



Integrated Directional Signing Program

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MINUTES OF VIRGINIA STATEWIDE DIRECTIONAL SIGNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: April 5, 2005

Time: 9:30 a.m.

Place: Virginia Tourism Corporation
901 East Byrd Street, West Tower 19th Floor
Richmond Virginia 23219

1. Introductions

Ray Khoury opened the meeting; members, staff and guests introduced themselves, and a sign in sheet was circulated.

2. Previous Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were revised to reflect that Suzie Lee of VTTI was in attendance.

3. IDSP

a. Status of Participation (Logo, TODS, Supplemental, GMS) – Virginia Logos reported as follows:

Logo

- 100% of businesses have responded and have either renewed or dropped.
- Experienced an 11% loss overall after price increase. Gas and Camping lead the losses.
- Attractions are underway.
- Currently marketing urban areas.

TODS

- Marketing schedule is available. Marketing procedures were discussed.
- All work is on track.
- Currently working with Natural Resource Agencies.
- Virginia Logos is awaiting responses/selection of generic logo for farm markets, which Donna Johnson agreed to check into.

Supplemental Guide Signs

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- There have been no significant changes in the number of signs.
- There have been 177 inquiries for SGS to date. Of the 177, 97 are possible additions.
- Only four applications have been received to date; one was for maintenance.

b. Senate Bill 813 – Phil Hopkins updated the committee on the approach VDOT is taking to address the provisions of the legislation.

i. Fees – Handouts of the existing and proposed fees were provided and discussed. Hopkins pointed out that high volume mainline fee for logo would drop from \$1,250 to \$1,000; the regular mainline fee would go from \$900 to \$800. Additionally, the 40,000 ADT breakpoint is to be moved to high volume. There is a projected 4% margin in the proposed fee schedule.

The proposal is to make the fee schedule retroactive to 16 Sep 2004. Discussion centered on how participants would be compensated for the difference. Ray Khoury indicated this is to be worked out; any issuance of rebates would have to be determined by legal staff

Ralph Earnhardt inquired whether the bumping policy would prevent a business from getting back on the program at the reduced fee. John Spacek indicated it would be a negligible effect (less than 1%) and would not affect any gas facilities.

Mike O'Connor raised the issue of fixing the fees indefinitely. This would require the CTB to bind future CTBs, which Phil Hopkins pointed out, cannot be done.

Donna Johnson inquired why there was no reduction in fees for TODS. Ray Khoury pointed out that there is no windfall to VDOT from TODS; the revenue to VDOT is predominantly coming through the Logo Program. The TODS Program is basically operating at margin.

ii. Auctioning – Virginia Logos made a PowerPoint presentation about the draft process in South Carolina. VDOT will be preparing a report to go to the General Assembly by 01 August; there may or may not be a recommendation with the report.

iii. Gas Criteria I (24 hours) – Phil Hopkins discussed the background of Category I and II Gas. Virginia Logos will be preparing a report discussing possible ways to handle, positives and negatives, and so forth.

Lee Stephens with Spotts Fain, representing Wawa, was invited to speak on behalf of the 24 hour issue. He emphasized that providing information about services available 24 hours is a true benefit to motorists; it provides for their safety and convenience. Also, it maintains a level playing field for all participants; all gas stations have the opportunity to extend their hours to be competitive. It was pointed out that this would not have any immediate effect on current Category I Gas businesses.

Ralph Earnhardt indicated 70% of tourists travel during the day. Lee Stephens pointed out that the paradigm is shifting; increasingly, motorists are traveling at night as their schedules become more condensed and complicated during the day.

Ray Khoury invited the committee members and guest to present any comments or feedback on the 24 hour Gas issue. It was clarified that this is for a report only and would not be put out for public comment.

An updated report will be made to the SDSAC at the June meeting.

4. Full Service Food MUTCD Experiment

Phil Hopkins opened the discussion of this item noting that additional locations for full serve food will be added. By the time some of the locations are constructed and crash data is collected for a year, it will be up to two years to complete an experiment at these locations. He indicated VDOT plans to continue with the current, approved experiment and send a report to FHWA. If FHWA requires additional study, we will add the other locations.

Suaie Lee of the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute made a PowerPoint presentation about the current status of the experiment. The study is divided into two parts; the first part is to determine motorists' perspectives on the Full Serve Food signs through a survey; the second part is a crash analysis study. The survey is to begin today (04/05/05) and is seeking to make 800 contacts. Suzie went over the final cut of questions that were put on the survey. The crash analysis is nearly complete; thus far it has not identified any negative impacts. The analysis is looking at impacts of crashes where driver distraction was an indicated factor. Due to the limited number of crashes involved, most results appear to be statistically insignificant.

John Shenal raised the issue of the impact of older drivers, indicating sign congestion and information overload is a major complaint. He inquired whether there is too much information at the locations and drivers are tending to ignore the signs. Suzie Lee indicated that trying to screen for older driver impacts would further reduce the number of crashes and be more statistically insignificant; however, she agreed to look at it as well as other issues such as day vs. night crashes and simple vs. complex interchanges.

Suzie Lee will provide an update at the next SDSAC meeting. She should have data on the survey results at that time.

5. Open Discussion

John Spacek noted that the Virginia Logos website went live last night. The web address is www.virginialogos.com

6. Next Meeting Agenda Items

Update on auctioning
Update on 24 hour Gas criteria
Update on Full Service Food experiment

7. Next Meeting: 07 Jun 2005