

**MINUTES OF TRANSPORTATION ECONOMICS COMMITTEE MEETING  
(ABE20)  
Monday, July 11, 2011. 2:00p.m. to 5:45p.m  
Boston, MA**

**Attendance (attached)**

**Agenda (attached)**

**Introductions/Approval of Minutes of January 2011 Meeting**

Mark Burriss opened the meeting with introductions. The minutes of the winter meeting were approved. He highlighted the webinar tutorials available from TRB, in particular he noted the Paper Reviewer Training Webinar to assist committee members in reviewing papers for the Annual Meeting.

**TRB Staff Report**

TRB requires an update of each committee's Strategic Plan every three years. We need to submit a draft of ours by mid-December 2011, discuss changes in January 2012 and finalize the plan by March 2012. Tools are available to assist in the process of developing the plan in the new format. It should include both the plan plus an evaluation and look back at recent committee efforts. Two conference calls are set up for committee chairs.

2012 TRB Summer meeting – discussion regarding holding the 2012 summer meeting in Irvine, California at the Beckham Center. This meeting is likely to include policy, performance and planning committees. The goal is enable more inter committee coordination to discuss common research topics, such as economic, congestion policy and demand for travel. The benefits of the Beckman Center would be less competition for meeting space and session time, lower registration costs, a more relaxed pace, and enough quality time for committee and cross-committee meetings and discussions. Overall, the hope would be a more relaxed pace with plenty of time to work with others that share the most common agendas.

*TRB Information and Calls*

- Young member council wants nominees from the committee to help increase participation from younger members.
- TRB focus on research – Committee research coordinator, Ralph Erickson, is planning to retire. Committee needs volunteers for a new coordinator.
- Nomination for a policy paper for the Wootan Award – think of outstanding papers. TRB will provide Mark with more information on applying for the award and award criteria.

- Webinar on how to review papers, information available on TRB website.
- The transportation economics committee is co-sponsoring a workshop entitled “The Future of the Federal Transportation Program” at the TRB annual meeting in January 2012. The workshop will have some time to devote to transportation economics issues (such as (1) the role of benefit-cost analysis, performance measures, program evaluations, in assessing results and outcomes of federal funding and investments; (2) the overconsumption of transportation capacity in the absence of transparent pricing, (3) inefficient peak roadway operations with the very limited use of congestion pricing, etc.) Rabinder Bains leading our efforts to coordinate with Mark Muriello to help him organize the workshop and ensure we promote solid transportation economic principles at the workshop.

## **2012 TRB Workshops and Sessions**

Three different research areas for the economics committee to collaborate on for the 2012 annual meeting:

### *1. Transportation for America’s Best Idea – Promoting Livability, Sustainability, and Strong Local Economies*

This session will examine the experience with new transportation alternatives (transit services, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, etc.), as well as historic transportation elements (alpine roadways, such as Going-to-the-Sun Road) on creating and promoting livable, sustainable and economically viable national park gateway communities and regions. Speakers will highlight the experiences at National Parks and other land management agencies with transportation’s impact on local businesses and the economy, air quality and the environment, livability, and safety. Examples will include rural and urban parks and public lands. Possible examples include Acadia National Park, Golden Gate National Park, Glacier National Park, and Independence National Park, which is in the urban core of Philadelphia, adjacent to a subway stop, and in an area of Philadelphia that recorded an increase in population during the last census. The complex assortment of objectives - accommodating renewed interest in traveling to such destinations given the recession, the price of fuel, and security; work to handle increased visitation and not limit park/site experiences; renewal of infrastructure; and efforts to minimize visitation impacts on parks, historic sites, and more - all make this a timely session. This session links with the 2012 Annual Meeting theme – Transportation: Putting Innovation and People to Work.

#### *Supporting Groups:*

Lead - Planning and Environmental

Partners - Policy and Organization; Public Transportation, and Pedestrian Committee.

*Organizers* – Lead – Katie Turnbull (TAC Chair), supported by Carol Zimmerman (Committee on Transportation Needs of National Parks and Public Lands Chair) and Mark Burriss (Transportation Economics Chair)

## 2. *The Value of Travel time Reliability on air Transportation Mode (and Others)*

If technology or policy changes do not result in a reduction in average delay, but a reduction in the variance of delay, value is still created even though we wouldn't necessarily treat it with typical passenger value of time. What techniques are being developed and applied for this? Shane Martin at MITRE has worked with FAA-APO that could stand well for the aviation side—a new, clear, analytical methodology that would make a nice technical presentation. I would seek out additional presenters from other modes, in particular with a benefit cost analysis perspective.

Katherine Harback, Ph.D.: AV040 (Aviation Economics and Forecasting)

## 3. *Impact of Analysis of Ferry Systems*

Ferry transportation systems generate multiple economic impacts and benefits across the United States. These include the impacts and benefits of transportation and transit access, real estate, manufacturing, employment, transportation redundancy and congestion relief, and energy conservation, among others. How have these impacts and benefits been quantified, or how could they be? Where does an economic case for ferry transportation and related facilities complement a state and federal economic development plan? How do the benefits of ferry transportation compare to the costs? Does the economic case for ferry systems development and ferry transportation warrant public and private investment in new routes and/or new capital investment?

Roberta Weisbrod, Chair Ferry Committee/Marine Highway Subcommittee

### **Sub-Committee Reports**

*Economics of Pricing* – Ed Regan submitted Mileage Based User Fee for research ideas. The VMT/Revenue discussion is dismissive of economic pricing. This may need some re-scoping.

*Economics of Parking* – Request for Best Practices in Parking Policy, planned for Sunday before TRB. Other solicitation for sessions – optimal pricing; value of free parking to businesses; institutional barriers to pricing; how parking companies alter prices; cross price elasticities. Had two successful sessions at 2011 TRB.

### **Paper Review Process – Tony Rufolo**

Inform Tony as soon as you know that you cannot review a paper, so that another reviewer can be assigned. Review the abstract and determine if you can review the paper, if not send it back

to the paper review committee. Leaving that to the end makes it challenging to get the papers reviewed in a timely manner. Update your areas of interest on the webpage or let Tony know. Read the guidance on ratings and comments.

### **Practice of BCA Website – Chris Williges**

[www.transportationeconomics.org](http://www.transportationeconomics.org)

Texas DOT is compiling an Economics Encyclopedia, need to make sure the two do not overlap.

Chris asked for more volunteers to review the website content. The goal is to announce the new webpage at the 2012 Annual meeting in January. If and when any change is made to a page, it is sent to the experts to verify. Chris would like to get other reviewers and editors from outside the committee to assist in the development of the site and get experts to take responsibility to take charge of their topics.

The sub-committee has developed an action plan, attached.

- The goal is to hold quarterly conference calls to share ideas and discuss what individuals might be working on, research and other issues.
- Find a way to engage practitioners through a 'listserve'.
- Find missing data

### **Triennial Self-Evaluation and Strategic Plan – Valentin Vulov**

Valentin asked committee members to comment or make suggestions on the draft plan and send them to Mark Burris. The top priorities or focus of the research are to be:

- Choose a topic for the annual call for papers
- Develop a one-page call for papers every March
- Prepare new research problem statements based on emerging issues, including joint sponsorship with other committees on crosscutting issues
- Maintain a compendium of ongoing research projects and report on their status at the annual meeting
- Maintain a list of co-sponsored research, conferences, and sessions, and make the list available on the Transportation Economics Website
- Actively seek out co-sponsoring opportunities with other TRB committees for sessions and events including crosscutting issues
- Identify potential topics for presentations at committee meetings
- Consider opportunities for special events that focus on transportation economics; assign a task force to plan and carry out each special event

## **Future Research Topics**

Lei Zhang volunteered to be the research needs coordinator. Doug Lee also interested in volunteering for the research coordinator role.

Other topics for research were suggested:

To learn from the applications submitted for the TIGER program and compile a Facts and Furbies of TIGER projects. GAO report on ...? At the TRB Annual meeting have a BCA guidance presentation –what are the relative correct values of several key components (time, operation costs, discount rates...) in BCA? Is the practice good or bad?

## ***Call for Paper Topics***

1. Equity/congestion pricing an issue (SGR – preservation –economics)
2. Multi-modal demand management/substitution between modes – current knowledge of cross elasticities. Are some values too high? The value will increase when more alternatives are available.
3. How do you estimate broader economic impacts – Economic development committee willing to work on this.
4. NCHRP 08036/task #101 – A report to be published on multi-modal peer exchange – integrating BCA into planning.
5. Requested assistance in reviewing a problem statement on reliability.

## **Presentations**

1. Benefit – Cost Analysis Quiz : David Luskin discussed this new initiative and lead us through a couple challenging BCA issues in the format of a quiz
2. NCFRP05: A new risk-based benefit-cost analysis system for multi-modal freight projects. Cambridge Systematics and EDR Group presented their work.

Presentations available: <http://www.transportationeconomics.org/agendas-and-minutes>

Meeting adjourned after informing the committee members where to meet for a committee social gathering.

## **Attendance**

Mark Burris (M)  
Greg Bischall  
Paula Dowell (M)  
Chris Mann  
Brian Weatherford (M)  
Jonathan Peters (M)  
Chad Shirley  
Adam Fulton  
Harold Stolper  
Mark Muriello  
Nat Coley  
Doug Lee (M)  
Robena Reid  
Rabinder Bains (M)  
Nancy Bergeron (M)  
Daniel Brod (M)  
Todd Litman  
Chris Williges (M)  
Brian Alstadt (M)  
Jim Gillespie (M)  
Katie Turnbull  
Jonathon Skolnik (M)  
Mike Laurence  
Sharada Vadali  
Tony Rufolo (M)  
Valentin Vulvo (M)  
Holley Krambeck (M)  
Peter Rafferty (M)  
Lei Zhang (M)  
Sarah Damon  
Dan Graham (M)

## Agenda

### AGENDA

- 2:00** Welcome and Introductions
- 2:10** Approval of January 2011 meeting minutes
- 2:15** TRB Staff Report – Martine Micozzi
- 2:20** Future Summer Meetings – discussion of locations, events and topics.
- 2:30** Committee Business
- TRB Annual Meeting 2012 Workshops and Sessions – Mark Burris
- Paper Review Process – Tony Rufolo
- TransportationEconomics.org and other communication issues – Chris Williges, Peter Rafferty
- Triennial Self-Evaluation and Strategic Plan – Valentin Vulov.
- 3:10** Presentations
1. Benefit – Cost Analysis Quiz : David Luskin will discuss this new initiative and lead us through a couple challenging BCA issues in the format of a quiz
2. NCFRP05: A new risk-based benefit-cost analysis system for multi-modal freight projects, Cambridge Systematics and EDR Group.
- 4:00** Break
- 4:15** Subcommittees
- Joint Subcommittee on the Economics of Pricing – Darren Timothy
- Joint Subcommittee on Parking Pricing – Caroline Rodier
- Practice of BCA: Action Plan – Chris Williges
- 4:30** FHWA Policy Office – Tianjia Tang - Ongoing/planned survey and policy research
- Research Needs – Ralph Erickson
- 5:10** Other business / Announcements
- 5:20** Official committee meeting ends. Committee outing to visit nearby Fan Pier (<http://www.fanpierboston.com/>) and dinner at the Atlantic Beer Garden (<http://atlanticbeergarden.com/>).