

MINUTES
NVTC COMMISSION MEETING – NOVEMBER 4, 2010
NVTC CONFERENCE ROOM – ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

The meeting of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission was called to order by Chairman Hudgins at 8:10 P.M.

Members Present

Sharon Bulova
Barbara Comstock
John Cook
Thelma Drake
Adam Ebbin
William D. Euille
Jay Fisette
John Foust
Jeffrey Greenfield
Mark R. Herring
Catherine Hudgins
Mary Hynes
Joe May
Jeffrey McKay
Paul Smedberg
David F. Snyder
Christopher Zimmerman

Members Absent

Kelly Burk
Thomas Rust
Mary Margaret Whipple

Staff Present

Rhonda Gilchrest
Scott Kalkwarf
Greg McFarland
Adam McGavock
Stephen MacIsaac (VRE)
Kala Quintana
Jennifer Straub (VRE)
Rick Taube
Dale Zehner (VRE)

Approval of the Agenda

Chairman Hudgins stated that Richard Sarles, WMATA's interim general manager, will give a presentation during the WMATA agenda item. There were no objections to adding this to the agenda.

Minutes of the NVTC Meeting of October 7, 2010

On a motion by Mr. Zimmerman and a second by Mrs. Hynes, the commission unanimously approved the minutes. The vote in favor was cast by commissioners Bulova, Cook, Drake, Ebbin, Euille, Fisette, Foust, Greenfield, Herring, Hudgins, Hynes, May, Smedberg, Snyder and Zimmerman. Mr. McKay abstained since he did not attend last month's meeting.

VRE Items

Report from the VRE Operations Board and VRE Chief Executive Officer. Mr. Zehner reported that VRE's average daily ridership was over 17,000 for the month of October. VRE's highest ridership day was October 13th with 19,322 daily passenger trips. Systemwide on-time performance was at 89 percent for the month of October. The majority of the delays were due to weather issues, including flood restrictions. Prince William County has developed plans to add approximately 180 parking spaces to the Broad Run VRE station. Construction is expected to be completed this winter.

Mr. Zehner also announced that on November 13th VRE will conduct a full scale emergency drill. Fairfax County has asked for 150 volunteers from the local community to participate and VRE will ask for rider participation as well. It is a multi-agency effort with Fairfax and Prince William counties' Fire and Rescue and Police, TSA, FBI, and FRA all participating. Mr. Zehner explained that this is a larger scale drill compared to past drills. The simulated wounded will even be evacuated to a local hospital for this drill.

Sale of Railcars and Locomotives to the U.S. Army. Mrs. Bulova reported that the VRE Operations Board recommends approval of Resolution #2158, which would authorize VRE's CEO to sell three GP-40 locomotives and 10 gallery railcars to the U.S. Army for \$250,000. The Army will use this equipment to transport troops to and from field training at Fort A.P. Hill in Caroline County.

Mrs. Bulova moved, with a second by Mr. Smedberg, to approve Resolution #2158.

Mr. Euille asked if a market analysis of value had been done on the railcars. Mr. Zehner explained that VRE purchased the railcars from Chicago for \$1 apiece. The selling price is higher since VRE invested in the rehabilitation of these cars.

Delegate Comstock arrived at 8:15 P.M.

The commission then voted on the motion and it passed. The vote in favor was cast by commissioners Bulova, Cook, Comstock, Drake, Ebbin, Euille, Fisette, Foust, Greenfield, Herring, Hudgins, Hynes, May, McKay, Smedberg, Snyder and Zimmerman.

Elimination of Rail Advisory Board. Mrs. Bulova explained that Governor McDonnell's Government Reform Commission has recommended in its interim report that the Rail Advisory Board (RAB) should be eliminated. To do so would save \$10,000 annually. The Board advises the Commonwealth Transportation Board on allocating Rail Enhancement funds for rail projects and serves as a forum for interactions between freight and rail passenger interests. RAB has been especially valuable for improving relations with VRE's freight rail partners and the VRE Operations Board has written to the Reform Commission's chairman citing the benefits to VRE and asking for the Reform Commission to withdraw its recommendation. The VRE Operations Board also asked NVTC and PRTC to take a position on this proposal and to send a letter.

Mrs. Bulova moved, with a second by Mr. Smedberg, to authorize NVTC's chairman to send a letter to the Government Reform Commission.

In response to a question from Mr. Fisette, Mr. Zehner explained that CSX and Norfolk Southern senior executives are members of the Rail Advisory Board. The Board has provided a forum for VRE and the freight railroads to build a partnership, which has been invaluable to VRE. Mrs. Bulova noted that the small amount of savings that would result from eliminating the RAB does not compare to the large benefit of what the Board provides.

The vote in favor was cast by commissioners Bulova, Cook, Ebbin, Euille, Fisette, Foust, Greenfield, Herring, Hudgins, Hynes, McKay, Smedberg, Snyder and Zimmerman. Commissioners Comstock, Drake and May abstained.

NVTC Copier Lease

Mr. Taube reported that NVTC received three proposals in response to its RFP. The existing office copier lease expires at the end of December, 2010. NVTC staff tested the proposed copiers and carefully reviewed the proposed lease costs, including the maintenance agreements. The top-ranked firm is Capital Office Solutions (NVTC's current service provider). Its proposal would provide a Xerox 7765 copier at an initial annual lease cost of \$5,500, fixed for the first two years with a maximum of 7% escalation for each of the remaining three years. This copier and service agreement was the least expensive of the top-ranked machines in the three proposals as well as being ranked first in overall value to NVTC. An industry-standard lease agreement would be executed. It is being reviewed by legal counsel.

Mr. Fisette moved, with a second by Mr. McKay, to authorize NVTC's Executive Director to execute the lease with Capital Office Solutions after legal counsel review.

The vote in favor was cast by commissioners Bulova, Cook, Comstock, Drake, Ebbin, Euille, Fissette, Foust, Greenfield, Herring, Hudgins, Hynes, May, McKay, Smedberg, Snyder and Zimmerman.

WMATA Items

Presentation on "Rebuilding Metro: Preliminary FY 2012-2017 Capital Improvement Program." Mr. Sarles explained that safety is WMATA's number one priority. He reviewed some of the procedures put in place to address safety issues, including implementing the NTSB recommendations. For the Capital Improvement Program, WMATA will be focusing on the Metro system being in a state of good repair and safety, with no expansion of the system and services. The proposed CIP (\$5.1 billion) includes NTSB-related projects which total \$330 million. Debt issuance would be shifted from FY 2015 to FY 2023 to accommodate these recommendations. This would assume a four percent growth in federal and jurisdictional funding. \$148 million will be designated for escalator repair or replacement over a six year period.

Mr. Zimmerman stated that it is important to understand that previously the plan was to grow service by 50 percent. Based on inadequate funding, all service expansion has been halted over the next six years. Therefore, capacity has been scaled back even though ridership continues to increase. He stated that it will be important to be able to explain this to the public.

Mr. Snyder, who is a daily Metrorail rider, observed that it is hard for Orange Line riders to understand that although they have to pay increased fares, the service will not get any better and may even deteriorate. In his opinion, the Orange Line all too often is dangerously overcrowded. Mr. Snyder also asked if some of the problems with the escalators are due to being exposed to the elements. Mr. Sarles stated that this is a contributing issue but it is not the only issue. The age of the equipment is a factor. Escalators haven't been maintained as well as they should have been. There are plans that include installing canopies at some of the stations to protect the escalators. Mr. Snyder stated that on a positive note Metro operators are doing a better job of communicating with riders when there are problems and delays.

Mr. Snyder stated that during his travels in Europe, he observed that some transit agencies have agreements with hotels to provide transit passes to patrons. He suggested WMATA look at this.

Chairman Hudgins thanked Mr. Sarles for coming and giving his presentation. She observed that there have been many positive things happening at WMATA under his leadership.

WMATA Governance. Chairman Hudgins explained that following last month's meeting, staff was asked to propose a process for discussing Metro governance, safety and funding. Staff proposes that a group of up to ten individuals be selected to discuss these three topics. Proposed members are Bill Euille, Thelma Drake, Corey Hill, Catherine Hudgins, Joe May, Steve Pittard, Mary Margaret Whipple and Chris

Zimmerman. She also suggested that Mr. McKay be added to the list since he is on the WMATA Board and Mrs. Drake has agreed. It is suggested that the committee meet a maximum of three times and the topics for discussion at each meeting have been outlined. NVTC should discuss the committee's progress and act upon any recommendations at its January 6, 2011 meeting.

Mr. Smedberg moved, with a second by Mrs. Bulova, to approve the process, schedule and membership, including the addition of Mr. McKay to the group.

In response to a question from Mr. Smedberg, Chairman Hudgins explained that at the first meeting participants will come to consensus as to the items to be discussed and can decide how wide to disseminate information.

The commission then voted on the motion and it passed. The vote in favor was cast by commissioners Bulova, Cook, Comstock, Drake, Ebbin, Euille, Fissette, Foust, Greenfield, Herring, Hudgins, Hynes, May, McKay, Smedberg, Snyder and Zimmerman.

Vital Signs Report. Chairman Hudgins reported that this written report is a new tool for WMATA to measure its performance. Mrs. Hynes observed that WMATA's number one goal is to create a safer organization and its third goal is to use every resource wisely. She observed that both of these goals overlap with what DRPT has been talking about relative to WMATA governance. She hopes that some of this information in this report could be helpful to the governance discussions. Chairman Hudgins agreed.

Legislative Items

Chairman Hudgins announced that NVTC's Legislative Committee will meet in November to develop the commission's proposed Legislative Agenda for 2011. The committee will present its recommendations for action at the commission's December meeting. NVTC's Legislative Committee is chaired by Bill Euille. Chairman Hudgins explained that she has appointed Delegate Rust to serve on the committee, filling the vacancy when Delegate Albo left the commission. Legislative Committee members are commissioners Euille, Burk, Greenfield, Hudgins, Hynes, Rust, Snyder and Whipple.

Mr. McKay observed that the transit benefit for federal employees will expire soon and asked if NVTC has taken a position on this. If the benefit is not extended, transit ridership, including Metro and VRE, could be reduced dramatically. Mr. Taube stated that this issue was included in NVTC's 2010 Legislative Agenda and could be included in this year's agenda. Mr. McKay stated that it should be included and also suggested that NVTC send a letter to Virginia's congressional delegation on this issue.

Mr. McKay moved, with a second by Mr. Smedberg, to authorize staff to send a letter to Virginia's congressional delegation urging that the transit benefit of \$230 be extended. The vote in favor was cast by commissioners Bulova, Cook, Comstock,

Drake, Ebbin, Euille, Fissette, Foust, Greenfield, Herring, Hudgins, Hynes, May, McKay, Smedberg, Snyder and Zimmerman.

Mr. Foust suggested also sending the letter to other members of Congress. Chairman Hudgins agreed that it would be good to broadly expand the list of recipients.

Regional Transportation Items

Miller Center Report on National Transportation Funding. Mr. Taube reported that in September 2009, 80 transportation experts (including NVTC's executive director) convened at the Miller Center at the University of Virginia to create a blueprint for rescuing the deteriorating U.S. transportation system. The recommendations included that Congress must address the immediate crisis in transportation funding. Also, future funding mechanisms should not depend primarily on fossil-fuel consumption.

U.S. DOT TIGER II Grants. Mr. Taube reported that no grant requests from this region were funded.

Agenda for Virginia Governor's Transportation Conference. Mr. Taube reported that the conference will be held December 8-10, 2010 at the Hotel Roanoke. The conference is titled, "Reforming and Revitalizing Transportation in Virginia."

NVTC Financial Items for September, 2010

Commissioners were provided with the financial items and there were no questions.

Mr. Smedberg asked how the preparations are coming for NVTC's office move. Mr. Taube explained that a furniture vendor and moving services are in the process of being selected for NVTC's upcoming move at the end of December.

Closed Session

Mrs. Bulova moved, with a second by Mr. Zimmerman, the following motion:

Pursuant to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (Sections 2.2-3711A (1) of the Code of Virginia), the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission authorizes discussion in Closed Session concerning a personnel item, pertaining to the annual performance review of NVTC's executive director.

The vote in favor was cast by commissioners Bulova, Cook, Comstock, Drake, Ebbin, Euille, Fisette, Foust, Greenfield, Herring, Hudgins, Hynes, May, McKay, Smedberg, Snyder and Zimmerman.

The commission entered into Closed Session at 8:55 P.M. and returned to Open Session at 9:35 P.M.

Mrs. Bulova moved, with a second by Mr. Zimmerman, the following certification:

The Northern Virginia Transportation Commission certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge and with no individual member dissenting, at the just concluded Closed Session:

1. Only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Freedom of Information Act discussed; and
2. Only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the Closed Session was convened were heard, discussed or considered.

The vote in favor was cast by commissioners Bulova, Cook, Comstock, Drake, Ebbin, Euille, Fisette, Foust, Greenfield, Herring, Hudgins, Hynes, May, McKay, Smedberg, Snyder and Zimmerman.

Chairman Hudgins noted that no action is needed at this time.

Adjournment

Without objection, Chairman Hudgins adjourned the meeting at 9:36 P.M.

Approved this 2nd day of December, 2010.

Catherine Hudgins
Chairman

Mary Hynes
Secretary-Treasurer