

Transportation Association of Canada
Education and Human Resources Development Council

Meeting Minutes

Date: September 27th, 2014

Location: Ville-Marie AB, 9thFloor Westin Montreal, ON

Chair: *Cindy Lucas* (Chair), Ministry of Transportation, Ontario

Members Present: *Carl Clayton*, Stantec Consulting Ltd.
Darlene Cleven, Allan Widger Consulting Corporation
Lynne Cowe Falls, University of Calgary
Heather Crewe, Ontario Good Roads Association
Alla Dinerman, MMM Group Limited
Keith Foster, LVM
Jean-François Gysel, SNC Lavalin Inc.
Ralph Haas, University of Waterloo
Adam Hayashi, Cement Association of Canada
David Hein, Applied Research Associates Inc.
Bill Kenny, Alberta Transportation
Diane Leroux, Ministère des Transports du Québec
Ana Lopez, (Vice Chair) Translink
Don McKibbin, Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation
Harmony McKinney-Bumstead, Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation
Debra Somani, Alberta Transportation

Regrets: *Iham Benyahia*, TRENDS (ITS Canada)
Jeananne Lindstrom, Yukon Department of Highways & Public Works
Isabelle Moo Sang, Transport Canada
Rosann Semchuk, Saskatchewan Highways and Infrastructure
Krysta Groenewegen van der Weiden, British Columbia Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure

Also Present: *Isabelle Gagnon*, Ministère des Transports du Québec
Michel Gravel, Transportation Association of Canada

Luay Mustafa, Transportation Association of Canada

1) Introductions

Ms. Lucas called the meeting to order and welcomed participants.

2) Adoption of the Agenda

Ms. Lucas drew attention to the draft meeting agenda and invited additions or corrections; none were offered. **It was agreed** to adopt the meeting agenda as circulated.

3) Meeting Minutes

Ms. Lucas drew attention to the draft meeting minutes, which had been circulated in advance. She invited corrections and/or addition; none were offered.

a. August 5th, 2014

It was agreed to approve the draft meeting minutes. **It was also agreed** to post the approved meeting minutes on the public and private portions of TAC's website.

Action: Secretary

4) Council Discussion on NASTO Leadership Institute

Ms. Lucas drew attention to the Northeast Association of Transportation Officials (NASTO) Leadership Institute proposal, which had been circulated in advance. She noted that the objective of the initiative is to develop the next generation of leaders by providing emerging transportation professionals an opportunity to gain leadership skills while immersing themselves in transportation issues. Ms. Lucas enquired if there would be interest from Council members and from TAC in creating an initiative in the same context as the NATSO proposal.

Ms. Crewe indicated that it is an interesting concept. She enquired if the EHRDC were to support creating this initiative, would it be applied to provincial and territorial agencies only. She also enquired about the need for financial support and if the TAC Foundation would fund such initiatives. Ms. Crewe noted that a business plan could be developed and presented to both the TAC Board of Directors and TAC Foundation Board with a request for their support.

Ms. Dinerman enquired if any of the Canadian agencies had participated in the NATSO initiative. Ms. Lucas indicated that the initiative just started and that Ontario might have participation.

Ms. Lucas enquired if the objectives of the NATSO leadership initiative aligned with the objectives of the EHRDC. Council members agreed that the objectives align.

Ms. Lucas indicated that there is a need to develop leadership in the mid-level management workforce. Ms. Lopez indicated that the Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA) provides courses to develop leadership skills. She suggested contacting such organizations to ask about where they focus their efforts to help the EHRDC outline the initiative.

Ms. Crewe enquired if the initiative's goals would align with the TAC Foundation goals. Mr. Hein indicated that the Foundation objectives are more focused on the younger demographic.

Mr. Hein indicated that it is important to create a nationwide forum for mid-level management professionals to meet and connect with each other to provide them with an opportunity to discuss particular interests and advancements in the field of engineering.

Mr. Clayton suggested that council discuss whether there is a need for the initiative and to define the type of need if any. He noted that the following step would be to plan the logistics and to look at funding options.

Ms. Leroux noted that spoken language could cause barriers amongst the nominated professionals.

Ms. McKinney-Bumstead noted the difficulty for technical staff to transition into supervisory roles.

Ms. Dinerman indicated that there is lack of education for professionals to develop their leadership skills. She indicated that council needs to look into participation and the number of people that would benefit from this initiative. She noted that nationwide might not be the option due to some restrictions at organizations.

Ms. Somani indicated that there is significant concern around leadership within her agency. She noted the need to prepare junior staff to move into mid-level management positions and the need to prepare mid-level management staff to move into higher positions. She emphasized the need to develop mid-level management professionals.

Mr. Kenny indicated that travel restrictions within agencies could prohibit face to face interaction. He noted that electronic interaction would eliminate such challenges.

Dr. Cowe Falls enquired about who would benefit from the initiative and if it would be restricted to TAC members only. She noted that leadership training is a priority need for TAC. She also drew attention to online leadership coaching programs and noted an example that is available in India where professionals in need of leadership advice could contact the coaching agency for guidance.

Mr. Clayton suggested creating a workshop at the 2014 TAC conference. He also suggested recruiting two or three presenters to talk to this initiative to gather more information on what is needed and expand the initiative based on interest at the workshop.

Ms. Lucas indicated that council needs to define the objectives of the initiative in order to outline the goals of the workshop.

Dr. Haas suggested following the skills workshop model that was delivered at the TAC 2013 conference in Winnipeg.

Ms. Cleven suggested contacting NATSO to explore the possibility of recruiting a presenter to speak to the leadership initiative at the workshop. Ms. Lucas volunteered to contact NATSO to enquire about this opportunity.

Action: Chair

It was suggested that the title of the workshop would be “Growing the Next Generation”. **It was agreed** that Dr. Cowe Falls would lead the work group to plan the workshop and that Mr. Clayton, Ms. Cleven, Mr. Hein, Ms. McKinney-Bumstead, and Ms. Somani would assist. **It was also agreed** that the work group would submit the call for topics form previously circulated by Katherine Presz at the TAC secretariat.

Action: Cowe Falls, Clayton, Cleven, Hein, McKinney-Bumstead, Somani

5) Council Discussion on Collaboration with the TAC Foundation

Ms. Lucas invited the council members that are also members of the TAC Foundation to discuss opportunities for collaboration between the EHRDC and the TAC Foundation.

Mr. Clayton indicated that the TAC Foundation has very limited funds that might be available and could be used to fund collaborated projects. He noted that most of the financial support is used to fund scholarship programs.

Ms. Lucas enquired about the mentoring program background. It was indicated that the purpose of the mentoring program is to promote the transportation and civil engineering careers to students. Mr. Clayton also noted that the focus is on students through the TRAC program.

Ms. Lopez drew attention to the need to promote mentorship within organizations. Mr. Kenny indicated that mentorship is available in other job environments such as law firms. He suggested following such examples in promoting mentorship in engineering positions. Dr. Cowe Falls noted that the challenge is not to force mentoring on young professionals.

Ms. Dinerman suggested looking at best practices to promote mentoring of mid-level staff.

It was suggested to create a session that will promote mentorship to be convened at the 2015 TAC conference. It was also suggested that the title of the session could be “How do I get to be You?” **It was agreed** that Ms. Lopez would lead the work group to plan the session and that Ms. Cleven, Ms. Dinerman, Mr. Foster, and Ms. Somani would assist. **It was also agreed** that the workgroup would submit the call for topics form previously circulated by Katherine Presz at the TAC secretariat.

Action: Cleven, Dinerman, Foster, Lopez, Somani

6) Council Discussion on Recruitment in Engineering Positions

Mme Leroux introduced Ms. Gagnon as the Chief Manager with the Human Resources Department at the Quebec Ministry of Transportation. She indicated that Mme Gagnon will provide a presentation about recruiting in engineering positions at MTQ.

Mme Gagnon delivered the presentation and welcomed questions from council members.

Attachment #1

Ms. Crewe enquired if MTQ encounters challenges in recruiting for positions within some areas of Quebec. She noted that challenges commonly arise when filling positions in some areas due to the difference in lifestyle, climate, and other factors. Ms. Gagnon indicated that MTQ looks at potential candidates that are from these areas to avoid such challenges.

7) Young Professionals Workshop for the 2015 Annual Conference

Dr. Cowe Falls suggested creating an event at the annual TAC conferences where young professionals would be invited to connect with each other. She also suggested planning the event on the Sunday night before the main conference program starts. She further proposed that the event would be led by a young professional and noted that Cory Wilson could be a potential candidate.

Ms. Lucas noted that the objective is to build the next generation of professionals and to continue to support the TAC. She also suggested that the TAC councils and committees Executives could be invited to attend the event to provide for an opportunity of networking for the young professionals.

Council members debated on the targeted group for the young professionals. It was suggested to change the title of the event to new professionals as to not limit the participation to a certain age group.

Dr. Cowe Falls suggested creating a section on the TAC website to attract new professionals to the event. She also emphasized the importance of promoting the event and invited council members to promote it at their respective organizations. She further suggested creating a LinkedIn group for the new professionals. **It was agreed** that the secretary would look into the possibilities of implementing the suggestions.

Action: Secretary

It was agreed that Dr. Cowe Falls will draft a summary of the initiative objective and purpose and will forward it to the secretary. **It was also agreed** that the secretary will bring the proposal to the TAC Conference Team at the secretariat.

Action: Cowe Falls, Secretary

8) Council Discussions on Student Outreach Project

Mme Leroux indicated that the TAC 2014 conference in Montreal attracted 150 students from different universities noting the success of the Student Outreach project.

Mr. Clayton emphasized the importance of encouraging students to participate at the TAC conference and the importance of promoting it to universities and colleges. He noted that they need to be aware that registration is free for students.

Ms. Cleven volunteered to contact the University of New Brunswick and the University of Prince Edward Island to notify them that the TAC 2015 conference will be held in Charlottetown in the fall and to encourage student participation.

Action: Cleven

Ms. Cleven welcomed other suggestions from council members. It was suggested to send an official letter when registration for the conference is open to the department of Engineering at both universities inviting them to encourage students to participate at the conference.

It was agreed that Ms. Cleven will draft the letter and will forward it to the secretary. **It was also agreed** that the secretary will look into how the secretariat could distribute the letter and will report back to council at a future meeting.

Action: Cleven, Secretary

9) Increasing Interest in the Educational Achievement Award (EAA)

Mr. Hein indicated that he looked into the history of number of submission for the EA award in the past four years. He noted that in:

- 2011- Two submission were received
- 2012-One submission was received
- 2013- Six submissions were received
- 2014- One submission was received.

Mr. Hein highlighted the need to promote the award. He noted that he found it difficult to find the award description on the TAC website. Ms. Lucas encouraged council members to promote the award through their respective organizations.

Ms. Crewe suggested drafting a template summarizing the award description and requirements. Mr. Hein agreed and indicated that he will draft a template similar to the World Road Association-PIARC report call for topics. He suggested council members could use it to promote the EAA amongst staff.

Action: Hein

It was agreed that all council members will forward the EAA template to staff at their organizations to promote the award and to attract more submissions.

Action: Council Members

Mr. Hein indicated that the review process currently includes reviewing full submissions only which could prove challenging if there are a high number of submissions. He suggested reverting back to the original review practice that included a two stage review process where the first stage is to review abstracts of submissions and the second stage is to review the full submissions of the accepted abstracts.

It was agreed by all to revert to the original review process of the EAA submissions.

Action: Secretary

10) Team Canada Alliance for Transportation Teaching (TCATT)

Dr. Haas indicated that the initiative was brought forth by a group of young educators who teach transportation engineering. He also indicated that the plan is to offer a Webinar based graduate course on topics in the Transportation Engineering field. He further indicated that the initiative is supported by the Canadian Institute of Transportation Engineers (CITE).

Dr. Haas asked council members if this initiative would be of interest to the EHRDC and the TAC Foundation.

It was agreed to invite a representative from TCATT to provide a presentation as part of the agenda for the upcoming 2015spring meeting in Ottawa. **It was further agreed** that Dr. Haas will develop a summary on TCATT to share with council members.

Action: Haas, Secretariat

11) Service Recognition/Employee Recognition

Ms. Lopez emphasized the importance of service recognition and noted that recognizing an employee's loyalty through service is key to continued retention. She indicated that efforts are being made within her agency to continuously improve the service recognition program. She also indicated that recognizing individual successes is challenging. She further indicated that the special events committee at TransLink is responsible for creating social events that bring staff together.

Ms. Lopez welcomed council members to share how their organizations recognize staff.

Ms. Crewe indicated that the practice at Ontario Good Roads Association (OGRA) is to invite municipal members to nominate individuals through the volunteer recognition call for nominations program. She noted that the recipients will then be invited to an award lunch ceremony at the conference where they will be rewarded with a plaque and a ticket to attend the lunch.

Dr. Gysel noted that employee recognition is not a goal for the younger generations indicating that they would rather be recognized for their accomplishments rather than being recognized for the number of service years at an organization.

Dr. Cowe Falls indicated that first year engineering students at the University of Calgary receive distinct scarfs. She also indicated that students really appreciate it because it gives them a sense of community and creates a culture of pride. She noted that such recognitions are also very cost effective.

Ms. McKinney-Bumstead indicated that every employee is unique and that it is a challenge to recognize everybody the same way. She noted that it is a struggle to find something that everybody appreciates.

Ms. Somani indicated that her agency recently redesigned their service recognition programs to include formal and also informal programs. She emphasized the importance of providing staff with the tools and resources to carry out these programs. She noted that at Alberta Transportation each floor has a thank you card stand that is available for all staff to use and is really appreciated. She highlighted that such practices are valued and that they bring staff together.

Ms. Dinerman highlighted the importance of recognizing achievements. She indicated that the senior executives at her company would plan and carry out the event after each project completion for staff as a way of appreciation for their achievement.

12) Activities in support of 2014 Conference

a. Student Conference Event

Ms. Crewe and Mme Leroux provided an update on the event. Ms. Crewe indicated that certificates will be handed to the students that participate along with small giveaways. Ms. Crewe noted that she had updated the guidelines for organizing the TAC student conference event which contains useful information and hints for council members tasked with organizing future TAC Student Conference Events.

Attachment # 2

b. Succession Planning/Mid-Level Management

Mr. Hayashi and Ms. Lopez indicated that workshop plans are on track. Ms. Lopez noted that in addition to her, Mr. Hayashi, and Ms. Somani, Mr. Alan Gee from Stantec Consulting will also speak at the workshop.

c. The Challenger of Ethics- What would you do?

Dr. Gysel provided the attached presentation on the session.

Attachment # 3

13) Executive Director's Report - M. Gravel

Mr. Gravel highlighted several points in the Executive Director's Report which had been circulated in advance, and he invited comments or questions.

14) Climate Change Task Force Update (CCTF)

Ms. Crewe provided the attached update presentation about the Task Force work to date.

Attachment # 4

15) Next Meeting

It was agreed by all that the next teleconference meeting will take Place on Thursday, October 16th from 13:00 hours to 13:30 hours. It was further agreed that the working groups will complete the 2015 conference call for topics forms prior to the next meeting.

Action: Secretary, Working Groups

16) Other Business

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

17) Adjournment

Prepared by: Luay Mustafa
Distributed on: November 6th, 2014