

MINUTES
NVTC COMMISSION MEETING – FEBRUARY 9, 2006
ROOM #4 EAST-GENERAL ASSEMBLY BUILDING
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

The meeting of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission was called to order by Chairman Connolly at 5:20 p.m. The commission met jointly with the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority, chaired by David Snyder. The meetings followed a joint press conference by NVTC and NVRTA to support dedicated funding for Metro, which was also sponsored by the Northern Virginia Regional Commission.

Members Present

Sharon Bulova
Gerald Connolly
Adam Ebbin
William D. Euille
Jay Fiset
Dana Kauffman
Karen Rae
Paul C. Smedberg
David F. Snyder
Mary Margaret Whipple

Members Absent

David Albo
Eugene Delgaudio
Jeannemarie Devolites Davis
Paul Ferguson
Ludwig Gaines
Catherine M. Hudgins
Elaine McConnell
Scott Silverthorne
Christopher Zimmerman

Staff Present

Steve Maclsaac (VRE)
Kala Quintana
Elizabeth Rodgers
Richard K. Taube
Dale Zehner (VRE)

Minutes of NVTC Meeting of January 5, 2006

On a motion by Mr. Euille and a second by Mrs. Bulova, the commission unanimously approved the minutes. Affirmative votes were cast by commissioners Bulova, Connolly, Ebbin, Euille, Fiset, Kauffman, Rae, Smedberg, Snyder, and Whipple.

Authorization to Submit NVTC's FY 2007 Grant Applications

Chairman Connolly noted that NVTC staff had submitted electronically NVTC's FY 2007 state grant applications to DRPT. Mr. Taube stated that the eligibility in this year's application was \$67 million greater than in FY 2006. That means that Governor Kaine's proposal to achieve the 95% statutory target for the state's share of eligible capital expenses in FY 2007 will fall far short unless more state funds are added.

Mr. Kauffman moved approval of Resolution #2010. Mrs. Bulova seconded. The vote in favor was unanimous with Ms. Rae abstaining. Affirmative votes were cast by commissioners Bulova, Connolly, Ebbin, Euille, Fiset, Kauffman, Smedberg, Snyder, and Whipple.

Approval of NVTC's FY 2007 Administrative Budget

Chairman Connolly stated that the same proposed budget had been discussed by the commission in September, 2005 and again in January, 2006. He asked Mr. Taube if there had been any questions or comments in the meantime. Mr. Taube responded that there had not. Delegate Ebbin asked for confirmation that the performance budget component for NVTC's financial functions was consistent with Delegate Reese's requests and that the commission would consider extending that approach to its remaining functions for FY 2008. Mr. Taube confirmed that was the case.

On a motion by Mrs. Bulova and a second by Mr. Kauffman, the commission voted unanimously to adopt the FY 2007 NVTC administrative budget. Affirmative votes were cast by commissioners Bulova, Connolly, Ebbin, Euille, Fiset, Kauffman, Rae, Smedberg, Snyder, and Whipple.

VRE Items

Report from the VRE Operations Board and VRE Chief Executive Officer. Mrs. Bulova noted the minutes of the January 20, 2006 VRE Operations Board meeting and Mr. Zehner mentioned the newly opened parking expansion at Broad Run.

FY 2005 Audited Financial Statements. On a motion by Mrs. Bulova and a second by Mr. Kauffman, the commission voted unanimously to authorize staff to distribute the FY 2005 audited financial statements by approving Resolution #2011. Affirmative votes were cast by commissioners Bulova, Connolly, Ebbin, Euille, Fisette, Kauffman, Rae, Smedberg, Snyder, and Whipple.

Increased Task Order for General Assembly Fleet Maintenance. On a motion by Mrs. Bulova and a second by Mr. Kauffman, the commission voted unanimously to approve Resolution #2012 which authorizes VRE's CEO to increase by \$768,890 a task order for general fleet maintenance to STV, Inc. Affirmative votes were cast by commissioners Bulova, Connolly, Ebbin, Euille, Fisette, Kauffman, Rae, Smedberg, Snyder, and Whipple.

NVTC Financial Items for December, 2005

There were no questions or comments.

Legislative Items

Chairman Connolly invited Delegate Jeff Frederick to address the status of transportation funding legislation in the House of Delegates. He stated that the House leadership is working on a plan to be announced Friday, February 10th. Delegate Ebbin asked if that plan would include dedicated funding for Metro. Delegate Frederick responded that he supports Delegate Albo's bill to increase fees on abusive drivers and also supports dedicating some existing sales tax revenues.

Scott York stated that he favored providing equal property taxing authority for counties compared to cities and towns. Delegate Frederick stated that there is no transportation funding crisis, only a transportation priority crisis.

Mr. Snyder reminded the group that after the Civil War the transcontinental railroad was completed and after the Korean War the Interstate Highway System was begun. Times of crisis can generate important responses and in this case there is a need to preserve transportation infrastructure to support jobs. It is a matter of good, basic government and is non-partisan. Transportation needs steady funding and cannot be funded one day and not the next.

Margaret Vanderhuye stated that the commonwealth doesn't really have a surplus if there is a drawer full of bills. Chairman Connolly noted that by 2015 there will be no state money to match federal transportation funds. Ms. Vanderhuye went on to say that the public is sick and tired of the General Assembly putting off a solution to the crisis and is demanding truth telling. More cash is needed now.

Delegate Frederick responded that Governor Warner doctored the books. There has been no budget reform since 1971. The commonwealth should pay only for the items that are most essential.

Senator Whipple stated that the Senate philosophy is different. The Senate removed transportation from comprehensive funding for education and other services two-years ago and believes now is the time to act on the transportation funding solution. The current surge in state revenue was unforeseen and is due largely to the real estate boom that generated recordation taxes, especially on refinanced mortgages. The surge is temporary.

Chairman Connolly noted the fissure in state politics reflected by the differences between the House and Senate leadership's positions. Delegate Ebbin said that the House Finance Committee Chairman Parrish could bring up HB1003 (dedicated Metro funding) at his discretion, even though a subcommittee tabled it. Chairman Connolly described Delegate Rust's bill (HB 1555) and reported that the patron was willing to amend it to include \$50 million dedicated for WMATA.

HB 1555 has been greatly reduced in subcommittee, however (only about \$80 million remains, down from an initial yield of \$300 million which had increased to \$468 million). Mr. Smedberg stated this bill also could be brought back off the table.

Mr. Snyder asked the General Assembly members about what message is needed now. Senator Whipple emphasized the potential loss of federal funds and the need to educate members about the dedicated Metro funding bills. The commission then reviewed a draft public flier designed to generate public support. Jay Fisette asked about using Governor Kaine's attendance lists from his public forums to target distribution of the fliers. Delegate Ebbin suggested adding a tag line to urge calling before February 15th.

Mr. Kauffman noted the importance of legislators being contacted by constituents from the business community who write large checks to their campaigns. He asked Bill Lecos of the Fairfax Chamber of Commerce if he would be willing to share the flier with his employer members who then could pass it along to employees.

On a motion by Delegate Ebbin and a second by Mrs. Bulova, the commission voted unanimously to authorize staff to incur costs to print and distribute fliers to educate the public about the need to contact their General Assembly members to support dedicated Metro funding and related issues. Affirmative votes were cast by commissioners Bulova, Connolly, Ebbin, Euille, Fisette, Kauffman, Rae, Smedberg, Snyder, and Whipple.

Recognition of Karen Rae

Mr. Taube reminded commissioners that this meeting was the last that Ms. Rae would attend before leaving the commonwealth for her new position in Pennsylvania. He thanked her for her energetic and effective work on behalf of transit in Virginia. Commissioners provided an extended round of applause.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Chairman Connolly adjourned the meeting without objection at 5:55 p.m.

Approved this 2nd day of March, 2006.

Gerald Connolly
Chairman

William Euille
Secretary-Treasurer