

Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

Summary Minutes

May 13, 2004

held at the Northern Virginia Regional Commission
7535 Little River Turnpike, Suite 100, Annandale, Virginia

Members

(those present are highlighted)

William Euille

Christopher Zimmerman

Jeff Greenfield for Robert Lederer

Gerald E. Connolly

David Snyder

Scott K. York

Harry J. "Hal" Parrish, II

William Wren

Sean T. Connaughton

William Mims

Vincent F. Callahan, Jr.

vacancy

J. Kenneth Klinge

Margaret E. G. Vanderhye

Karen Rae

Tom Farley

Mayor, City of Alexandria

Arlington County Board

Fairfax City Council

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

Chairman, Prince William Board of County Supervisors

Virginia Senate, District 33

Virginia House of Delegates, District 34

Virginia House of Delegates

Governor's Appointee; NVTA Chairman

Governor's Appointee

Director, VDRPT (non-voting member)

District Administrator, No. Va. Region, VDOT (non-voting member)

Staff Present

Linda Summerall

NVRC

Call to Order

Chairman Klinge called the meeting to order at 7:36 p.m. He explained that additional members were expected, which would provide a quorum, and that the presentation would therefore be the first item of business.

Presentation on the Woodrow Wilson Bridge Congestion Relief Project

Ronaldo "Nick" Nicholson, PE, VDOT's Project Manager for the bridge project, and John Undeland, the project's Public Affairs Director, provided an update on this project, which began in 2000 with river dredging. The first new bridge is expected to be completed in early 2006, along with switching all bridge traffic onto it and demolishing the old bridge. The second new bridge completion is scheduled for mid-2008, along with the I-295 and the Maryland 210 interchanges. Completion of the US Route 1 interchange is scheduled for mid-2009, with completion of the project occurring in 2011 when the Telegraph Road interchange is finished. The Woodrow Wilson Bridge project is the third largest project in the U.S.

Mr. Nicholson pointed out that the draw span on the new bridge will be 20 feet higher at the center for vertical clearance than the current span, decreasing the need to open the span. In reply to a question, he said it was not possible to build the bridge high enough without a draw span due to the impact on Alexandria. Also, from a regional standpoint it was agreed that the bridge should not be the major feature of D.C. region.

Chairman Klinge requested that the presentation be temporarily halted to allow the members to complete business, since Mr. Greenfield was leaving early for another appointment.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Connolly moved approval of the minutes of the January 8, 2004, meeting. The motion was seconded and unanimously carried.

Interim Technical Committee Report

• *Request to Reallocate Leesburg RSTP Funds*

Committee Chairman Tom Biesiadny reported the Town of Leesburg wishes to move \$317,560 in Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) funds from the East Market Street widening project to the Town's signal coordination project. He added that this request is similar to requests made by other jurisdictions in the past that the Authority has approved.

Mr. York moved approval of the reallocation of Leesburg's RSTP funds. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

• *Review of Letter on VDOT's Bicycle and Pedestrian Policy*

Mr. Biesiadny explained that this past March VDOT adopted a revised policy for integrating bicycle and pedestrian accommodations. This is the first time the policy takes into account the jurisdictions' recommendations on bicycle and pedestrian paths. It also provides VDOT funding for these projects.

The Interim Technical Committee recommends that the Authority send the attached draft letter to the Secretary of Transportation addressing three areas for future consideration on bicycle and pedestrian paths: design and construction, maintenance, and stronger recognition of comprehensive plans.

Mr. Zimmerman moved that the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority send the letter to the Secretary of Transportation. The motion was seconded. Chairman Klinge stated for the record that he was the only member of the Commonwealth Transportation Board to vote against these recommendations. The motion carried unanimously.

Roll Call

The Chairman called the roll and members present or absent were noted for the record.

Presentation on the Woodrow Wilson Bridge Congestion Relief Project, continued

Ms. Vanderhye asked about mixing concrete with soil to handle the dredging problems.

Mr. Nicholson replied that this is an innovative technique and was used in Boston and Utah. The engineers are monitoring settlement on the Woodrow Wilson Bridge project.

Mr. Undeland reviewed commuter programs designed to alleviate traffic during the construction project. Bridge Bucks is a one-year pilot project for 1,000 participants (split evenly between Maryland and Virginia). The project provides \$50/month toward transit fares and vanpool fees to drivers of single-occupant cars to switch from driving alone. Marketing has been aggressive.

Status updates on the construction project and information on Bridge Bucks can be found at www.wilsonbridge.com.

Interim Technical Committee Report, continued

• *Report on FAMPO Resolution Discussion*

The Fredericksburg Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (FAMPO) presented a resolution in March to the Transportation Planning Board (TPB) Program Committee. FAMPO would like to have all of Stafford County placed within the FAMPO planning area.

NVTA's Interim Technical Committee believes that FAMPO and the TPB need to discuss the planning issues in more detail. The Interim Technical Committee expects to bring a draft Memorandum of Understanding to NVTA in June or July. Ms. Rae commented that the issue is partially technical on the planning tasks but that funding impacts must be a separate discussion.

Bill Shelley, the chief transportation planner for FAMPO, asked to address the Authority. He said he was in basic agreement with Ms. Rae that the MOU must be signed by the TPB and the FAMPO policy board. He added that the FHA confirmed there would be no funding implications because of existing regulations. Mr. Shelley added that this matter must be concluded by the first of the year or both the TPB and FAMPO will be out of compliance.

Responding to Mr. Zimmerman's inquiry, Mr. Biesiadny said this needs to be done by the end of this federal fiscal year, September 30, which should allow finalization of the planning, financial and organizational issues. Mr. Biesiadny said the Interim Technical Committee will update the Authority on this matter as it progresses.

• *Report on the Northern Virginia 2020 Plan Update*

Rick Canizales (Prince William County staff) recounted that the Authority reviewed and approved the work program for this project at their December meeting. Members' comments were incorporated in the RFP released April 16. Eighteen firms attended the pre-proposal conference held April 29; proposals are due May 27. The selection committee will have until June 14 to review all proposals and choose the firms to be interviewed. A recommendation will be made to the Authority at its July meeting.

Funding for the 2020 Plan Update was amended into the regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) in April. However, on a statewide basis, VDOT is at the limit of its obligation authority limit for federal funds. Since the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is a financially constrained document, FHWA cannot approve STIP amendments that will effectively over-obligate available funding. Hence, either an increase in obligation authority must be received by the Virginia Division of FHWA or VDOT must drop existing projects out of the STIP to provide funding available for obligation. While awaiting the federal surface transportation program reauthorization, VDOT is identifying and dropping from the STIP, projects that have been delayed and are not using authorized funding. It is expected that additional projects will be identified for deletion from the STIP, and that the STIP amendment for the 2020 Plan update can be submitted to FHWA for approval within the next month.

Mr. Connolly asked about the modeling component. Mr. Canizales replied the modeling will include both roads and transit.

• *Report on TIP and CLRP*

The Federal Highway Administration has approved the region's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP). No projects were delayed while the region was operating under the Interim TIP and CLRP. The approved TIP is valid through 2006 and the CLRP is valid through 2007.

The region typically updates both its TIP and CLRP annually and all project submissions have been completed for the 2005 update. A major change in Virginia includes widening of I-66 eastbound between Rt. 29 in Gainesville and Rt. 234. Regionally, the most significant change is the addition of construction of the Inter-County Connector (ICC) in Montgomery County, Maryland. This has been approved by the TPB for conformity testing. If the budgets for the mobile sector of the SIP are not exceeded by this plan, the TIP can move forward this fall; otherwise, the region will need to adopt additional transportation emission reduction measures. The modeling will be completed in July and the TPB and NVTA will receive the results.

Mr. Connolly asked about the ICC's effects on emissions. Mr. Biesiadny said that while Ms. Kaiser who represents MDOT said publicly that Maryland will off-set emissions generated by the ICC, while her written comments said that Maryland would participate in adjusting the omissions. Mr. Farley pointed out that this does not get into the CLRP or TIP. Virginia is following this process and will act in Virginia's best interests. He added that there is good cooperation by both states' secretaries and governors.

• *Discussion of TIP Amendments*

VDOT recently submitted four TIP amendments to the TPB for approval. The Interim Technical Committee was briefed on the PRTC and VRE TIP amendments, and an amendment supporting highway improvement projects in Leesburg, Fairfax County and Arlington County, and recommends that NVTA endorse these amendments.

The fourth amendment is a \$724,000 study to identify pros and cons of various options in the I-66 corridor from Rosslyn to the Dulles Airport Access Road. The options are additional transit, no-build, HOV/HOT lane, and highway widening.

Mr. Farley stated that VDOT wants NVTA's input in the study.

• *Report on Air Quality Issues*

On February 19, 2004, the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC) approved the final "severe area" State Implementation Plan (SIP) for the region. Each of the three state air agencies submitted its SIP to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) before the March 1 deadline. The states had 60 days after March 1 to add any missing items to the SIP. The EPA is expected to issue a completeness finding shortly. If the EPA finds a SIP is incomplete a sanction clock will start. Non-transportation sanctions will be imposed if a complete SIP is not approved in 18 months. Transportation sanctions will be imposed after 24 months.

Virginia and the District of Columbia completed their SIPs with all the requirements, including the Rule 185 penalty provisions that go into effect on major polluters if the region cannot meet its major air quality goals by 2005. Any penalties collected will be returned to Northern Virginia to help reduce emissions.

The Maryland General Assembly did not adopt Rule 185 penalty provisions. It is likely that EPA will be forced to find Maryland's SIP incomplete and an 18-month sanction clock will be imposed, resulting in implications for Maryland if the SIP is not brought into compliance. However, there will be no implications for Virginia and the District.

On April 15, the EPA released the designations related to the eight-hour emissions standards. The Washington metropolitan region was designated as a "moderate" non-attainment area. Consequently, the mobile sector will have until June 15, 2005, to demonstrate conformity. However, EPA will not issue its guidance on how the one-hour and eight-hour standards will inter-relate until August 2004.

Moderate non-attainment areas are required submit a new eight-hour SIP by June 2007 and to comply with the eight-hour ozone standards by 2010.

This summer MWAQC will begin using the eight-hour ozone and particulate matter standards to predict Code Red days. The way MWAQC has decided to predict Code Red days should not result in significantly more Code Red days than there would be under the one-hour ozone standard alone. This effort will be monitored and changes will be considered for the 2005 air quality season.

• *Report on VDOT's Six Year Program*

Chairman Klinge called attention to the two e-mails he distributed. He noted the VDOT news release states "The Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) will reduce its draft six-year program by 14 percent or \$1.3 billion. Transportation revenues proposed by Governor Mark Warner were not included in the state budget. The CTB will approve a final six-year program and transportation budget on June 17."

Mr. Biesiadny reported that the state budget includes \$100,000 over the biennium (\$50,000 per year) for NVTA to support transportation planning activities in Northern Virginia. Chairman Klinge pointed out this is due to Senator Mims' efforts. The budget also includes \$75,000 in planning funds in the first year of the biennium to fund the cost of engineering services required to continue efforts to select an appropriate traffic calming method for Hunter Mill Road in Fairfax County; the money is allocated to NVTA, which will have the responsibility for overseeing the study.

Responding to Mr. Connolly's inquiry, the members agreed it would be beneficial for the public to know the ramifications of the budget cut to VDOT's Six Year Program. Ms. Rae said VDRPT is currently compiling a list of affected projects.

Other Business

Chairman Klinge asked that WMATA be included on the Authority's June meeting agenda to discuss the Metro Matters program.

Chairman Klinge appointed Mr. Snyder to chair the Nominating Committee and Messrs. Connolly and York to serve on the committee.

Chairman Klinge remarked on the difficulty the Authority has had in obtaining a quorum; in fact, the Authority's last meeting was in January. He asked Senator Mims if the legislation can be amended to include alternates. Senator Mims said this would have to wait until the next session. Mr. Zimmerman suggested reviewing what constitutes a quorum.

Chairman Klinge announced that Mr. Farley is retiring the end of June from VDOT, adding that no district member of the CTB could possibly have had a district administrator who did more for transportation than Mr. Farley has done for Northern Virginia. Mr. Klinge and the members thanked Mr. Farley and gave him a round of applause. Mr. Farley thanked his staff and Chairman Klinge and expressed his appreciation to the elected officials, adding that Northern Virginia works together as a region.

Chairman Klinge then announced that transportation "guru" Bob Heitman passed away May 11 from cancer.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Chairman Klinge adjourned the meeting at 9:26 p.m.