

BACA Board Meeting Minutes

December 2, 2010

Present: Tom Ezell, Claibanne Williamson, David Holsted, Ken Gould, Norm Berner, Charles Ross, Jim Britt, Judy McDowell, Gordon Fisher.

Absent: Steve Bentley (work); Coreen Frazier, Judy Lansky (Festivelo); Don Bearden (work)

Treasurer's report (by Tom, Don had to work tonite)

- Treasury balance as of December 2, 2010, is \$15,247.47. Marilyn Fulper Fund: \$1,272.
- Dues are due in December for our membership in the Alliance for Biking & Walking. Should be ~\$100; Tom will send the notice to Don once we receive it from the Alliance.
- Time to look at drafting a budget for 2011. This will give us an idea of what we can afford to do during the year, as well as set up our fundraising goals for the year. Way & Means committee is absent tonite; so Tom will try to draft up a strawman budget to distribute to the Board for consideration before the January meeting. He will also share the Powerpoint presentation used at the League club leadership workshop on budgeting last month.
- Annual membership dues are coming due for 2011, sent notice out in the newsletter last week and will make an announcement to the membership tonight; not sure how many actual dues-paid members we have right now, but there aren't that many in comparison to the 570 or so on the newsletter list.
- Tom had a short demonstration (PowerPoint) of the Wild Apricot membership software we briefly discussed in November's meeting. Holds our records on-line ("in the cloud") and allows individual members to see and edit their own membership accounts, allows access to overall membership & budget figures to selected members (e.g., the Board); allows for both PayPal and credit card payments and donations on-line, also contains a newsletter and mass e-mail function similar to what we have with Constant Contact, also provides web site service similar to what we have with our ArkansasWeb account. Cost: at less than 50 paid members it's free; at BACA "current" levels if all 500 or so member sign up it would cost \$50 per month; \$600 per year. There's a small discount for 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations.
- General consensus of the board members was that we had most of the same functionality, save for on-line payments and the member database, with the services we currently get with Constant Contact/ArkansasWeb.

President's Report: Previously sent to Board via e-mail. Discussed the current vacancies in the Board membership (Secretary, At-large Director, and SRTS Network Organizer). Ads are out on the BACA web site and in this month's newsletter for members interested in filling these positions. Annual elections will be up again in April 2011, so as a group the Board and membership need to start thinking about

filling leadership positions for next year, who would do well in these positions, and how we can work on leadership development and increasing active membership.

Claibanne went to the Brookwood/Western Hills Neighborhood open house at Hindman Park last month and reported back that there was a lot of potential in this project for tying sections of Little Rock together with bike-amenable facilities, as well as greatly improving opportunities in that district and the adjacent University District. UALR and LR Bike-Friendly committees are working to merge this project into their bike-friendly community plans; however there is no funding available from the city to help much with these projects.

Tom discussed the impacts from the November general elections; here in Arkansas there will be nearly a 40% turnover in both legislative houses, with strong gains by local Republican candidates. At State level, only Governor Beebe will be returning to the Capitol, all other State officers will be new, and Republican. In Congress, only Rep. Mike Ross (D, 4th District) kept his seat, as well as Senator Pryor, who was not up for re-election. Senator Lincoln, who had been a strong supporter of biking, lost to Rep. John Boozman, and the three other representatives (Rick Crawford, 1st district; Tim Griffin, 2nd District; and Steve Womack, 3rd District) will be like the state officers, all new and all Republican. At State level, we do have a few potential friends coming to the Legislature, but in all cases we'll need to basically start all over in cultivating relationships and offering/getting support.

Claibanne noted an article in today's Democrat-Gazette announcing the recommendations of the "blue ribbon Highway funding committee," which advocated raising fuel taxes, applying sales taxes to motor fuels, and diverting part of the current sales taxes on motor vehicles and parts to highway operations. Governor Beebe's response was that none of these options were viable in the near to immediate future. Could be an interesting legislative session, and means that state bike advocates will have a big job simply protect what we already have, much less ask for additional facilities.

The National Bike Summit will be coming up on March 8-10, 2011, in Washington, DC. BACA has historically (over the past five years at least) sent 3, up to 4 delegates. Coreen and Tom were solicited again by the League to act as State Coordinators this year. Do we want to send delegates again this year, if so, how many, and do we want to put a cap on reimbursable expenses? *Ken G: City of Little Rock has historically funded one person to go, we need to approach them about sending someone again. Tom E: Not in 2010, because of the City budget crunch, Little Rock declined funding this past year. We asked Bryan Day again in July about sending a person (Julie H) to the Pro-Bike Pro-Walk conference in Chattanooga for the BFC and Safe Routes program, but were turned down again due to shortage of City funds. The situation hasn't improved much, based on reports, so I am not counting on any support from that direction for 2011. Arkansas Bicycle Club (ABC) has funded at least one of our positions the past three years, for \$800 to \$900, the rest were paid for by BACA.*

Tom reminded Board members of need to plan and coordinate meeting programs for the coming year; each Board member was requested to plan and coordinate one speaker and program for monthly meetings in 2011.

Ken Gould noted that the National TEA Party as well as local affiliates have apparently initiated campaigns against federal funding for transportation enhancements such as bicycle and pedestrian facilities, as well as public transit. They apparently perceive these types of public projects as a UN/socialist plot, "Agenda 21," to drive people away from driving cars. Local activist Debbie Pelley has carried out strong protests and demonstrations against the Jonesboro Metroplan long range plan, as well as plans for biking and walking trails in Trumann in northeastern Arkansas, which was picked up as an article for the Arkansas *Times* blog [<http://www.arktimes.com/ArkansasBlog/archives/2010/11/22/the-carless-culture>]. (BACA representatives Ron Rizzardi and Tom Ezell both wrote good rebuttals to Pelley's claims on the AT blog.) Subsequently, State Rep. Donna Hutchinson of Bella Vista wrote a strong guest editorial in the NW Arkansas Times opposing the use of public and Walton Foundation funds for the newly-announced Razorback Greenway connecting Fayetteville and Bentonville. After discussion among the Board and guests, it was resolved that while these are local problems in communities that already have strong bike advocacy groups, BACA officers will monitor these issues and be ready to lend assistance where needed, as well as anticipate and respond timely to local TEA party propaganda concerning local projects.

The annual appeal for year-end donations was included in the December newsletter. David Holsted noted that we could also approach corporate sponsors; Tom & others will work on a fact sheet (BACA activities & accomplishments) to accompany these sorts of requests.

Tom led discussion on continuing the Bikes Belong Safe Routes to School grant for 2011. The new year's contract was forwarded from the National Partnership early last week, and forwarded to the Board for their review and approval. We have had a number of problems over the past year with the initial confusion and organizer turnover last summer, but at this point we've been told we're in the National Partnership's good graces, with funding guaranteed through December 2011. After that point, the State network should become self-sustaining, with four options that Tom previously shared with the Board. There were no objections to renewing the grant for another year, so Coreen, Judy, and Tom will proceed with recruiting and hiring a new Organizer and renewing the grant for the 2011 calendar year.

Claibanne W. noted that Gene Pfeifer had forwarded a white paper to the Board members (and others) on how bike paths and improved bike facilities improve property values and the desirability of the properties served, and moved that BACA have several copies of this paper reproduced and provided to members of the LR city council and BFC committee. Motion passed, subject to checking on copyright and reprinting permissions.

Bud Laumer addressed the Board on potential outreach and assistance in challenging the TEA party assertions and protests at the Jonesboro Metroplan meetings.

With no other business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 6:47.

MAIN PROGRAM: Pulaski County Judge Buddy Villines (& Sherman Smith) on the Two Rivers Bridge

and the Chain of Parks project.

(57 members in attendance)