

Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

Summary Minutes
Joint Meeting with the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission
FEBRUARY 1, 2007

held at the General Assembly Building, Room 4East
Capitol Square
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Members
(those present are highlighted)

William Euille
Christopher Zimmerman
Robert Lederer
Gerald E. Connolly
David Snyder
Scott K. York
Harry J. "Hal" Parrish, II
Bryan Polk
Martin Nohe
Jeannemarie Devolites Davis
Vincent F. Callahan, Jr.
Jeffrey M. Frederick
Julia A. Connally
Margaret E. G. Vanderhye
Matthew O. Tucker
Dennis Morrison

Mayor, City of Alexandria
Arlington County Board; NVTA Chairman
Mayor, City of Fairfax
Chairman, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
Falls Church City Council
Chairman, Loudoun County Board of Supervisors
Vice Mayor, City of Manassas
Manassas Park City Council
Prince William County Board of County Supervisors
Virginia Senate, District 34
Virginia House of Delegates, District 34
Virginia House of Delegates, District 52
Governor's Appointee – CTB Member
Governor's Appointee
Director, VDRPT (non-voting member)
No. Va. District Administrator, VDOT (non-voting member)

Staff Present

James Van Zee

NVRC

Call to Order

Chairman Zimmerman called the meeting to order at 5:41 p.m.

Roll Call

The roll was called and members present or absent were noted for the record. Mr. Connolly asked that the minutes reflect that Delegate Vincent Callahan joined them for the press conference and that he be accounted for as present

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Connolly moved approval of the minutes of the November 9, 2006, meeting. The motion was seconded and carried.

Action Items

- A. Statement of Principles Regarding the Proposed Transportation Funding Plan in the General Assembly

The Authority reviewed the proposed joint statement on transportation funding with the Northern Virginia Regional Commission and the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (attached). NVRC and NVTC had already acted on the statement following the joint press conference held earlier that afternoon. Mr. Connolly moved approval. The motion was seconded and carried with Del. Frederick voting no.

B. Calendar Year 2007 Work Program and Meeting Schedule

Tom Biesiadny stated that changes have been made to the meeting schedule that were requested by NVTA, including adjusting the schedule regarding the September meeting and deleting some meetings where NVTA could go two months without convening a meeting. Mr. Connolly moved approval, Mr. York seconded. The vote in favor was unanimous.

C. Reallocation Requests of RSTP Funds: Alexandria, Fairfax Co., Loudoun, Prince William

There was no discussion. Mr. York moved approval, Mr. Euille seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion Items

A. Report on the General Assembly

Mr. Biesiadny distributed a staff analysis comparing the various transportation bills as they stood prior to this day's actions. This is to be used as a reference to see how the Governor's proposal, HB 3202 and SB 1417 looked before today. Staff will update it, incorporating the General Assembly's changes.

He also stated that staff would update the overall year-by-year review of the Republican Transportation Plan. Finally, the document "Transportation in Northern Virginia" is a compilation of data and information to serve as a resource document. He stated that it does not specifically relate to the TransAction 2030 regional transportation plan but there is a section on the 2030 plan in the document.

Mr. Biesiadny also reported that the Senate passed the photo red bill. The House Transportation Committee reported a photo red bill as a consensus bill and it will go to the floor in the next several days. Mr. Snyder stated that Falls Church's experience with photo red enforcement is extremely positive. Delegate May reported that the legislation passed out of committee with a 19-2 vote. He would like to see solid numbers for or against. This information will be provided.

I-95/395 Hot Lanes Proposal

Virginia Secretary of Transportation Pierce Homer came before the Authority to provide an update on the status of the proposed HOT (High Occupancy Toll) lanes in the I-95/395 corridor from the 14th Street Bridge at the Potomac River to the Massaponax area south of Fredericksburg. In response to questions regarding the progress and direction of the proposal, he stated that the question is how does the region attract private investors. He asked NVTA to be mindful that the state is dealing with both the Fredericksburg Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (FAMPO) and the District of Columbia, that has a set of imperatives and questions that are different than NVTA. He offered several reasons why this project is important:

1. To get a reliable stream of operating funds in the I-95 corridor for bus service and other transit.
2. Whatever is done in this corridor would not diminish funds going to Metro based on HOV ridership.

Secretary Homer stated that the northern segment already has physical constraints while the southern portion would need to be built and would have environmental constraints and higher capital costs.

He then introduced VDOT commissioner David Ekern and VDOT Chief Engineer Malcolm Kerley.

Secretary Homer stated that it is important to look at a transit vision and the means to implement it. It will be probably a good 1-2 years before costs of HOT lane facilities can be provided. There is also a factor that USDOT has designated I-95 as a "Corridor of the Future," which does not provide funds but expedites regulatory approvals.

Mr. Tucker informed the Authority that Corey Hill from his staff at the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) has been put in lead of a staff task force on assuring public transit access to the I-95/I-395 express lanes.

Mr. Connolly asked if this project could qualify as a categorical exception. VDOT replied that it might in the environmental process. Mr. Connolly stated, that in that case, there's some leverage lost since there won't be a process. The I-95 HOT lanes proposal is different from the Beltway HOT lanes project. It is to enhance an existing facility. It was explicitly discussed that it would enhance transit use, not that it would just be looked at. He thought it was to be integrated from the beginning. Given the fact that the promise on the Beltway HOT lanes isn't going to be met and public funds will be needed, why rush into a second project with the same company. Secretary Homer responded that the premise that the Beltway was to be self-financing was never the case; it was always 15 percent public participation. Mr. Connolly stated that he sat on that committee and he couldn't remember any discussion of 15 percent.

Del. Frederick stated that his constituents in Prince William County have expressed strong opposition to the HOT lanes proposal. He added that there is a major concern that the promises being offered regarding HOV and public transit access will be degraded over time.

Mr. Nohe stated Prince William County has not taken an official position on HOT lanes, but individual Board members have concerns.

Chairman Zimmerman said he recognizes that something needs to be done regarding these specific concerns. Beltway HOT lanes would involve new capacity and bringing in new money. The taxpayers already paid for I-95 with HOV lanes. The original HOT lane proposal very prominently featured Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) as the transit of choice. A year later, BRT was gone. This creates a problem. The facility is already functioning well as a BRT and HOV facility. If the project goes into the CLRP now, the region loses the ability to be at the table and help make decisions.

Secretary Homer stated if we do nothing the HOV lanes will fail. On average 2 days a week the lanes fail. It's a difficult balancing act between the two MPOs and the need to fund a process that makes clear commitments to making it work. If private investors are expected to make serious financial commitment, there needs to be balance.

Mr. Connolly asked why rush into a second project when there are problems with Beltway HOT lanes. Caution is called for when looking for detailed answers to the region's concerns.

Mr. Zimmerman stated that it is important to ensure region has a role in the process.

Mr. Tucker stated that Corey Hill is working on a milestone schedule that will lay out the entire project, so the region can see where it can express concerns throughout the project. The state officials insisted that they are listening to the region's concerns.

Other Business

Delegate Whipple reported that her legislation regarding local reimbursements/per diem rates is on the second review. Mr. Snyder reported that NVTC will invite Metro officials to meet with NVTC at its March 2007 meeting.

Mr. Connolly requested that the Interim Technical Committee present periodic updates next year on the TransAction 2030 Transportation Plan.

Adjournment

Chairman Zimmerman adjourned the meeting at 6:47 p.m.

Statement of Principles Regarding the Proposed Transportation Plan in the General Assembly

The Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA), Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC) and the Northern Virginia Regional Commission (NVRC) appreciate the efforts made during the General Assembly session to provide a permanent dedicated source of funding for transportation in order to meet the Commonwealth's future economic competitive needs. We believe that this is a step toward a workable solution. At their meetings on February 1, 2007, consistent with the adopted TransAction 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan the NVTA, NVTC and NVRC will affirm their support for the following principles that will guide them in assessing transportation legislation in the General Assembly:

1. The legislation must provide significant increases in transportation funding for all modes from a stable, reliable, and permanent source(s).
2. Transportation is a state responsibility, and therefore, enactment of new Northern Virginia transportation revenue sources must include a substantial state financial commitment. Any regional/local funding effort should include a broad array of options for choosing among a number of revenue sources.
3. NVTA, NVTC, and NVRC oppose the devolution of the secondary road systems to counties as proposed. Such action shifts funding responsibilities from the state to the local tax base and homeowners associations and will lead to a disparity in the level of road maintenance around the Commonwealth.
4. NVTA, NVTC and NVRC do not support language that requires the local government and NVTA to consult with General Assembly members when selecting projects to be funded with new Northern Virginia revenues. There are General Assembly members on NVTA, and the TransAction 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan, adopted unanimously by all nine local governments in the region, already prioritizes Northern Virginia investments.
5. Any change in the existing land use authority of local governments should also be based on a deliberative, consultative process and must include the ability to deny development on the basis of inadequate public facilities.

Further, NVTA, NVTC and NVRC respectfully call on the General Assembly to:

- A. Provide a fair share of funding for Northern Virginia in the statewide package.
- B. Limit the use of General Fund dollars, so as to protect current and future funding for core state obligations, such as K-12, higher education, public safety and human services.
- C. Allocate bond funds to all modes, including transit capital, based on the Transportation Trust Fund formula.
- D. Continue to match federal interstate and primary road earmarks with state funds, not shift this responsibility to Northern Virginia regional funds.
- E. Provide an on-going revenue stream of at least \$50 million in capital funding for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) with no sunset, and no federal match requirement. This will provide flexibility beyond matching federal funds, and will ensure that WMATA's on-going capital needs will be funded.