

Oklahoma Road User Charge (RUC) Task Force meeting
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 9, 2023

Call to Order

The Oklahoma Road User Charge (RUC) Task Force meeting was called to order at 2:01pm.

Roll Call

Task Force Members Present were Caden Cleveland, Todd Hiatt, Scott Minton, Jim Newport, Chris Schroder, Lyle Walters, Robert Endicott (proxy for Michael Lynn), John Sharp (proxy for Mark Sweeney), Joe Gappa (proxy for Jessica Grogis) and Senator John Haste. **Joining Virtually** were Rich Brierre and Representative Brian Hill.

Task Force Members Absent were Mike Fina and Jonathan Fowler.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes approved for December 15th, 2022 meeting.

Award of the STSFA Federal Grant – Russell Hulin

On November 1st, 2021, ODOT submitted an application to USDOT for federal grant funding as directed by HB 1712 to assist in the funding of Oklahoma's upcoming pilot. HNTB coordinated the completion of the application with contributions from ODOT and OTA staff. The award was originally scheduled for announcement in mid-2022, but was delayed for several months. The delay likely resulted from the implementation of the major infrastructure bill passed by Congress in November 2021.

In January of this year Oklahoma was announced as one of 7 states who were awarded federal grants totaling just under \$18 million to assist with road user charge pilots or research projects. Other states receiving grants included California, Delaware, Hawaii, Michigan, Minnesota and Virginia.

The \$1.9 million in grant funds we received provides approximately 50% of the total cost of the pilot with the remainder coming from ODOT budgeted state matching funds.

All of our planning and pilot development has followed the original application objectives allowing for grant reimbursement going forward. The required federal reporting will be handled by ODOT's grant management staff.

Presentation – Mr. Kary Witt (HNTB), Ms. Jee Kim (Gannett Fleming) and Scott Jacobs (Emovis)

A Pay-Per-Mile Pilot Concept of Operations Overview was given. Mr. Witt talked about the Recruitment, Onboarding, and Enrollment of the pilot and Ms. Kim and Mr. Jacobs discussed the mileage collection, monitoring, invoicing/payment, and reporting.

Presentation – Mr. Cory Cart (Jones PR)

Mr. Cart presented an update on the Outreach Campaign for the Fair Miles Oklahoma pilot program. He discussed the sign-up process, incentives offered, media coverage and outreach. He encouraged the task force members to share the website and spread the word about speaking opportunities offered to educate people on the pilot. The goal is to sign-up at least 600 participants.

Questions & Open Discussion

Mr. Sharp asked about capturing a broad spectrum of participants. Mr. Cart responded the only challenge identified was households falling below the poverty line because they may not have access to the technology or their vehicle may not be a newer model.

Mr. Schroder asked how data is collected when the phone may be off or how does the app differentiate if a registered user is riding in someone else's vehicle? Mr. Jacobs stated the vehicle is the participant and the person enrolled did so with the VIN number which is connected by the Bluetooth MAC Address. Multiple users are identified at the beginning of the sign-up process so each possible driver of that vehicle will have their own account and connection. Ms. Kim added if the vehicle is driven by someone not identified and connected with the app, mileage driven can be reconciled with a 'before and after' photo of the odometer.

Mr. Walters asked how many signed up chose the app as the collection method. Mr. Jacobs said we don't know at this time but there will be a breakdown of collection methods.

Mr. Newport reiterated from previous meetings that it is important not to follow other states but present a plan to the legislature that is unique to Oklahoma as Mr. Hulin said at the December 15th meeting. He further stated the cost of data collection is still a concern. Sec. Gatz responded that the task force was created to follow through with a pilot and provide a report of what worked and what did not for the legislature to consider so they can make an informed decision. Mr. Hulin added that HB1712 mandated the pilot but it also requires the task force to look at all alternatives for the replacement of fuel tax.

Sen. Haste stated that there was great representation on the task force with all different areas looking into options and the legislature is being proactive about revenue replacement for the hybrid vehicles because it is impacting dollars coming into our state from a national and statewide standpoint. Rep. Hill added that the best models were built with the idea of the weight and classification of vehicle but also including mileage. As the pilot moves forward, identifying any other mechanisms that could serve our state better.

Mr. Endicott asked if privacy matters will be considered and Sec. Gatz answered absolutely privacy will be protected. Ms. Sullivan added that the pilot will include Oklahomans perspectives by conducting surveys asking participants about their thoughts on the mobile app and did they feel their information was secure.

Mr. Minton said a "citizenry bill of rights" should be considered for the pilot and hopes that the task force is considering that.

Mr. Willingham from the Oklahoma Corporation Commission mentioned the international state compacts for commercial vehicles traveling interstate. For example, a trucking company might pay for fuel in Dallas but most miles traveled are within Oklahoma. The International Fuel Tax agreement requires Motor Carrier to report every quarter how many miles were driven in which states/provinces. Mr. Gatz added that the International Fuel Tax Association (IFTA) works and is similar to what we are trying with the RUC pilot.

Recommendation for Task Force Approval to Proceed with Pilot Design

Sec. Gatz asked for a motion and a second for Task Force approval to proceed with the 6-month pilot as designed and recommended by our consultant teams. Mr. Hiatt moved for approval. Mr. Walters motioned for a 2nd. Motion carried unanimously.

Closing Remarks

Sec. Gatz thanked the task force members for their time and participation.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 3:28pm.

Signed by: 
Tim J. Gatz

05/09/2023
Date