

The National Academies of
SCIENCES • ENGINEERING • MEDICINE



Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

July 19-20, 2021

Woods Hole and Virtual

Monday, July 19, 2021

8:30 a.m.

Welcome and Announcements (Shaheen) Information

8:40 p.m. Self-Introductions (Shaheen) Discussion

- a. Policy Statement on Preventing Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying was noted.
- b. Bias/Conflict of Interest Discussion – There were no conflicts of interest reported.

8:50 a.m.

Approval of January 26-28, 2021 Minutes (Shaheen) Action

- The minutes were approved.

8:55 a.m.

Approval of Consent Agenda (Shaheen) Action

- The consent agenda was approved.

9:00 a.m.

TRB Division Committee Report (Hendrickson) Information

- a. A PowerPoint presentation with graphs was used to present data.
- b. A description of the organizational structure of NASEM was provided.
- c. The Committee reviews and approves panel and committee compositions, among other roles, and it oversaw 57 reports in the first six months of 2021.
- d. Race/ethnicity of the 16,345 Friends of TAD Standing Committees, Volunteers, CRP Panel Members have seen advances in more diversity.
- e. We are seeing more and more diversity in participation of TRB activities. Even a 1 percent increase in African-Americans involved with TRB is an increase of more than 100 people.

9:10 a.m.

TRB Communications Strategic Plan (Mackie) Action

- a. The Communications Strategic Plan was formally adopted.
- b. Questions and feedback included discussions about:
 - how much to do advertising
 - how to bundle our content
 - how to further develop key communications metrics

- how to get more transportation information out through the NRC/Academies' channels
- how to use the Executive Committee as true communications partners and find out how they are using TRB products and communicating TRB on social media
- how to incorporate more content sharing partnerships
- how to use AASHTO and APTA better in communications partnership
- how to incorporate the developing TRB value proposition into communications
- how to further leverage impacts, and
- how to even further curate information for our audiences.

9:40 a.m.

Executive Director's Report (Pedersen) Information

- a. We are moving to a "new normal" through COVID, including this being the largest in-person meeting since March 2020.
- b. The return to NASEM's offices is planned for October 4.
- c. We are preparing for an in-person TRB Annual Meeting in 2022.
- d. There is a tremendous amount of work going on by the Academies and TRB on President Biden's four priorities: COVID-10, economic recovery, climate change, and equity.
- e. Critical Issues equity addendum has been released and we are working on the next full edition of Critical issues.
- f. The National Research Council adopted a new strategic plan in February.
- g. The latest status of federal transportation funding was reported.
- h. The TRB financial status report was described.
- i. Transitions were detailed, including Cindy Baker's retirement this month.
- j. Thanks were given to the Executive Committee through a challenging time.
- k. A question was asked about how much the Annual Meeting represents out of TRB's revenues: it's about \$6 million out of \$16 to \$17 million.

10:00 a.m.

Break

10:15 a.m.

Signing of MOU with Latinos in Transit (Pedersen) Action

- A new MOU with Latinos in Transit was signed virtually by Neil Pedersen and Alva Carrasco, President of Latinos in Transit.

10:20 a.m.

Development of New TRB Strategic Plan (Turnbull) Discussion

- a. The NRC Strategic Plan was adopted in February. The current TRB plan was adopted in 2019.
- b. The current TRB and NRC missions and visions were reviewed and so was the proposed TRB language. Feedback was offered and included within the proposed language.
- c. The proposal regarding TRB's values is to adopt the NRC's values: objectivity, rigor, integrity, inclusivity, truth. One comment was that the NRC's values are devoid of humanity and the climate. The NRC's values are still evolving and these could still be updated.
- d. As TRB looks into the future, our Guiding Principles were reviewed, and they include:
 - a. adhere to the Academies' high standards
 - b. leverage the Academies
 - c. facilitate research in practice

- d. benefit from multi-disciplinary perspectives
 - e. provide useful products and growth opportunities, and evaluate and improve, and
 - f. leverage and develop diversity.
 - g. Comments were made to make implementation and communications more explicit, to include more about people and communities, and that some of the items sound more like goals than guiding principles.
- e. The current TRB and NRC goals were reviewed, as well as TRB's proposed language regarding resilience and sustainability in an ever-changing world. The language includes preparing decision makers, expanding TRB's impact, and assuring for TRB's creativity, resilience, and sustainability. Many comments were made about the language with several specific suggestions for language change.

11 a.m.

Biden Administration Priorities (Hampshire, Cliff, Pollack, Mims) Presentations and Discussion

- a. Robert Hampshire of U.S. DOT detailed the strategic pillars of the Biden Administration and how the DOT is aligning its own practice with those strategic goals. Among those pillars are safety, building equity into transportation, decarbonizing the country by 2050, and being excellent at delivering service. He discussed efforts by the DOT, including low-carbon fuels and fuel cell and battery work.
- b. Steven Cliff of NHTSA is launching a Safe System Approach that builds in equity, engineering, education, enforcement, and emergency medical services. NHTSA works on fuel economy and is revising standards, per the Biden Administration. American Jobs Plan has a lot of focus on zero-emission transportation, CAFÉ standards, and opening 500,000 new electric vehicle stations across the nation. NHTSA is taking an increased role on the safety of autonomous vehicles and technologies. For example, serious crashes must be reported to NHTSA within a day.
- c. Stephanie Pollack of FHWA notes that 1 in 3 fatalities is outside the car (pedestrians and bicyclists). Areas to work with TRB include developing equity metrics and baselines, figuring out how to do outreach with communities, and understanding equitable road pricing. Climate goals include establishment of methodologies for measuring GHG emissions (which have been flat for a long time) at state, regional, and project levels. Electric vehicle charging stations are needed along the national highway system. Resiliency is as much about precipitation and storms and heat for bridges and infrastructure as it is about sea-level rise, so we need best practices for this. Complete streets that are designed safely and feel safe cut across goals like economic strength and equity. Other issues include understanding post-COVID travel demand, automated enforcement and whether that can be more equitable, and improving methodologies for establishing and enforcing safe speed limits.
- d. Bradley Mims of FAA reported that his leadership team is aggressive and progressive. The FAA has provided \$20 billion to keep airports up and running during the pandemic. More than 1,500 (\$3.2 billion) in Airport Improvement Program grants are being awarded, with many of them focused on equity and recruitment of a diverse workforce. In terms of climate goals, there is \$100 million going to making aircraft cleaner and quieter, research on sustainable aviation fuels, and more efficient air traffic operations.

12:15 p.m.

Lunch

1:35 p.m.

Policy Session on Racial Equity (Ford) Information

- a. Laura Castillo-Page is in charge of DEI at the Academies. Infrastructure, capacity, culture, hiring and advancement, a DEI lens, policies and practices, and increased accountability through communications and data transparency are among the areas she's investigating. She is currently listening to leaders and will give Governing Board feedback and get staff and volunteer feedback.
- b. Carol Lewis reported on TRB's DEI initiatives, including identifying practices and primers for committees and panels, a new Blue Ribbon Award for Diversity, engaging with other transportation organizations, ways to make specialty conferences more inclusive, identifying resources and removing barriers for TRB staff, ensuring DEI in TRB's work, and improving data and communications to support all of this.
- c. Karen Febey reported on the Minority Student Fellows Program, which is approximately half funded by FHWA. This past year we received about \$12,000, which was the most donations ever in the 12 years of the program's history. Many efforts are underway to support the upcoming year of the program. Separately, of the 178 Standing Technical Committees, there are 8 that have a DEI focus. The Annual Meeting has a focus on equity, there are upcoming specialty conferences regarding DEI, and there are several TRB blogs, podcast episodes, and webinars focused on equity. There are also many publications on the topic, including a recent TR News issue devoted to the topic and special collections in TRR.
- d. Tierra Bills of Wayne State University discussed "transportation inequity," which is related to the growing extreme income inequality and the approximately 1 million people in Black communities displaced in the mid-century by interstates and urban renewal programs without proper compensation. She discussed her work on how unrecognized biases in data collection affect modeling and decision making. There are dynamics that are not caught in traditional travel demand models.
- e. Dorval Carter of CTA Chicago said that all of us would love to give free rides but we don't have the funding to do it, and the politics of leaders is also not always in line with the will of the public. To deal with those dynamics, a good spot to focus is on partnerships and community impact. Also, APTA announced that he is being selected as Transit Manager of the Year.
- f. Andrea D'Amato of Massachusetts DOT attended and secured the next speakers.
 - a. Liz Williams of the Massachusetts DOT Office of Transportation Planning is working with a group of data indicators for equity issues, especially for access to destinations. Transportation is important for what it does, not what it is. The DOT participates in the University of Minnesota Accessibility Observatory, which can detail levels of accessibility. Mass DOT adapted the data site for its own use and it is available to all.
 - b. Betsy Harvey is the transportation equity manager of the Boston MPO and discussed how she interacts with everyone across the entire agency and how equity is handled in the decision-making cycle.
- g. Robert Hampshire of U.S. DOT offered his initial feedback about this Policy Session. He discussed partnerships for building a robust science network and sharing knowledge and evidence-based decisions.

3:15 p.m.

Consensus Study on Equity Metrics (Menzie) Discussion

- a. There was a brief discussion on how to do research that assesses equity impacts of surface transportation funding programs.

3:20 p.m.

Break

3:30 p.m.

Plenary Discussion on Equity in Transportation (All) Discussion

- a. It was asked whether we have an equity assessment of all our agencies. It's difficult to know where to go for different needs even within individual agencies. Should we all have equity assessment coordinators, or equity managers like the Boston MPO?
- b. The transportation workforce could see a loss of young women and women of color, which would hurt equity goals.
- c. We still don't know the exact balance of using big data and being satisfied with the amount of data we already have collected, and also the amount of data to collect from actually being out in the field talking to people and communities.
- d. Sometimes we overthink transportation infrastructure and just need to talk to the communities. Missouri engages a community for three years and South Carolina has a massive highway project that includes a 10-year community engagement process.
- e. The auto industry has to understand consumer demand and what they might be interested in in the future. There could be consumer choice models that could be further developed.
- f. We all have an opportunity to share best practices and make a big difference on equity.
- g. A lot of the numbers we work with (such as VMT) have inherent bias baked into them, and it seems TRB could work on better measures that can reduce or remove inherent biases.
- h. Gentrification is a big concern when you're making any transportation investment.
- i. The dynamics with community outreach are very often the same voices showing up: white, wealthy, older.

5:10 p.m.

Concluding Remarks and Logistics (Pedersen)

- Neil Pedersen thanked the panelists for their thought provoking presentations and the committee for a rich discussion about issues related to transportation equity.

5:15 p.m.

Break

5:30 p.m.

Reception and Dinner

Tuesday, July 20, 2021

8:30 a.m.

Policy Session Follow-up Session (Shaheen) Information

- a. Any approach to measurement needs to take into account human geospatial issues, such as gerrymandering.
- b. Vacation, recreational, leisure transportation is also very important.
- c. We need to find ways to bake in equity, and issues like broadband access, before we plan the transportation routes.

- d. CRP studies could engage more with people in the research process, and create a movement of participatory research. CRP could create levels of participatory research and make it easy for the PIs to measure the levels of participatory research within each study. They do often include focus groups and surveys, but true participatory research is engaging with communities from the beginning. Perhaps tackling the barriers to participatory research could be a first step.
- e. Transit is the backbone of all the systems, and helps equity and climate, but we don't know what it looks like after the pandemic.

9 a.m.

January 2022 Policy Session (Houston) Information

- a. The January session will be on decarbonization. Speakers will be identified.

9:05 a.m.

Technical Activities Update (Grimes/Brach) Information

- a. There is a lot of focus on diversifying the content streams, including a growing influence for TRR and its 250-person editorial board. TRR is now the #1 transportation journal for policy and patents.
- b. The TRB Annual Meeting will be in person in 2022 and will be focused on Innovation.
- c. The committees were recently restructured after decades of staying the same. The next step is to restructure staff so they are working more on their projects and less on processes.
- d. Anne-Strauss Wieder has been selected as the Deen Lecturer for 2022.

9:20 a.m.

Next Critical Issues in Transportation (Turnbull/Pedersen) Discussion

- a. The last document was released at the 2019 Annual Meeting and discussed 12 topics and 63 issues. It guides TRB's focus for research.
- b. COVID and Racial Equity addendums have since been released.
- c. Transportation decarbonization seems like the most important potential issue.
- d. The future of cities, in terms of the "new normal" and "next normal," is a big issue that captures all the issues into a broader umbrella. We're at a point in time where we need to elevate the top issues such as safety, equity, and climate. We should organize these top issues and all their nuances.

9:55 a.m.

Break

10:15 a.m.

CRP Update (Hedges) Information

- a. The CRP Program has progressed a lot towards digital instead of paper-based during the pandemic, with a lot of help from TRB communications products and the APTA partnership, Impacts on Practice reports, and many other ways to disseminate materials.
- b. Much of the NCHRP research feeds into AASHTO manuals and materials.
- c. We are trying to make CEOs aware of research products, so that implementation will be funded.
- d. We showcase results in our annual reports.

10:35 a.m.

Marine Board Update (Grabowski) Information

- a. The takeaways from the Board's Spring meeting were that key stakeholders get very little time to talk with each other about emerging issues, research gaps were identified, and a followup workshop will probably be scheduled, including a tie-in to the consensus work on authorities of the Coast Guard.
- b. The focus at the upcoming meeting will be DEI in marine transportation.

10:45 a.m.

International Subcommittee (Iwasaki) Information

- a. New MOU agreements have been signed and there are new ones being drafted.
- b. There has been a focus on Africa and also on China. There has been good attendance at online conferences and webinars. TRB is reaching people around the world now more than ever during the pandemic.
- c. The International Subcommittee is going to revise its strategic plan.

11 a.m.

Young Member's Council (Kontou) Information

- a. This is one of four Coordinating Councils under the new TAC committee structure.
- b. The committee works on involvement, mentoring, and promotion of young member TRB participation.
- c. There will be a lot of planning that will happen at the TRB Annual Meeting, including holding the Six-Minute Pitch.
- d. The discussions about participatory research and the losses and potential losses of young women from the industry could be robust parts of the discussions. The committee is working to put together a diverse set of sessions on various related topics and also to partner with other committees, such as workforce and leadership development-related committees.

11:15 a.m.

Consensus and Advisory Studies Update (Menzies) Information

- a. The four report releases since the Executive Committee last met in January were detailed, including: offshore oil inspection, LNG by rail, transportation resilience metrics, and wheelchairs on airplanes.
- b. The status of study requests in recently enacted legislation was detailed, including in the Coast Guard Reauthorization Act, the FAA Reauthorization Act, and other pending surface transportation bills.

11:40 a.m.

Other Business (Shaheen) Information

- a. Thanks were given for allowing this to be an in-person meeting.
- b. This group provides some of the most valuable input to TRB, and a special thanks to Nat Ford and Susan Shaheen for leading the discussion.

11:45 a.m.

Adjournment for Lunch