NVTC Program Advisory Committee Members Present via Electronic Participation:
  David Snyder, Chairman
  Elizabeth Bennett-Parker
  John Foust
  Libby Garvey
  David Meyer
  Michael R. Turner

Other NVTC Commissioners Present via Electronic Participation:
  David Reid

Staff and Others Present via Electronic Participation:
  Kate Mattice, Executive Director
  Allan Fye
  Ben Owen
  Jae Watkins
  Dinah Girma

Chairman Snyder called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. He explained that given the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency, the meeting is being conducted electronically. This is possible because the governor signed into law on April 22, 2020 a legislative amendment to the budget bill to allow public bodies to meet electronically without a physical quorum present to discuss or transact the business statutorily required or necessary to continue operations of that public body. NVTC staff followed the procedures and guidelines in the legislation to give notice to the Program Advisory Committee (PAC), Commission, staff and the public.

Chairman Snyder reviewed the procedures and instructions for the electronic meeting. The only visual component of the meeting is the presentation slides shown on WebEx for PAC members and on YouTube livestream for the public. Chairman Snyder then announced that no public comments were received for this meeting.

Chairman Snyder outlined the impact of the COVID-19 public health emergency on I-66 Inside the Beltway toll revenues, which have dropped sharply since March 2020. The very limited revenue available for new projects has required NVTC to be flexible and strategic in identifying a viable Round Four (FY 2021-FY 2022) programming approach. The focus of today’s meeting will be an initial round of projects for FY 2021 that can be funded with available revenues; NVTC staff will track toll revenue collections closely with the hope of awarding funding for additional projects in FY 2022. Chairman Snyder introduced Ben Owen, who provided an overview of the revenue available for new projects and staff’s proposed programming approach.
Mr. Owen stated that prior to the COVID-19 public health emergency, staff had anticipated that $25 million would be available to support new projects in Round Four. Due to the sharp decreases in toll revenue caused by COVID-19 and continued uncertainty about when revenue might rebound, staff identified $4 million available for programming in FY 2021. Mr. Owen indicated that additional revenue is anticipated to become available by FY 2022 but that any projection would be highly speculative at this point. Staff will coordinate with Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) staff to monitor revenue trends.

Mr. Owen then provided an overview of the proposed programming approach. The Round Four initial (FY 2021) program, which would be approved this fall, would prioritize renewals of existing Commuter Choice-supported transit services and small capital projects, up to the $4 million available. He explained that staff is seeking the PAC’s endorsement of the initial program at this meeting. The supplemental (FY 2022) program, if feasible based on available funding, would be anticipated in June 2021, aligning with the anticipated Commuter Choice on the I-395/95 Corridor Round Two (FY 2022-FY 2023) program of projects approval timeframe. Mr. Owen summarized each of the six applications under consideration for initial program funding as well as the five projects that would be considered for supplemental program funding in Summer 2021; three further applications were deferred by their applicants for a future call of projects.

Mr. Owen outlined the planned next steps for the initial program. Staff opened public comment on the proposed projects on September 1 and will close the comment period on September 21, 2020. In October, the Commission will be asked to take action on the program and staff will brief the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) later in the month, with CTB approval by the end of the year.

Chairman Snyder asked Ms. Mattice for any further comments. Ms. Mattice recapped staff’s proposal to advance an initial program of projects now with the understanding that additional revenue may become available over the next several months that could support a supplemental program for FY 2022.

Chairman Snyder asked for comments from other PAC members. Ms. Garvey thanked staff for the work put forth on the strategic approach.

Mr. Turner asked if the funding must also be requested from the CTB as part of their approval of the program of projects. Mr. Owen explained that the funding comes directly to NVTC from VDOT but that the CTB’s program approvals allow NVTC to enter into funding agreements for selected projects, through which NVTC provides funding.

Chairman Snyder asked if there was a consensus to move forward with the outlined recommendations. There were no objections. Chairman Snyder reminded that the public comment period is open through the end of September 21, 2020. Staff will then share comments from the public with the Commission.

Ms. Garvey inquired if there would be legislation that could allow Commissioners to continue to participate virtually after in-person public meetings resume post-pandemic. Ms. Mattice stated that NVTC By-Laws now allow for two meetings to be missed by each Commissioner, but the topic will be part of the Legislative Committee agenda. Chairman Snyder requested clarification if this would be a hybrid approach for attendance to be both in-person and virtual. Mr. Meyer added...
that more discussion is needed around the hybrid approach with the Commission. Ms. Mattice stated that this can be added as a legislative committee action item. Mr. Reid stated that a hybrid meeting does allow for more public participation.

The meeting adjourned at 5:31 p.m.