



REGIONAL TRANSIT DIALOGUE

Finance and Governance Joint Subcommittee Meeting

September 9, 2009, 11:00 a.m.
ACOG Board Room, 21 E Main St., Suite 100
Oklahoma City, OK 73104

Attendees:

Governance:

Bill Bleakley, OKC Biz
Guy Henson, Midwest City
Jane Jenkins, Downtown OKC Inc.
Bob Kemper, Northern Flyer Alliance
Dick Lee, COTPA
Turner Mann, Midwest City
Bill Nations, Oklahoma House of Representatives
Dean Schirf, Greater OKC Chamber of Commerce

Finance:

Rick Cain, COTPA
Rod Cleveland, Cleveland County
Steve Commons, Edmond
Terry Hawkins, Phillips Murrah
Tom Sherman, Norman Chamber of Commerce
Russell Smith, Midwest City

ACOG Staff Liaisons:

Kara Chiodo, Finance Subcommittee
Meredith Williams, Governance Subcommittee

Other ACOG Staff:

Holly Massie
Ryan Billings

Guests:

Larry Hopper, COTPA

SUMMARY

I. Welcome/Introductions

Russell Smith, chair of the Finance Subcommittee, called the meeting to order. Meeting attendees introduced themselves.

II. Regional Transit Authority (RTA) Geography Scenario Exercise

Meredith Williams gave a PowerPoint presentation on the three types of governance models (for a regional transit authority) that the Governance Subcommittee had investigated so far: the county model, the city model, and the district model. This served as an introduction to the models for Finance Subcommittee members, as well as a review for Governance Subcommittee members. Kara Chiodo then went over a handout packet that the members had been given. For each RTA governance model, members had three maps showing geographic examples of how the model could look. There was also a sheet with city and county population figures for all communities in the OCARTS area.

Discussion ensued on the benefits and problems with the different governance structures and the possible boundaries that each structure could have. Some major discussion points included:

- Number of elections needed to set up the RTA
- Size of RTA—do we start with the largest feasible boundary or start small and then add on later?
- How will entities feel about an outside authority having some taxing control over their areas?
- Which structure is easiest to legislatively enact? Easiest to operate? Easiest to get voter approval?
- Who gets to decide where the line would be drawn for the district model? How would its position be justified?
- What would the requirements for a community to join the RTA at a later date? What if a community wants to leave the RTA?
- An authority would not necessarily mean the demise of existing transit service—it can function as an “add-on”—this was what happened in Denver
- How to fairly tax both urban and rural parts of the area
- How do we set up the RTA, with whatever model is ultimately chosen, so that it will have the best chance of succeeding?
- Should opinion survey work be undertaken to get a better idea of popular support?

Of the three governance structures, it was eventually decided that district and city were most promising. A county model was deemed unnecessary to pursue further, as county boundaries could be wholly or partially used to form the line used in a district model.

III. Discussion of items for future meetings

The attendees from both committees agreed that since their work is so closely related, the two committees will continue to meet jointly from now on. The 11 a.m. time slot was determined to be a good one.

IV. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by Mr. Smith.