



## **SUMMARY MINUTES**

Thursday, December 8, 2022

7:00PM ET

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**

Chair Randall

- ✓ Chair Randall called the meeting to order at 7:05PM ET and asked that the roll be called.

### **2. Roll Call**

Mr. Davis, Board Secretary

- ✓ **Members: Attendees** Chair Phyllis J. Randall, Vice Chair David Snyder (Remote-Paris - Personal), Chairman Jeffrey McKay, Chair Ann Wheeler, Board Chair Katie Cristol, Mayor Justin Wilson, Mayor Michelle Davis-Younger, Mayor Jeanette Rishell, Senator Jennifer Boysko (Remote-HI-Personal), Supervisor Pat Herrity (Remote-VA-Medical), Mayor Derrick Wood, Anthony Bedell, Mary Hynes (Remote-VA-Medical), Jim Kolb, John Lynch, and Todd Horsley.
- ✓ **Staff Attendees:** Chief Executive Officer Monica Backmon, Executive Assistant to CEO Amanda Sink, Chief Financial Officer Mike Longhi, Board Secretary Jonathan Davis, Communications and Marketing Coordinator Abigail Hillerich, Assistant Finance Officer Peggy Teal, Principal, Transportation Planning and Programming Keith Jasper, Senior Transportation Planner Dr. Sree Nampoothiri, Regional Transportation Modeler Harun Rashid, Regional Transportation Planners Mackenzie Love, Ian Newman, and Griffin Frank.
- ✓ **Council of Counsels:** Rob Dickerson-Prince William County, MinhChau Corr-Arlington County (Remote), and Christina Zechman Brown-City of Alexandria.
- ✓ **Other Attendees:** Sr. Vice President Tracy Baynard, McGuireWoods Consulting, LLC., jurisdiction and agency staff.

*Members of the public were in-person and were able to watch the meeting livestreamed via [NVTA's YouTube Channel](#).*

### **3. Approval of November 10, 2022, Meeting Summary Minutes**

Chair Randall

- ✓ Chair Randall received a motion from Board Chair Cristol who moved the approval of the November 10, 2022, meeting summary minutes, and seconded by Mr. Bedell. The motion was unanimously approved.
- ✓ **Point of Personal Privilege:** Chair Randall acknowledged Chief Executive Officer Monica Backmon, who received two awards since the last meeting. Ms. Backmon was named one of Washington Business Journal's Power 100 and she received the Woman of the Year award from the Washington DC Chapter of the Women's Transportation Seminar.

## ACTION ITEMS

### **4. Adoption of TransAction Update**

Mayor Wilson, Planning and Programming Committee Chair  
Ms. Backmon, Chief Executive Officer

- ✓ Ms. Backmon highlighted the TransAction Update timeline spanning over three years that involves work from staff and the Technical Advisory Committee, the Planning Coordination Advisory Committee, and the Planning and Programming Committee, which is chaired by Mayor Wilson. Ms. Backmon expressed her thanks to everyone, as 2022 included the adoption of the Six Year Program and culminating in the adoption of the update of the long-range plan, TransAction.
- ✓ Mayor Wilson echoed Ms. Backmon's comments and noted the significant work that was done by NVTA and member jurisdiction staff. He added that TransAction includes 424 multimodal projects of which incorporates \$44 billion in transit projects; \$28 billion in roadway, intersections and interchanges, and parking projects; \$1.5 billion in non-motorized projects; and a little less than \$1 million in technology and Transportation Demand Management. Mayor Wilson further noted that TransAction is a fiscally and geographically unconstrained plan, but it allows the listed projects to be candidates for future funding. He acknowledged other Authority committees' endorsement of the Plan and Project List and officially submitted the Planning and Programming Committee's recommendation to the Authority to adopt TransAction.
- ✓ Chair Randall received a motion from Mayor Wilson who moved the adoption of the TransAction Update and associated Project List, seconded by Chair Randall. Chair Randall opened the floor for discussion on the motion.
- ✓ Board Chair Cristol began the discussion by thanking staff and noted her reflections on the previous version of the Plan to the current version, expressed her appreciation for the authentic representation surrounding assumptions made on the projects' effects on emissions.
- ✓ Chair Randall added her thanks to staff on the Plan and Project List and expressed her appreciation to members of the public who shared in discussion and comments surrounding the fiscally and geographically unconstrained long-range plan.
- ✓ Chair Randall opened the floor for a vote on the motion to adopt the TransAction Update and associated Project List. The motion was unanimously approved.

### **5. Adoption of the 2023 NVTA Legislative Priorities**

Ms. Backmon, Chief Executive Officer  
Ms. Baynard, Sr. Vice President, McGuireWoods Consulting, LLC.

- ✓ Chair Randall noted that the previous night, Chair Wheeler, Chairman McKay and she spoke at the Dulles Area Transportation Association (DATA) event where there was consenting discussion surrounding the protection of dedicated NVTA revenues and to have the nearly \$40 million (remaining balance to be restored) returned to the Authority. She also noted her attendance at the Board of Trade business meeting today

where there was support expressed on the Authority's position of protecting its dedicated funding and to recoup the funds that were diverted in 2018. She concluded her comments on the topic by expressing her appreciation to jurisdictions, partnering agencies and external organizations that have communicatively supported NVTAs mission in protecting its dedicated funding source and to recoup the funding that was diverted.

- ✓ Ms. Baynard reported on the draft 2023 NVTAs Legislative Priorities. She noted that protecting dedicated revenue sources and powers of the NVTAs remains a priority. She reminded Members that the 1.5% reduction in the sales and use tax on groceries and personal hygiene products starts January 1, 2023, and we will need to see what the long-term structural impact of that might be. Ms. Baynard continued her report by noting the other 3 priorities: Restore Long Term Funding to the Authority, Protect Virginias Transportation Funding, and Support the Use of Effective Transportation Technology.
- ✓ Mr. Bedell inquired if pushback is expected on Priority 4-Support the Use of Effective Transportation Technology. Ms. Baynard responded no and noted that the State of Virginia has a National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Plan that is a living document that will continue to be updated by the Youngkin administration.
- ✓ Chairman McKay referenced yesterday's DATA meeting where there was discussion surrounded protecting dedicated NVTAs revenue sources and restoring lost revenue. He inquired if there has been any known discussion on the suspension of gas tax and Ms. Baynard noted that she is not hearing anything from the Youngkin administration regarding a gas tax holiday and would be surprised to hear of such considering the local and national decrease of gas prices as well as revenue projections showing an up-turn.
- ✓ Senator Boysko added to the discussion, noting that she does not anticipate any gas tax changes.
- ✓ Chair Randall moved the adoption of the 2023 NVTAs Legislative Priorities and seconded by Board Chair Cristol. The motion was approved unanimously.

**6. Proposed Meeting Schedule for Calendar Year 2023** Ms. Backmon, Chief Executive Officer

- ✓ Ms. Backmon shared the proposed meeting schedule for Calendar Year 2023, specifically noted that the NVTAs Bylaws require the Authority to adopt a meeting schedule at its Annual Organizational meeting in January.

**7. Travel Trends Update**

Ms. Backmon, Chief Executive Officer  
Mr. Rashid, Regional Transportation Modeler

- ✓ Mr. Rashid reported that during the height of the pandemic in 2021, more than 50% of workers worked from home in the Washington D.C. Metro area and since then, highway traffic remains slightly below pre-pandemic levels. He added that there has been some substantive growth in local bus services, particularly the City of Alexandrias DASH, the City of Fairfax's CUE, and Fairfax County Connector bus services that have seen an

increase in ridership above pre-pandemic levels. Mr. Rashid suggested one of the reasons for the increase is due to the free fare service introduced in July 2022. He also highlighted an increase in ridership for Virginia Railway Express (VRE) and attributed this increase to the free fare service provided by VRE.

- ✓ Chairman McKay inquired if the statistics for Metro Bus and Metro Rail reflected the respective agency's entire system or only their systems in Virginia. Mr. Rashid clarified that the data is only reflective of the systems in Virginia.
- ✓ Chair Randall requested that data from trips throughout the day in addition to the AM or PM peaks be added to the data analysis in Chart 1 of the Travel Trends Update Report. Ms. Hynes advised that identifying who is providing free fare and for how long should also be data that we track as it could provide insight on how free fare or reduced fare may benefit riders, particularly those identified to be among low-income demographics.
- ✓ Chairman McKay concurred with Chair Randall and Ms. Hynes' suggested additions and clarified that the Fairfax County reduced fare program has yet to be implemented and whatever data that will result from the implemented program would likely be an added achievement for the Fairfax Connector. Chairman McKay noted that Fairfax County currently provides free fare for students and encouraged the region to identify its position on free fare for public and private middle and high school students given the preponderance of students already taking advantage of the free fare program. He continued noting the equity aspects related to students now having the opportunity to participate in things like afterschool programs that they wouldn't ordinarily participate in due to lack of transportation.
- ✓ Ms. Hynes concurred with Chairman McKay's comments and noted that because of increased ridership, an increased response in federal subsidies could be seen as well.
- ✓ Mayor Meyer noted the City of Fairfax's experience in providing free fare because of implemented Covid safety precautions. He noted that while ridership decreased, a baseline was formed which identified transit dependent riders who counted on the bus to get to locations within the city including work. He further noted that the City of Fairfax will likely continue to provide free fare for riders given farebox recovery of only 8%. In conclusion, Mayor Meyer noted that the guiding factor to provide free fare for all was of an equity focus that benefited lower income riders or riders who couldn't afford standard fare rates.
- ✓ Mayor Wilson noted that the discussion on utilizing free fare for middle and high school students presents the next level of discussion in leveraging an opportunity to relieve some burden on the school bus system. He added that it is not enough to just talk about free fare but also important to add to the discussion route options and reliable services.
- ✓ Board Chair Cristol referenced Mayor Wilson's and Mayor Meyer's comments on transportation funding, economic values, federal subsidies received, and route

adjustments from transit tracking and added that Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC) announced it will be unveiling its NoVA Transit Tracker on December 17, 2022. The tracker will provide real time dashboard information on all NVTC's bus systems. Board Chair Cristol added that NVTC conducted a study to identify what the options might look like in providing no fare or low fare and found that the regional average (excluding metro bus) for farebox recovery is 23% and commuter bus is 65%. She noted that fare price recovery matters and while the federal government abdicated the operating cost of transit, it does offer Smart Benefits. In conclusion, Board Chair Cristol noted that she agrees with Chairman McKay's comments regarding free fare for middle and high school students and added that her cautionary comments are to look realistically across the region with the understanding that what may work for one bus system may not work for another.

- ✓ Chair Wheeler noted that OmniRide instituted free fare on Local and - Express bus services while keeping commuters on OmniRide Express buses using their SmartTrip card.
- ✓ Chairman McKay added that once you flip the switch on fare reduction, there is almost no way to anticipate the demand. He offered the perspective that for a system as big as Fairfax County's, there is a concern to ensure high quality service and further added that the County's forthcoming reduced fare program is a needs-based program.
- ✓ Chair Randall ended the discussion by noting her intent to reach out to Authority Members through the remainder of the year to ask questions and share in discussions about local and regional bus transit services. Mr. Horsley noted that the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation has just announced it is accepting FY2023 grant applications for the Transit Ridership Incentive Program (TRIP) which includes provisions for zero fare and low-income projects that help reduce barriers to transit use for low-income individuals through the Commonwealth of Virginia.

## **8. Governance and Personnel Committee Report**

Chair Randall

Ms. Baynard, Sr. Vice President, McGuireWoods Consulting, LLC.

- ✓ Chair Randall noted the previous discussion regarding the 2023 NVTA Legislative Priorities and moved to the next order of business.

## **9. Finance Committee Report**

Mayor Rishell, Chair

Mr. Longhi, Chief Financial Officer

- ✓ Mayor Rishell advised that the Finance Committee last met on November 10, 2022, just prior to the Authority meeting that evening. She noted that the focus of the meeting was preparation of the FY2024 Operating, Regional Revenue and Local Distribution Budgets and added that the Committee received information for new initiatives proposed for FY2024 which include:
  - Regional Bus Rapid Transit Preliminary Deployment Plan
  - NoVA Gateway Dashboard Enhancements

- Website Modernization and Consolidation
- Contracted Legal Services
- Investment Consultant
- Offsite Storage

**10. Planning and Programming Committee Report**

Mayor Wilson, Chair

- ✓ Mayor Wilson submitted the written Planning and Programming Committee Report as seen in the meeting packet.

**11. Planning Coordination Advisory Committee Report**

Mayor Colbert, Chair

- ✓ Chair Randall directed Members to Mayor Colbert’s Planning Coordination Advisory Committee Report as seen in the meeting packet.

**12. Technical Advisory Committee Report**

Mr. Boice, Chair

- ✓ Chair Randall directed Members to Mr. Boice’s Technical Advisory Committee Report as seen in the meeting packet.

**13. Transportation Technology Committee Report**

Vice Chair Snyder, Chair

- ✓ Vice Chair Snyder noted that the written Transportation Technology Committee Report is submitted in the meeting packet and added that it is important that the Authority coordinate with NVTC on the Regional Bus Rapid Transit Preliminary Deployment Plan. Board Chair Cristol echoed Vice Chair Snyder’s comments and added that NVTC would like to partner with the NVTA on this effort.

**14. Chief Executive Officer’s Report**

Ms. Backmon, Chief Executive Officer

- ✓ Ms. Backmon expressed her excitement for new hire, Griffin Frank, who joined staff as a Regional Transportation Planner and further expressed her excitement for TransAction being adopted.

**15. Chair’s Comments**

Chair Randall

- ✓ Chair Randall acknowledged the nominating committee members and confirmed that the Authority could anticipate a report from the committee at the January 12, 2023, meeting. She noted that tonight is Mayor Meyer’s last meeting as an Authority Member and offered him the floor to share his comments on his years of service as a Member.
- ✓ Mayor Meyer expressed his appreciation to everyone, both in-person and virtually attending, and noted that transportation is a critical component to the work required of an elected official given the impact transportation has on the lives of the electorate. He noted that transportation must be equitable and ensure accessibility to every person regardless of their economic background, characterizing it as a moral issue and not an issue of party affiliation or a matter between jurisdictions that are inside or outside the beltway. Mayor Meyer referenced NVTA’s enabling legislation which he

noted provides the tools necessary to invest in Northern Virginia. He shared reflections from his childhood growing up in the region where he saw large lots of land being purposed for highways with no thought about sidewalks, alternative transportation, the environmental impacts, or where the roads would eventually run through often including the neighborhoods and homes of people of color, and even adversely affected people who didn't have the right to vote. Mayor Meyer noted that Northern Virginia has come a long way in the arch of its history and yet still has a lot more to do. He praised TransAction as NoVA's unconstrained plan and expressed his hope that the region will make wise choices. In conclusion, Mayor Meyer expressed his pleasure in working with colleagues and friends and offered his help on future initiatives.

- ✓ Chair Randall presented Mayor Meyer with a plaque in appreciation for his service to the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority.

## 16. Adjournment

Chair Randall

- ✓ Seeing no further order of business, Chair Randall adjourned the meeting at 7:55 PM.

**Next Meeting: Annual Organizational Meeting**  
**January 12, 2023, at 7:00PM**  
**NVTA Offices**