in agreement that the states should pay their fair share, but they also want to understand the methodology and the line item assumptions for determining such. Ms. Ross also added that there is no corporate partnership for cost controls and no effort to look at revenue maximization which is not a good dialogue in terms and conditions since we have no ability to adjust/address crew issues. A discussion needs to take place.

President Marie suggested that a letter be drafted for the Congressional delegation and Secretary LaHood detailing NASTO’s concerns.

Ms. Stubbs recommended that CT, with synthesis, draft a letter to USDOT, FRA, and Amtrak on behalf of NASTO (in DRAFT format) to our national stakeholders in order to gather reaction and potential support. She believes it is “too much to ask for a deadline extension” and suggested a conference call be scheduled for the end of the month.

Mr. John Horsley (AASHTO) stated he would further explore this issue at the West, Midwest and Southeast regional meetings.

Ms. Ross suggested that the Passenger Rail groups also be included in this discussion.

**Agenda Item V:**

State by State Round up - Due to lack of time, Agenda Item V was skipped.

**Agenda Item VI:**

AASHTO Finance Review Task Force Presentation - Mr Carlos Braceras (AASHTO Treasurer) provided a review of AASHTO's "financial picture". The findings from this report were the result of the Association Finances Task Force (AFTF) chaired by Mr. Braceras and eight CEOs. The purpose of the Task force was to consider alternatives to meet member needs and to fill revenue gaps. Several options were presented (5%, 10%, and a 15% dues increase) and are currently under consideration in order to meet the long-term financial needs of AASHTO. (Presentation and Dues Worksheet attached)

**Agenda Item VII:**

Other Business - President Marie presented a motion to extend CONEG's contract for administrative support to NASTO for one year. The current contract expires June 30, 2010 and has a balance of approximately \$8,000 out of a total budget of \$12,500. This would be a no-cost extension for the same level of support, expiring on June 30, 2011. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Agenda Item VIII:**

Adjourn – With no other business before the BOD, the meeting was adjourned at 5:10 PM. The next NASTO Board of Directors meeting will likely be in conjunction with the 2010 AASHTO Annual Meeting in Biloxi, Mississippi.