**CASTA Membership Meeting Notes**

**5311 Policy Discussion**

**December 12, 2016, 10 am**

**Conference Call**

Amber Blake, CASTA Board President, opened the call by welcoming participants.

Amber then led the group through an overview of the CDOT 5310 and 5311 Funding Distribution Policy TRAC Subcommittee, November 2016 slide deck (attached). The slidedeck was used for discussion at the November subcommittee meeting and outlined the FTA funding realities CDOT is facing, provides the overall guiding policy the department is working from and more information and examples to feed a policy discussion on what “available to all eligible providers” means.

After providing the overview Amber opened up the call to discussion and questions. The discussion was free flowing with lots of comments and suggestions. The comments have been grouped together under subject areas for ease of use.

Performance measures:

* Meeting performance measures may be hard for new grantees.
* An agency that has been running a route for 10 years most likely has a feel for where they can make performance increases and how to do it while new agencies are still building ridership.
* It was noted that new agencies have had recent ridership studies done so should be able to predict what their ridership will look like.
* If cuts are made to very small agencies because they didn’t meet their performance measures it could create a downward spiral of decreasing performance for that agency.

5310:

* Is 5310 being discussed right now too?
* The subcommittee plan is to discuss the 5311 policy first while keeping in mind the impacts those policy decisions will have on the 5310 pot.
* The 5310 policy will be taken up by the subcommittee once the 5311 policy has been decided upon.
* **When does CDOT think the subcommittee will get to the 5310 discussion?**

Capital funding:

* If capital funding is removed from 5311 are there other sources of capital funding an agency could tap?
* One suggestion brought up at the subcommittee meeting when this was discussed was the 5339 pot.

Equity for low income areas of the state:

* **Has the subcommittee considered how to support low income areas of the state?**
* The committee has not focused on that question yet.
* This should be part of the fair and equitable discussion.
* Eboni Riehl, CDOT Civil Rights Program, will follow up with Jeff Sanders, CDOT Division of Transit and Rail) to make sure the subcommittee addresses this issue adequately.

Category concepts (slide 19 and 20):

* Would it make more sense to use categories that relate to types of service rather than vehicle miles ie demand response, fixed route, resort etc.
* Does it matter where the endpoint of a route is? Does ending at a resort make an agency a resort agency?
* There is never only one type of rider on “resort” agency buses, they serve commuters, local citizens and tourists on the same routes.
* Is there any difference having a resort as part of the classification?
* Resorts are rural but during the season the density goes up.
* Classify with monthly numbers? If you have a big seasonal spike in riders that makes an agency resort?
* There are spikes in riders for agencies serving colleges too. So you could use a baseline to see if an agency serves a college or ski town.
* Is categorizing by service type better than by vehicle miles?
* It could be easier to add performance measures and compare agencies if they are grouped by service type. High or low mileage doesn’t make agencies so comparable.
* It would be very hard to determine what group some agencies would belong to, for instance Gunnison serves a resort, a college, and is seasonal.
* Jim Souby mentioned at a TRAC meeting that when he worked in Alaska they were having this kind of discussion and were not able to come up with rational categories.
* There is a concern that if we categorize too much some agencies will be excluded.
* Although it’s hard there must be a way to find come categories because that’s one of the ways we make sure that the funding is equitable (see existing inequity chart on slides 14 and 15). This needs to be fixed.

CDOT’s responsibility:

* **Is CDOT willing to take a cut on its take down from the funds too?**

RFTA:

* Should RFTA have separate consideration since it’s so much bigger than the other rural agencies?

Ramifications of cuts on the smallest agencies:

* Small agencies are being stretched already by the state minimum wage going up this year.
* Any cuts will be hard and most likely result in service cuts.
* Smaller agencies need more time to transition to less funding.

Small agency suggestions:

* If we went with the phasing percentages option (“Z” on slide 22) what if we let the very smallest agencies transition from 80/20 to 50/50 either more slowly or not all the way to 50/50.
* Would it make sense to have a floor for the amount the smallest agencies get to make sure they get enough to keep afloat?

**Questions for TRAC subcommittee:**

* **When does CDOT think the subcommittee will get to the 5310 discussion?**
* **Has the subcommittee considered how to support low income areas of the state?**
* **Is CDOT willing to take a cut on its take down from the funds too?**

Upcoming 5311 stakeholder/CASTA membership meetings:

* January 4, 2017, 10:00 am
* January 18, 2017, 10:00 am