

IFTI Executive Board Meeting

Thursday, February 23, 2012

Herff College of Engineering Executive Conference Center
University of Memphis
3:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Members Present:

- Mike Bronzini
- Steve Liberto
- Dr. Martin Lipinski
- Cliff Lynch
- Andy Meyers
- Sunny Morris
- Mark Norris
- Craig Phillip (via conference call)
- Keith Reardon
- Dick Warder

IFTI Staff Present:

- Sean Ellis, Associate Director
- Kimberly Grantham, Marketing Manager
- Dan Pallme, Director of Freight Transportation Leadership

Meeting Minutes:

Dr. Martin Lipinski, Director, opened the meeting by welcoming the board to campus. All board members introduced themselves.

Dr. Lipinski shared that IFTI has had a great year. He explained the renovations to the new classroom and plans for the student lounge in the Engineering Administration building. Dr. Lipinski remarked that during the meeting, each staff member would review portions of IFTI's progress. IFTI made significant staff changes in 2011. In June 2011, IFTI added two new staff members: Dan Pallme, Director of Freight Transportation Leadership and Kimberly Grantham, Marketing Manager. (See slides 1-2)

Sean Ellis, Associate Director, provided a financial report. He reviewed the three centers operating out of IFTI: CFTS, the former UTC, @ \$2.2 million; CAIT, an earmark, @ \$4.6 million and CFIRE, the new UTC relationship, @ \$3.5 million. (See slides 3-6)

Sean also provided an update about students working for IFTI. To date, IFTI has one post-doctoral researcher, three research associates, four PhD candidates, and four Masters Students. (See slides 7- 11)

Kimberly Grantham, Marketing Manager, shared information about IFTI's marketing and communication efforts. She reviewed what we've been doing over the last six months including developing a printed marketing piece; working with the U of M Marketing Department to create a video and launching the IFTI twitter page, Facebook page, LinkedIn page and YouTube Channel. Over the next six months, Kimberly shared that IFTI will redesign the IFTI websites, continue to publicize the Academy and develop QR codes for important IFTI sites. Kimberly confirmed that the group was receiving the Executive Board monthly update. (See slides 12 – 15)

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Dan Pallme, Director of Transportation Leadership, introduced the Freight Transportation Leadership Academy. He reviewed the schedule, the target audience and introduced the industry experts associated with the class. To date, we are expecting about 10-12 participants. The maximum number is 25. Keith Reardon shared that CN and similar large corporations want their employees to understand the transportation business. He suggested that perhaps we reach out to young, undergraduate students to make sure they understand the transportation industry. (See slides 16 – 21)

Dan talked about the Executive in Residence program. IFTI hosted its third Executive in Residence conference on November 8, 2011. This program connects industry leaders to University of Memphis engineering and business students. The 2011 Executive in Residence was David Wedaman from ReTrans. While on campus, Mr. Wedaman made two presentations. During the first presentation, he addressed a large group of business and engineering students. For the second presentation, Mr. Wedaman conducted a conversation about the freight movement industry with IFTI students and professors. Mr. Wedaman also provided one-on-one career and professional advice to four students. (See slide 22)

Dr. Lipinski provided an update about Vanderbilt's research focus including, but not limited to network analysis, waterborne cargo system, and forward thinking initiatives with regard to climate change activity. In June 2011, Vanderbilt hosted a two-day leadership summit conference that brought together major stakeholders in the freight transportation sector with climate change researchers to discuss the climate change issue. The consensus that emerged from this landmark meeting was despite the uncertainties surrounding climate change; it is time to start developing effective strategies that will keep the nation's critical infrastructure, including our transportation systems, running in the face of the adverse impacts that are expected. (See slide 23 – 24)

Dr. Lipinski provided an overview of the U of M research. The research is organized into three areas: 1) engineering, 2) business and 3) workforce development. [Click here](#) to view completed project reports and current project proposals. (See slide 25 – 28)

Dr. Lipinski introduced the new CFIRE relationship. He explained the history of the new format, the call for proposal and selection process as well as plans for working within the new relationship. Of the 63 University Transportation Center applications received, RITA awarded 22 grants, each worth \$3.5 million dollars. Forty-six of the applicants competed to be one of the 10 Tier 1 Centers. The CFIRE (National Center for Freight and Infrastructure Research and Education) Consortium was awarded a Tier 1 Center. RITA also awarded 10 regional centers and, 2 public transportation centers.

CFIRE includes 10 universities. The University of Memphis will coordinate the "southern hub," which includes Vanderbilt University, the University of Alabama-Huntsville, and the University of Southern Mississippi. The University of Wisconsin-Madison will serve as the lead institute of CFIRE and will lead the "northern hub," which includes the University of Wisconsin-Superior, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, the University of Toledo, the University of Illinois-Chicago, and Michigan Technological University.

In the initial stages of developing the proposal, IFTI was courted by several universities including Northwestern, University of Arkansas, Mississippi State University, University of Denver, Cal State and George Mason. We decided to partner with University of Wisconsin-Madison for a few reasons: 1) They are focused on freight 2) The geographical area serves the majority of freight traffic in the United States and 3) They were interested in looking at a unique

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partnership in the consortium. We believe our unique approach was a selling point in the proposal.

Many landmark center proposals were not accepted including Northwestern, Southern Cal, Arkansas, Alabama and Iowa. We also submitted a regional proposal with the University of Tennessee. Unfortunately, the regional center went to University of Florida.

In the CFIRE proposal, we identified specific research projects, work force development events and tech transfer activities. Since January, the consortium members are figuring out how these relationships are going to work. Even though it looks like a lot of money, when you divide it among the members, it may be a challenge. We specified eight research projects in proposal. We've assigned one lead to each project. The lead will flesh out the plan, connect with interested partners, and submit to CFIRE peer review panel. We are hoping to have money remaining to have call for proposals in 2013.

We have increased the number of presentations and published papers. Our goal is to disseminate our research findings in the leading academic journals and at professional meetings attended by our peers at universities and by those practicing in the public and private sectors. .

Under the CFIRE umbrella, the University of Memphis will be heading two projects - the economic impact of short line railroads and livability considerations in freight-centric communities. Vanderbilt will be leading projects on inland waterway data sources and climate change. These projects will be reviewed by the CFIRE research advisory committee before being selected for funding.

Mike Bronzini asked about the future of the UTC Program. Since we were this award is for one year, what happens if not refunded. Dr. Lipinski gave a summary of the roundtable meeting sponsored by Congressman Lipinski held in Washington during the TRB meeting. He mentioned there is a great deal of uncertainty about future funding and the provisions for UTCs. Currently, the Senate and house bills are different.

Sean reviewed the IFTI strategic plan. The staff took three days at the beginning of January to put our goals down on paper. The University's tag line is dreamers, thinkers, doers. We feel that IFTI's goals fall in line with that saying: research, education, and outreach. (See slides 31 – 36)

Andy Meyers, Vice-Provost for Research at the University of Memphis addressed the group to explain the University's plan for supporting IFTI and our research. His professional focus is mostly on funded research. As an issue of importance in Memphis, transportation is huge. With the opportunity CFIRE presents, the university recognizes the need to do a better job supporting IFTI. In earlier efforts, the university saddled the IFTI staff with a hefty burden of finding matches.

As we've begun to discuss the Universities role and commitment to IFTI, Dr.. Meyers emphasized the need for better coordination cross colleges. He understands that we need to get the Fogelman College of Business Dean to make a commitment. He mentioned that there are a number of obvious places where interdisciplinary connections can be built: Business, GIS, Law, Earth Sciences, Urban and Regional Planning, etc. Previous efforts to establish these partnerships were not always successful, perhaps because the wrong players were at the table. A meeting is scheduled with the Provost to outline steps that are needed to support the Institute. These include: 1). Funding positions in engineering and business for faculty engaged in freight

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transportation research, 2) Getting serious commitments for interdisciplinary research across campus, 2) Generating match dollars for program support rather than just project orientation.

From Dr. Meyers prospective, relieving match burden and developing interdisciplinary ties funded by university and not the center will give CFIRE a running start. Even if the money goes away, he wants to see a transportation center here in 10-20 years. The ability to bring in new young faculty is a win-win for all.

Board Comments to Andy Meyers:

- Dean Warden commented that university is working to make strategic hires in engineering and business. Engaging new young assistant professors for collaborating is our future.
- Sunny Morris asked if we have other agencies to NSF young investigator award. We want/need to look at other funding options.
- Dr. Lipinski commented on the challenges of breaking down silos. Each school has different set of metrics. We see CFIRE money to build from.
- Mike Bronzini commented on the interdisciplinary aspect. In his experience, the university has provided a budget line item for covering base costs.

Dan Palme led conversation about the IFTI Executive Board bylaws. During the last meeting, Senator Norris asked us to develop bylaws. This is a draft prepared by staff for your consideration. (See slide 36)

Comments:

- Sunny Morris suggested including something about being green.
- Keith Reardon said if you want to reach businesses/corporations, you need to connect the dots for them. Let them know that IFTI is creating solutions and people. Link the prep-work that IFTI is doing to prepare students to be successful in business world.
- Steve Liberto suggested that we need to make IFTI research visible to corporations.

Dr. Lipinski reviewed upcoming events. (See slides 37-43)

To-dos from the meeting:

- Reassess the IFTI strategic plan/vision to include workforce development. Be clear and concise in that the institute provides solutions and people. We are meeting the needs of industry.
- Consider IFTI's need to have a work force development/career development committee? Steve Liberto and Keith Reardon suggested they may be interested.