

**MINUTES**  
**NVTC COMMISSION MEETING – MARCH 2, 2017**  
**NAVY LEAGUE BUILDING – FIRST FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM**  
**ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA**

The meeting of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission was called to order by Chairman McKay at 7:38 P.M.

**Members Present**

David Albo  
Sharon Bulova  
John Cook  
Jim Corcoran  
Katie Cristol  
Christian Dorsey  
Adam Ebbin  
John Foust  
Libby Garvey  
Jeff Greenfield  
Catherine Hudgins  
David LaRock  
James LeMunyon  
Matt Letourneau  
Tim Lovain  
Jeff McKay  
J. Randall Minchew  
Paul Smedberg  
David Snyder  
Jennifer Wexton

**Members Absent**

Ron A. Meyer

**Staff Present**

Karen Finucan Clarkson  
Andrew D'huyvetter  
Nobuhiko Daito  
Rhonda Gilchrest  
Dan Goldfarb  
Patricia Happ  
Scott Kalkwarf  
Kate Mattice  
Zachary McCoy  
Aimee Perron Seibert  
Steve MacIsaac (Counsel)  
Doug Allen (VRE)  
Joe Swartz (VRE)  
Todd Horsley (DRPT)

## Opening Remarks

Chairman McKay welcomed WMATA's General Manager/CEO Paul Wiedefeld. On behalf of the Commission, Chairman McKay thanked Mr. Wiedefeld and his team for their hard work every day to provide transit service to Northern Virginia's jurisdictions. He stated that the majority of tonight's agenda is reserved to discuss WMATA issues.

## Minutes of the February 2, 2017 NVTC Commission Meeting

Mr. Letourneau moved, with a second by Ms. Bulova, to approve the minutes. The vote in favor was cast by Commissioners Bulova, Cook, Corcoran, Cristol, Dorsey, Foust, Garvey, Greenfield, Hudgins, LaRock, LeMunyon, Letourneau, Lovain, McKay, Minchew, Smedberg, Snyder and Wexton.

## Consent Agenda

Ms. Mattice reviewed the Consent Agenda:

- Authorize the Chairman or His Designee to Comment on the Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP) Before the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB)
- Resolution #2334: Authorize the Executive Director to Execute an Amended Vanpool Incentive Program Memorandum of Understanding
- Resolution #2335: Appoint Tim Lovain to Serve on the VRE Operations Board as an Alternate

In response to a question from Delegate LeMunyon, Ms. Mattice confirmed the SYIP testimony topic "continued use of interstate toll revenues to expand transit options for commuters" is all inclusive to refer to any existing or future tolling. Mr. Snyder asked that support for gas tax floor legislation be included in the comments regarding dedicated and sustainable sources of funding.

Mr. Horsley reported that the CTB public hearing in Northern Virginia is now scheduled for May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Ms. Mattice stated that this will allow staff to bring the draft testimony back to the Commission at its April NVTC meeting.

In regards to the Vanpool Incentive Program MOU, Ms. Mattice explained that NVTC's share of the federal formula funding goes directly towards WMATA, which is a continuation of current practice.

Mr. Dorsey moved, with a second by Mr. Smedberg, to approve the Consent Agenda. The vote in favor was cast by Commissioners Bulova, Cook, Corcoran, Cristol, Dorsey, Foust, Garvey, Greenfield, Hudgins, LaRock, LeMunyon, Letourneau, Lovain, McKay, Minchew, Smedberg, Snyder and Wexton. (Copies of the resolutions are attached.)

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

Mr. Wiedefeld stated that much has transpired over the last year since he addressed NVTC at its January 2016 meeting. WMATA's priorities continue to be safety and security for riders and employees; service reliability and customer service; and financial management. He updated the Commission on the progress being made. The SafeTrack program has condensed three years of maintenance into one year. Fifty-three miles of tracks have been worked on, which is approximately 23 percent of the entire Metro system. WMATA is also aggressively addressing the FTA findings and corrective actions. Some of the other safety improvements include a revamped Metro Police force. Results show incidents are down.

In regards to service reliability, Mr. Wiedefeld reported WMATA's focus is on railcars. Twenty new 7000 Series railcars are currently arriving each month, which is helping to lower the number of train delays (down 13 percent in 2016). Several customer service initiatives have been introduced, including a grace period to leave a station and not be charged the fare, a new website with an on-site social media section, progress on the implementation of wi-fi and cell phone coverage in the tunnels and stations, and a new Select Pass for American University students.

In terms of financial management, Mr. Wiedefeld stated the primary focus from his first day has been fiscal accountability. He reviewed several actions taken. This past year WMATA laid off 500 employees and eliminated 500 more positions. The health care cost structure for non-labor employees was also changed. WMATA worked with FTA to lift the ECHO restrictions so that electronic drawdowns are now restored. WMATA is also exploring public-private partnerships.

Delegate Albo and Senator Ebbin arrived at 7:49 P.M.

Mr. Wiedefeld stated that the FY2018 Budget, which has a shortfall of \$290 million, is a shared sacrifice budget, which calls for fare increases, subsidy increases, and other management and service reductions. The WMATA Board will act on the budget in the next few weeks. He stated that there are many factors not in WMATA's control which impact ridership (changes in the federal workforce, competing Uber-type services, and increased biking and telecommuting). For 2017, WMATA plans to focus on what it can control. It will continue to focus on service reliability through its Back2Good Railcar Reliability Program and restrict service hours to provide time for track preventive maintenance. WMATA will also focus on station improvements, such as upgrading lighting and speaker systems, painting major stations, and implementing a more rigorous cleaning program. He will also focus on accountability, improving productivity, lowering absenteeism and workmen's compensation, and exploring outsourcing opportunities.

Mr. Wiedefeld stated WMATA continues to improve the customer experience and he is confident the rider's experience has improved. He will continue to manage the operating budget very tightly, but cautioned that big cost savings are becoming harder to find. It is also important to recognize that the transit industry is a capital-intensive industry. WMATA estimates \$17 billion in State of Good Repair needs over the next 10 years. As a region, there are major budget issues to wrestle with starting in 2018.

Delegate LeMunyon asked what is WMATA's scenario for the future and what WMATA will look like as a success from a financial and operational standpoint. Mr. Wiedefeld explained that his first year was focused on operations and now he is focused on the FY2018 Budget process. He stated that there has been work done in this area and he will make it his focus once the budget is approved.

Mr. Letourneau observed that the Capital Needs Inventory is projecting a \$2.5 billion in unconstrained capital needs annually over a 10-year period. This is a serious concern for the jurisdictions. He asked if there is a realistic cap of what WMATA can spend in capital improvements. Mr. Wiedefeld stated that as WMATA is structured now it can probably spend closer to \$1.5 billion. For the future, there may be other ways to deliver projects, such as outsourcing. Mr. Letourneau asked if there is a way to right-size these numbers because they are scaring the region. He asked what steps are needed to make sure WMATA has the funding to operate. Mr. Wiedefeld stated the FY2017 Budget will not require additional funding and the FY2018 Budget is fairly conservative. With SafeTrack ending, ridership could start going up. Other things to watch are the marketplace, fuel costs, and federal labor force freezes. He cautioned that the FY2019 Budget is a whole different story.

Ms. Garvey asked about metrics for service reductions and stated it is important to work with the jurisdictions. Mr. Wiedefeld reviewed some of the factors in determining service cuts. Mr. Greenfield stated that he appreciates the challenges WMATA is facing. However, his constituents in the City of Fairfax are impacted by service cuts to Metrobus, reduced hours of Metrorail service, fare increases, and potential tax increases for the jurisdictions to cover increased subsidies. Jurisdictions are paying more for less service. He asked how WMATA will demonstrate to riders that service has improved and get them back. Mr. Greenfield concluded by saying that the jurisdictions support WMATA, but there needs to be a realistic expectation of how much localities can financially absorb. Mr. Wiedefeld stated that Metrorail service is becoming more reliable and WMATA is turning the corner on track maintenance and new railcars. WMATA needs the localities to focus on what WMATA is doing right.

Mr. Corcoran asked about marketing plans to bring back riders. Mr. Wiedefeld stated that research shows WMATA does not need to do a big marketing campaign. Improved service and reliability will bring back riders. Promoting the Back2Good program can be used to market the improvements. Ms. Cristol asked about final reporting on the SafeTrack program. Mr. Wiedefeld stated WMATA plans to celebrate the successful conclusion of the program.

Delegate LaRock asked about improvements to other equipment, such as elevators and escalators and other power equipment. Mr. Wiedefeld stated that work related to power is also being done through SafeTrack, such as testing wiring. In regard to elevators and escalators, he stated that contrary to public perception they actually perform well up in the 90 percent range. Delegate LaRock asked about the general condition of the power system. Mr. Wiedefeld state he can't give a percentage but does know it is not where he wants it to be.

Mr. Lovain stated that transit oriented development is critical to Metro's future and will increase rail ridership. He stated that it is important for WMATA to coordinate with the jurisdictions.

Delegate Minchew commended Mr. Wiedefeld for conducting an audit on absenteeism and asked how WMATA can combat the issue of unforecasted absenteeism. Mr. Wiedefeld stated WMATA recently announced a new absenteeism policy to improve productivity and reduce the use of overtime. WMATA's Office of Medical Services will take the place of supervisors approving absences. Overtime costs are about nine percent of WMATA's salary budget. WMATA is also working to improve scheduling to maximize resources.

Delegate Albo stated he is impressed with Mr. Wiedefeld's leadership and hopes he won't get frustrated and quit. Mr. Wiedefeld stated he has no intention of quitting because he has a great team and support from the community.

Ms. Garvey stated that the station improvements, such as lighting and painting, should make a world of difference to the public. Ms. Bulova thanked Mr. Wiedefeld for his leadership. She also noted that a silver lining of the SafeTrack program is a closer cooperation with the jurisdictions and WMATA. She hopes this will continue.

Mr. Snyder expressed his concern about funding as it relates to the jurisdictions' budgets. There are limitations for the localities to come up with more funding. As a regular rider, he is frustrated with the inconsistent intervals between trains. Mr. Wiedefeld stated that part of the budget proposal is to implement a more realistic schedule, but there are a number of issues that cause inconsistencies. He hopes riders will see more consistent intervals by the fall of 2017. In response to a question from Chairman McKay, Mr. Wiedefeld stated it is still WMATA's goal to implement automatic train control in the future, however, WMATA will need to reexamine the technology. Mr. Snyder highlighted how impressive Metro service was for Inauguration events.

In regard to marketing, Delegate LeMunyon stated he would be happy to broadcast good news related to Metro service in his emails and social media to his constituents. Chairman McKay stated that all Commissioners should be encouraging riders to come back to Metro.

Chairman McKay observed that parking usage going down at the outer stations. This is a challenge for the jurisdictions in regard to debt service. He asked Mr. Wiedefeld to look at considering incentivizing riders to get these parking structures filled.

Mr. Dorsey stated SafeTrack has had a positive impact on the quality of Metrorail service. He stated that the General Manager should not underestimate his own power to get riders back when the SafeTrack work is completed.

Chairman McKay thanked Mr. Wiedefeld for addressing the Commission. NVTC is in partnership with WMATA. The Metro system is important to this region and NVTC is here to spread the good news about Metro.

Mr. Smedberg stated that the WMATA Board is on track to approve the budget this month. Mr. Snyder asked if there is a commonly agreed to set of short- and long-term operating and capital numbers. Ms. Hudgins stated that the Board needs to get through this budget process before it can look at long-term projections. In response to a question from Mr. Snyder, Mr. Wiedefeld stated that the federal safety recommendation to put in a radio system and cell phone coverage in the tunnels is currently underway. Mr. Letourneau stated that there have been some communication issues between WMATA and jurisdictional staff and he asked Mr. Wiedefeld to help address these issues.

### Department of Rail and Public Transportation

Chairman McKay stated that DRPT Director Mitchell was unable to attend tonight's meeting. He asked Mr. Horsley to give the DRPT update. Mr. Horsley, encouraged Commissioners to read the written DRPT Report. He gave a brief update on the Metro Safety Commission legislation. The MSC legislation was passed by both the House and Senate and awaits the Governor's signature. He reported that it is his understanding that Maryland also passed MSC legislation. On behalf of DRPT, he thanked all the legislators for helping pass this important legislation, especially Delegate LeMunyon for his patronage.

Ms. Cristol asked about the MSC certification process required by the Federal Transit Administration. Mr. Horsley explained that once the certification process is complete, FTA should release the funding it is holding until the MSC is in place. Delegate Minchew expressed his opinion that FTA moved the goal post when the jurisdictions were ready to kick the football, and that is not fair play. Mr. Snyder expressed his appreciation to the legislators to get this legislation passed.

### Report from the Chairs of NVTC Committees

Mr. Cook, chair of the newly created Governance and Personnel Committee, announced that the first committee meeting will be held on March 7<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 P.M. in NVTC's offices. As outlined in an enactment clause of the MSC legislation, the committee will be coordinating with the Secretary of Transportation, through the Department of Rail and Public Transportation, to develop, propose, and seek agreement on WMATA reforms. The Governance and Personnel Committee plans to meet monthly with quarterly half or full-day sessions for the coming year. He stated that it is important for Virginia to maximize its influence by speaking with one voice. Chairman McKay agreed that it is helpful to have a unified voice and it is good that NVTC can provide that voice.

Delegate LeMunyon stated he hopes the committee will create a version of what Virginia thinks a new WMATA Compact should look like when it's fixed and not worry about the District and Maryland.

Ms. Mattice read the list of the members of the Governance and Personnel Committee: John Cook, chair, Jeff McKay, Dave Snyder, Ron Meyer, Libby Garvey, Christian Dorsey,

Catherine Hudgins, Jim Corcoran, Paul Smedberg, Adam Ebbin, Jim LeMunyon and Jennifer Mitchell.

Delegate LeMunyon stated that there is existing Code language referring to Virginia's negotiating position on the WMATA Compact. Delegate Minchew explained that Title 33.2 of the Code includes provisions, such as right to work and binding arbitration, that Maryland and the District haven't agreed to yet. He observed that this codified law is a good place to start to look at WMATA reforms.

Mr. Corcoran observed that the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments is releasing a technical report on Metro in the near future. Mr. Chuck Bean, MWCOG Executive Director, stated that it is expected to be brought to the MWCOG Board at the end of April. Ms. Mattice stated that MWCOG staff will give a presentation on its study at NVTC's May meeting.

Chairman McKay asked Ms. Cristol and Mr. Greenfield, co-chairs of NVTC's Legislative and Policy Committee, to give an update. Ms. Cristol thanked the General Assembly members for their work during the recent Session. She stated the committee is expected a busy year ahead as it looks at legislative issues, such as the capital funding cliff, gas tax floor and VRE system needs. The strategy is to develop a strong position on these issues before the next General Assembly Session. The committee also sees its role in key strategic partnerships with MWCOG, Chambers of Commerce, and others. In addition, the Legislative and Policy Committee will be working closely with the Governance and Personnel Committee as they make recommendations.

Ms. Cristol announced that the Legislative and Policy Committee plans to meet on April 2, 2017 at 6:00 P.M. prior to NVTC's meeting. She encouraged Commissioners to participate.

Ms. Cristol asked Aimee Perron Seibert to give an update on the just concluded General Assembly Session. Ms. Perron Seibert stated that NVTC did not initiate the introduction of any bills this General Assembly session, but did follow some closely, such as those establishing a regional gas tax floor and a Metro Safety Commission (MSC). The focus of NVTC's legislative agenda was the Metro Safety Commission legislation. Both the House (HB2136) and Senate (SB1251) passed MSC bills containing enactment language directing the Secretary of Transportation and NVTC to work together to review the 1966 WMATA Compact and consider potential changes. The Virginia bills are designed to become law immediately upon the signature of the Governor. She stated it was a team effort to successfully get this passed and thanked the legislators.

Ms. Perron Seibert stated that a floor on the regional gas tax will have to wait until next year. HB2103 (Levine) was defeated in a House Finance Subcommittee. SB1092 (Petersen) was rolled into SB1456 (Wagner), which passed the Senate floor 26-12 before being tabled in the House Finance Committee. As it was a voice vote, no delegates went on the record against the bill, which received broad support from road builders and chambers of commerce, alongside the transit community and localities. She stated that NVTC should look for opportunities to continue to educate legislators on the need for a tax floor.

Ms. Perron Seibert reported that Speaker William Howell announced his retirement and a new leadership team has been voted in by the House Republican caucus: Delegate Kirk Cox (R-Colonial Heights) was elected as Speaker-Designee and will be the 55<sup>th</sup> Speaker of the House; Delegate Todd Gilbert (R-Shenandoah) was elected as Majority Leader-Designee; Majority Caucus Chairman Tim Hugo (R-Fairfax) and Majority Whip Jackson Miller (R-Manassas) were each also re-elected unanimously.

Ms. Perron Seibert noted that now that the General Assembly Session is over, the General Assembly Building will be demolished and rebuilt. The legislature and many of its agencies will move into the Pocahontas Building during the renovations, which are expected to be completed by 2021.

Chairman McKay stated that the Transit Capital Project Revenue Advisory Board (RAB) will meet next week to hear a presentation from the consultants on possible revenue enhancements. There will be a report at next month's NVTC meeting.

Delegate Albo observed that the term gas tax "floor" needs to be rebranded. He expressed his opinion that in order to get a bill passed there also needs to be a cap. Mr. Snyder observed that the failure to pass the gas tax floor legislation just moves costs around. He asked for analysis on calculating the price of inaction. He expressed appreciation for all the business groups that supported the legislation in Richmond.

### Virginia Railway Express

Chairman McKay noted there are no action items. He asked VRE CEO Doug Allen to give a brief update on VRE activities. Mr. Allen stated that VRE worked closely with Amtrak to provide safe service for the Presidential Inauguration activities. He reported on-time performance (OTP) for the month of January was 94 percent and average daily ridership was strong at 19,900, which is a 10 percent increase compared to the same time last year.

Mr. Allen reported on February 8<sup>th</sup> he and VRE's Deputy CEO/Chief Operating Officer Rich Dalton met with Charles "Wick" Moorman, the new President and Chief Executive Officer of Amtrak, to discuss projects of interest to VRE, including mid-day storage and the Alexandria King Street Station.

Mr. Allen stated that VRE's Chief Financial Officer Donna Boxer has announced her retirement at the end of the fiscal year. VRE will begin a search for a new CFO.

Mr. Allen stated that DRPT submitted its report to the General Assembly on VRE's 2040 System Plan Review. Key findings of the report conclude VRE's concern regarding its long-term financial challenges are founded. VRE staff is in the process of summarizing the report and will use this valuable information as it coordinates a legislative strategy for the 2018 General Assembly Session. A more detailed presentation on DRPT's report will be given at the April NVTC meeting.



### Economic Value of High Capacity Transit in Northern Virginia

Chairman McKay stated that NVTC staff will give a presentation at the May meeting.

### NVTC FY2017 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Ridership Report

Chairman McKay stated that this is an information item and encouraged Commissioners to read the written report.

### Executive Director Report

Ms. Mattice reviewed upcoming Commission meetings. At the April meeting, NVTC will be looking at several of its important initiatives, focusing on regional farebox upgrades, the Commission's role with VRE, DRPT's Study of VRE's System 2040 Plan, and the WMATA Budget. For the May meeting, NVTC will meet at the Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce in Tysons, and will include a presentation from the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' on its Metro Study.

### Adjournment

Delegate Minchew moved, with a second by Ms. Bulova, to adjourn the meeting. Without objection, Chairman McKay adjourned the meeting at 9:05 P.M.

Approved this 6<sup>th</sup> day of April 2017.

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Jeffrey C. McKay  
Chairman

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Matthew F. Letourneau  
Secretary-Treasurer



## **RESOLUTION #2334**

**SUBJECT:** Authorize the Executive Director to Execute an Amended Vanpool Incentive Program Memorandum of Understanding

**WHEREAS:** The Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC), the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC) and the George Washington Regional Commission (GWRC) agreed to sponsor the Vanpool Incentive Program (VIP) through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) executed in July, 2012;


**WHEREAS:** The purpose of the Vanpool Incentive Program is to promote increased vanpooling, provide assistance through marketing, rate publication, ride-matching, and payment of \$200 per vanpool for submitting data necessary to qualify for federal Section 5307 funding from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA);

**WHEREAS:** It was determined that the formula included in Section D, Subsection 4(c) and (d) of the VIP MOU, which allocates vanpool mileage to NVTC, PRTC and GWRC, does not reflect the original intent of the program sponsors; and

**WHEREAS:** An MOU has been prepared with revised formula language which the program sponsors agree reflects the original intent.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that NVTC authorizes its Executive Director to execute the Vanpool Incentive Program's Amended Memorandum of Understanding.

Approved this 2<sup>nd</sup> day of March, 2017.

  
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Jeffrey C. McKay  
Chairman

  
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Matthew F. Letourneau  
Secretary-Treasurer



## **RESOLUTION #2335**

**SUBJECT:** Appoint Tim Lovain to the VRE Operations Board as an Alternate


**WHEREAS:** NVTC is empowered to make appointments to the Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) and the Virginia Transit Association (VTA);


**WHEREAS:** On January 7, 2017, NVTC appointed Paul Smedberg to serve as a Principal Member of the VRE Operations Board representing the City of Alexandria; and

**WHEREAS:** The City of Alexandria has subsequently appointed Tim Lovain to serve as Mr. Smedberg's Alternate to the VRE Operations Board.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission hereby appoints and confirms Tim Lovain to serve as an Alternate to the VRE Operations Board.

Approved this 2<sup>nd</sup> day of March, 2017.

  
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Jeffrey C. McKay  
Chairman

  
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Matthew F. Letourneau  
Secretary-Treasurer