



Northern Virginia Transportation Authority
The Authority for Transportation in Northern Virginia

SUMMARY MINUTES

Thursday, October 12, 2023

7PM, EST.

3040 Williams Drive, Suite 200

Fairfax, VA 22031

This meeting was conducted in person and livestreamed via [NVTA's YouTube Channel](#)

1. Call to Order

- ✓ Vice Chair Snyder called the meeting to order at 7:05PM.

2. Roll Call

- ✓ **Membership: Attendees** Vice Chair David Snyder, Chairman Jeff McKay (7:50PM), Chair Ann Wheeler, Board Member Matt de Ferranti (Remote-Medical), Mayor Justin Wilson, Mayor Michelle Davis-Younger, Mayor Jeanette Rishell, Mayor Catherine Read, Senator Jennifer Boysko, Mr. Anthony Bedell (Remote-Louisiana-Distance), Ms. Mary Hynes, Mr. Jim Kolb, Mr. John Lynch, and Mr. Todd Horsley. **Non-Attendees** Chair Phyllis J. Randall, Supervisor Pat Herrity, Mayor Derrick Wood
- ✓ **Staff Attendees:** Chief Executive Officer Monica Backmon, Chief Financial Officer Michael Longhi, Principal, Transportation Planning and Programming Keith Jasper, Communications and Public Affairs Manager Abigail Hillerich, Strategic Communications Specialist Sharara Faisal, Assistant Finance Officer Peggy Teal, Investment & Debt Manager Dev Priya Sen, Senior Accountant Adnan Malik, Accounting Assistant Margaret Duker, Senior Manager, Transportation Planning and Programming Dr. Sree Nampoothiri, Planning Analytics Manager Harun Rashid, Regional Transportation Planners Ian Newman, Griffin Frank and Hannah Pajewski.
- ✓ **Council of Counsel Attendees:** Mr. Daniel Robinson-Fairfax County, Ms. MinhChau Corr-Arlington County, and Ms. Christina Brown Zechman-City of Alexandria (Remote).
- ✓ **Other Attendees:** Tracy Baynard McGuire Woods LLC
Members of the public, jurisdiction and agency staff were in person and were able to watch the meeting livestreamed via [NVTA's YouTube Channel](#).
- ✓ Vice Chair Snyder opened the meeting with a moment of silence for all those victimized by terrorism, war, and political persecution. After a moment of silence, approval of the September meeting minutes was postponed until a voting quorum was present.

PRESENTATIONS

4. Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPRA) Update

- ✓ DJ Stadtler, Executive Director, VPRA, provided updates on VPRA's Transforming Rail in Virginia initiative. Mr. Stadtler highlighted future passenger rail expansions through 2030 and beyond, including adding six new trains to the Virginia Railway Express (VRE)

Fredericksburg Line, four new trains to the VRE Manassas Line, and seven new trains to the Amtrak State Supported Service. Additionally, Mr. Stadtler provided details on infrastructure improvements from DC to Quantico, highlighting the need to increase capacity. He discussed upcoming timelines and progress on Alexandria's Fourth Track, Franconia-Springfield Bypass, Crystal City Station and Long Bridge projects.

- ✓ After the presentation, Mayor Read asked what the estimated date of completion of the Roanoke to New River Valley line was. Mr. Stadtler responded that the 30% design will be completed in December 2023, and at that time they will have more information to determine a schedule. Mayor Read responded that the ridership of the Roanoke trains has exceeded expectations and stated it will be important for the Virginia Tech and Blacksburg community to have the connection. She followed by asking about any plans to continue the line to Bristol. Mr. Stadtler responded that the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) is leading that discussion. He continued that the connection between Roanoke and New River Valley is the first step to extending to Bristol. Vice Chair Snyder added that NVRTA has significant investments in VPRAs project and it's important to highlight that NVRTA is not only assisting the region but a statewide rail system.

5. Virginia Railway Express's (VRE) System Plan 2050

- ✓ Rich Dalton, Chief Executive Officer and Nick Ruiz, Planning Program Manager, VRE presented on VRE's System Plan 2050 Update. This update seeks to address numerous changes in regional travel patterns since the previous System Plan was adopted in 2014. Mr. Ruiz discussed the importance of assessing market reality to determine systemwide needs. VRE's Travel Market Assessment included studying travel behavior and determining the most utilized routes. Additionally, he discussed weekday and weekend board-recommended alternatives to better serve the region. VRE predicts these recommendations will help grow ridership, especially on weekends. Mr. Ruiz concluded with a timeline to finalize the preferred 2050 scenario and adopt the Plan in March 2024.

6. Transform 66 Outside the Beltway Concession Fee Projects Update

- ✓ Susan Shaw, Megaprojects Director, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), presented the I-66 Outside the Beltway Concession Fee Projects Annual Update. Ms. Shaw discussed the status of the Concession Fee Projects and provided an update on the Transform 66 Project, which is now in the final completion phase. Ms. Shaw said the remaining segments of I-66 Parallel Trail are expected to open in October 2023. Additionally, Ms. Shaw presented I-66 Express Lane performance and usage statistics. She concluded the presentation by discussing the next steps in the I-495 Express Lanes Northern Extension Project (495 NEXT) and the I-95 Bi-Directional Study.
- ✓ After the presentation Senator Boysko commented on her observation of the congestion on I-495 northbound to Maryland. Ms. Shaw stated that VDOT's project will improve flow, but that the real fix for the congestion is for Maryland to address the American Legion Bridge and I-270. She noted Maryland has restarted efforts to address the issues. Chair Wheeler mentioned how both for the region and personally the

projects have made an impact on travel and quality of life. She concluded by stating that even though it will take years, she is looking forward to the bi-directional express lane work. Ms. Backmon then noted that Ms. Shaw is retiring on November 1st and the Authority members thanked her for her work.

7. Commonwealth Transportation Board Process Update; SMART SCALE

- ✓ Mary Hynes, Authority and Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) member presented an update regarding the SMART SCALE review process. She discussed the Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment's (OIPI) key findings and recommended solutions for future SMART SCALE funding cycles as well as illustrative impacts. Throughout the presentation Ms. Hynes discussed her and Scott Kasprovicz' proposal to OIPI's proposed recommendations for the overall SMART SCALE process which included the following:
 - Remove Step 2 and use SMART SCALE scores as a determinant through the full process
 - Do not reduce the number of applications per locality
 - Include in the definition of High Priority Program (HPP) corridor redevelopment and high-capacity fixed guideway transit
 - Changing factor weights for typology A to be Congestion at 40, Safety at 20, Accessibility at 25, Environment at 10, and Economic Development at 5.
 - Modify congestion mitigation measures to include 50% present day and 50% 10-year look ahead
 - Adjust accessibility measure weights to A1-40%, A2-20%, A3-40%
 - Economic Development factor should sustain and support growing and/or already in place businesses
- ✓ Ms. Hynes concluded with the schedule of next steps for the review process noting that the CTB will take action on the revised SMART SCALE process on December 5th. Chair Wheeler noted that her staff are currently analyzing Ms. Hynes' suggestions and since Prince William does not have all the multimodal options, such as Metro, that increasing the accessibility weight may hurt the outer jurisdictions' scoring. She also noted that if there were a reduction in the number of applications, she would hope that the town's applications would not work against the counties. Chairman McKay asked if the driver toward establishing a cap on the number of applications is due to the quality of applications. Ms. Hynes responded that it is based on a couple of factors, one being a capacity issue and the other being that some localities do not apply in a strategic manner. Chairman McKay stated that there are other ways to address those issues versus sheerly reducing the number of applications as it won't address the issue of quality. Chairman McKay asked if October was the only public comment period and Ms. Hynes confirmed.
- ✓ Vice Chair Snyder asked if there was interest in NVRTA providing input to the SMART SCALE process. Ms. Backmon confirmed there is interest from the region to provide comments on some of the proposed changes including the application cap. Chair Wheeler noted that she was not in favor of all the changes Ms. Hynes presented. Ms. Backmon confirmed that there is consensus for two of the proposed changes: 1.)

stating opposition to the application cap and 2.) accurately defining Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and including it in the definition of HPP. She also confirmed that if Step 2 is not removed, then NVTA would work with other regional entities to submit applications. Mayor Wilson asked what would make the most impact, a regional letter from NVTA or localities to provide their own inputs. Ms. Hynes stated that where there is regional agreement, it is beneficial for NVTA to provide comments and emphasized her concern about providing meaningful changes now to influence the future of the region. Ms. Backmon noted that NVTA can also provide a comment on the importance of the multimodal approach to SMART SCALE. Chairman McKay asked if the CTB staff would provide analysis of the comments submitted from localities on where there was agreement and Ms. Hynes responded she was doubtful that that level of detail would be provided. Chairman McKay noted that he foresees a lot of agreement on these changes from localities and emphasized that should be noted. Ms. Hynes stated she can mention that as needed at the CTB meetings.

3. Approval of September 14, 2023, Meeting Summary Minutes

- ✓ With a voting quorum now present at the meeting, Vice Chair Snyder entertained a motion for the minutes. Chair Wheeler moved Authority approval of the September 14, 2023, Meeting Summary Minutes, seconded by Mayor Wilson. The motion was unanimously approved.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 8. Approval of the Call for Projects for FY2030 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program and Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) Funds**
- 9. Approval of Arlington County’s Rosslyn Multimodal Network Improvements Standard Project Agreement (SPA) 2020-312-1**
- 10. Approval of City of Fairfax’s Intersection Improvements at Eaton Place/Chain Bridge Road Standard Project Agreement (SPA) 2018-47-1**
- 11. Approval of Recommendation to Reallocate Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program Funds and Regional Surface Transportation Improvements (RSTP) Funds for City of Alexandria**

- ✓ Mayor Wilson moved Authority approval of the consent agenda, seconded by Ms. Hynes. The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS

- 12. Acceptance of the FY2023 Audited Financial Statements and Compliance Audit Reports**

- ✓ Mr. Longhi first thanked Mr. Garber, PBMares, Ms. Teal, Ms. Sen, and Mr. Malik as well as all NVTA staff for helping to present the Audit to the Authority a month earlier than scheduled.
- ✓ Mr. Garber, a partner with PBMares reported the Authority's FY2023 Financial and Compliance Reports received an unmodified (clean) audit opinion. This opinion reflects that the Authority's financial statements, in all material respects, fairly and accurately present the financial position of the Authority for FY2023.
- ✓ Mayor Rishell echoed Mr. Longhi's recognition of NVTA staff for expediting the Audit.
- ✓ Mayor Rishell moved Authority acceptance of the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority Financial and Compliance Audit reports for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2023, seconded by Chairman McKay. The motion passed unanimously.

13. Approval of Contract Award for Preliminary Deployment Plan for Regional Bus Rapid Transit in Northern Virginia

- ✓ Mr. Longhi reported that a Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued on April 6, 2023, with proposals due on May 11, 2023. He continued that two respondent proposals were initially scored solely on their technical proposals and were interviewed on June 12, 2023. Cost proposals were then released for best value evaluation. The Selection Panel's initial scores were six to one in favor of the proposed consultant. When the cost proposals were evaluated, and with further discussion of the technical proposals, the rankings by the Selection Panel became unanimous. Additionally, Mr. Longhi noted that the modeling software for the PDP-BRT would be consistent with the modeling software used for TransAction.
- ✓ Mayor Rishell moved Authority approval of the proposed Preliminary Deployment Plan for a Regional Bus Rapid Transit System in Northern Virginia contract award to Cambridge Systematics Inc, seconded by Chair Wheeler. The motion passed unanimously.

14. Approval of Out of Cycle Appropriation – City of Fairfax, Government Center Parkway Extension

- ✓ Mr. Longhi stated the Regional Revenue Fund project appropriations are presented by the Finance Committee for Authority approval as part of the annual budget adoption, and the Finance Committee has approved this out of cycle appropriation. The City of Fairfax has determined that it can proceed with the Government Center Parkway Extension Project in FY2024. The Authority approved \$3,540,000 in funding for this project as part of the FY2020-2025 Six Year Program. The funding was initially planned to be appropriated in FY2025, and NVTA staff have determined there are sufficient FY2023 excess revenues and investment portfolio earnings to permit this appropriation without any negative fiscal impacts.
- ✓ Mayor Rishell moved Authority approval of a FY2024 Regional Revenue Fund appropriation of \$3,540,000 for the Government Center Parkway Extension Project, Project ID 2020-307-1, seconded by Mayor Read. The motion passed unanimously.

15. Approval of Investment Policy Update

- ✓ Mr. Longhi proposed two changes to the Investment Policy. The first update is the deletion of Overnight Repurchase Agreements from the list of permitted instruments. The second update involves modification of performance benchmarks. The Finance Committee recommended approval of these changes at the September 14th meeting.
- ✓ Vice Chair Snyder questioned the obligation of funds in the portfolio to projects. Mr. Longhi noted that 93% of the \$1.643 billion portfolio is dedicated to transportation projects previously approved by the Authority. The remaining 7% of the portfolio represents policy required reserves.
- ✓ Mayor Rishell moved Authority approval of the proposed Investment Policy updates as detailed in the attached draft, seconded by Mayor Davis-Younger. The motion passed unanimously.

16. Approval of Transfer of the Franconia-Springfield Passenger Rail Bypass Project from DRPT to VPRA

- ✓ VPRA was created to administer all capital expansion projects, infrastructure and land acquisitions related to the Transforming Rail in Virginia Program. DRPT and VPRA have mutually requested transfer of the project and VPRA has acknowledged that execution of the project must occur within the project description originally presented by DRPT and approved by NVTA.
- ✓ Mayor Rishell move Authority approval of the transfer of the Franconia-Springfield Passenger Rail Bypass (Project ID: 2020-313-1) project award from DRPT to VPRA, seconded by Chairman McKay. The motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION/INFORMATION ITEMS

17. Review of 2024 Draft Legislative Priorities

- ✓ Ms. Baynard first noted that there will be a lot of new members in the General Assembly which will require educating them on the importance and work of NVTA. She reported there are five priorities, four ongoing and one new, for NVTA's 2024 legislative priorities. The ongoing priorities remain consistent with priorities from the adopted 2023 Legislative Priorities. The new additional priority is "Secure Short and Long Term, Financial and Operational Stability for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)". As Metro faces a financial crisis, it is essential that stakeholders-- local, regional, state, and federal, and the public and private sector – work together to ensure that Metro continues to meet transportation and economic development needs and operates with dedicated operating and capital funding and in a more predictable structure.
- ✓ Chairman McKay suggested that the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission's (NVTC) study, the Value of Northern Virginia Transit to the Commonwealth, be included in the legislative priorities as the study determined transit's impact to the state is \$1.5 billion, which further speaks to the values of WMATA to the Commonwealth. Ms. Baynard agreed that it is important to highlight information detailing the value of Metro and transit to the General Assembly and that she and the legislative liaisons, are working to accomplish that. Ms. Hynes mentioned she has heard skepticism in

Richmond about NVTC's value of transit numbers. She suggested having businesses that have decided to locate to Northern Virginia due to the transit options, find a way to advocate to the General Assembly. Ms. Baynard agreed and stated that multiple Chamber of Commerce have already been involved. Senator Boysko echoed that it is important to inform new members of the General Assembly unaware of the region's priorities, of the value that Metro brings to the entire Commonwealth. Chair Wheeler noted that it is striking that Metro is the only major transit authority funded primarily by localities rather than the state. Ms. Baynard noted that currently there is no discussion of diverting NVTA's revenue to WMATA. Vice Chair Snyder added to include points made by the Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance about the expenses of WMATA. He mentioned it could be beneficial if there was a way to highlight not just the financial numbers, but the numbers of jobs and support of essential services. Chairman McKay added that it is important to get the Airport Authority to support the effort, especially with the extension of the Silver Line. He also noted that the push from the current administration for people to return to the office will require WMATA's services to accomplish. Chairman McKay noted it is important to keep those two points connected and highlight that message. Ms. Backmon concluded that she is working with Ms. Baynard to prepare information on NVTA to present to the General Assembly, as well as to present final legislative priorities language to the Authority in December.

18. Finance Committee Report

- ✓ The Finance Committee Report was presented as provided in the packet.

19. Transportation Technology Committee Report

- ✓ The Transportation Technology Committee Report was presented as provided in the packet.

20. Chief Executive Officer's Report

- ✓ Ms. Backmon highlighted NVTA's feature in the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Fostering Multimodal Connectivity newsletter providing insights to NVTA's multimodal investments. Ms. Backmon introduced a new NVTA staff member, Sharara Faisal, NVTA's Strategic Communications Specialist.

21. Chair's Comments

- ✓ Vice Chair Snyder acknowledged Mr. Lynch and his upcoming his retirement. The Authority thanked him for his contributions to NVTA.
- ✓ Ms. Backmon noted that Chair Randall will send an email to the Authority cancelling the November Authority meeting.

13. Adjournment

- ✓ Vice Chair Snyder adjourned the meeting at 9:16PM.