

**MINUTES**  
**NVTC COMMISSION MEETING –MAY 5, 2022**  
**FIRST FLOOR LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM – 2300 WILSON BLVD.**  
**ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA**

The meeting of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission was called to order by Chair Aguirre at 7:01 p.m.

Members Present

Canek Aguirre  
Walter Alcorn (*via electronic participation*)  
Sarah Bagley  
Nick Clemente  
Katie Cristol (*via electronic participation*)  
Matt de Ferranti  
Jennifer DeBruhl (Alternate, Commonwealth of Virginia) (*via electronic participation*)  
Adam Ebbin (*via electronic participation*)  
Aimee S. Gilroy  
Matt Letourneau  
Jeff McKay  
David Meyer  
Dalia Palchik  
M. David Skiles  
Paul Smedberg  
David Snyder  
John C. Tuck III  
Mike Turner  
James Walkinshaw

Members Not Present

John J. Bell  
John Foust  
Libby Garvey

Staff Present

Kate Mattice, Executive Director	Sophie Spiliotopoulos
Monique Blyther	Silas Sullivan
Andrew D’huyvetter	Brittany Sumpter
Matt Friedman	Melissa Walker
Allan Fye	Ronnetta Zack-Williams
Rhonda Gilchrest	Aimee Perron Siebert ( <i>via electronic participation</i> )
Adam Hager	Steve MacIsaac (VRE)
Xavier Harmony	Joe Swartz (VRE)
Scott Kalkwarf	
Tenley O’Hara	
Ben Owen	

## Opening Remarks

Chair Aguirre welcomed everyone to the May 5, 2022 NVTC meeting and noted that the meeting is also being livestreamed for the public on YouTube.

Chair Aguirre stated that Mr. Alcorn and Mr. Ebbin are participating electronically due to personal reasons. Ms. Cristol is participating electronically due to a medical reason. Acting DRPT Director Jennifer DeBruhl, who is a new NVTC Alternate, is participating electronically under the provision of the NVTC Electronic Participation Policy that allows a member to participate electronically if they live 60 or more miles away from the meeting location. Commission Secretary Rhonda Gilchrest confirmed an in-person quorum was present.

Chair Aguirre took a moment to recognize that today, May 5, is Cinco de Mayo, which is personally important to his Mexican heritage but also because his family is from the city where the battle was fought and Mexico was victorious.

Ms. Mattice reported that NVTC received one public comment submission asking questions about the funding plan for one of the projects being considered for funding under the Commuter Choice program – the Ballston Second Entrance project, of which I-66 Commuter Choice funding would contribute \$4.5 million towards a project that is being funded by Arlington County, Smart Scale, Developers, and is seeking funding from NVTA. She stated that the Commission will be briefed on the projects being considered for funding later in this agenda. The comment also included a request for information on when NVTC will be reporting on ridership data again. The commenter is aware of a technical delay in receiving this data from DPRT. Ms. Mattice stated that it is her understanding that the data will be available in the coming weeks as part of DRPT's new web portal. She announced that NVTC is continuing to receive public comment on the I-66 Commuter Choice Program of Projects through May 16.

## New and Departing Commissioners

Oath of Office for a New Commissioner. Chair Aguirre announced that NVTC was notified that Governor Youngkin appointed Jennifer DeBruhl as Acting DRPT Director following Jennifer Mitchell's departure from DRPT. Subsequently, Secretary of Transportation Shepherd Miller appointed Ms. DeBruhl to serve on NVTC as Mr. Smedberg's Alternate representing the Commonwealth. She has served as DRPT's chief of public transportation for more than five years and has over 25 years of public service to the transportation community.

Chair Aguirre welcomed Ms. DeBruhl to NVTC and virtually administered the ceremonial oath of office. Commissioners welcomed her to NVTC.

Recognition of Departing Commissioners. Chair Aguirre reported that on March 11 Secretary of Transportation Miller announced that DRPT Director Jennifer Mitchell was stepping down from the agency effective March 18 to become deputy administrator of the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) starting in April. He noted that Ms. Mitchell is here tonight so that the Commission can recognize her invaluable service to NVTC over the last eight years.

Chair Aguirre stated that Ms. Mitchell has been a true partner with NVTC and its jurisdictions and was instrumental in helping Northern Virginia make great strides in transit. Some highlights include:

- Two multi-decade agreements (I-66 Inside the Beltway and I-395/95) to create and fund the Commuter Choice program, an innovative, first of its kind program to invest toll revenue in multi-modal projects along two major interstate corridors in Northern Virginia;
- Dedicated funding for WMATA and VRE, resulting in long-term financial investments in Northern Virginia's two rail systems and enabling them to provide safe and reliable service that supports Northern Virginia's growing economy; and
- The creation of the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority, a vital Commonwealth agency that supports the growth of intercity passenger rail and is a vital partner to the ongoing and future growth and success of VRE.

Chair Aguirre noted that these are just a few highlights and more are included in the Resolution of Commendation that was prepared for Jennifer Mitchell.

Mr. Letourneau moved, with a second by Mr. Snyder, to approve the Resolution of Commendation for Jennifer Mitchell on her departure from NVTC. The vote in favor was cast by Commissioners Aguirre, Bagley, Clemente, de Ferranti, Gilroy, Letourneau, Meyer, Palchik, Skiles, Smedberg, Snyder, Tuck and Walkinshaw. A roll call vote followed for those Commissioners participating electronically. Commissioners Alcorn, Cristol and Ebbin cast affirmative votes. The motion passed.

Ms. Palchik recognized Ms. Mitchell for her being an outstanding leader for women in the transportation field and it is exciting that she is now at the federal level. She has left NVTC in good hands with Acting DRPT Director DeBruhl but will be greatly missed.

Mr. Smedberg recognized Ms. Mitchell for her fundamental work on the dedicated funding for WMATA, the creation of the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission, and her invaluable work in Richmond with legislators where she was well respected by all political parties, as well as other officials and staff. He thanked Ms. Mitchell and expressed how much he personally enjoyed working with her over these years.

Mr. Turner arrived at 7:14 p.m.

Mr. Meyer also recognized Ms. Mitchell for her work on the D.C. to Richmond rail project as she was able to navigate some turbulent waters and bring people together to reach consensus. Mr. Snyder stated that he joined NVTC in 1994 and expressed his opinion that Ms. Mitchell has been the most effective DRPT director during his tenure at NVTC. Her work has been phenomenal for the region and the entire Commonwealth. She had the strategic vision and the ability to carry it out. He stated that the Federal Railroad Administration is lucky to have her and he wished her the best of luck.

Ms. Cristol echoed her colleague's comments and noted the size of the impact Ms. Mitchell has had on the future of rail, not just for Virginia but for the entire regional corridor. She also noted that Ms. Mitchell has consistently worked in a way that was cognizant of the concerns and the

roles of local and regional groups, like NVTC, PRTC and VRE. She was instrumental in laying the infrastructure for so many important initiatives. This region is better off because of all her accomplishments over the last eight years.

Chair Aguirre reiterated NVTC's appreciation to Ms. Mitchell and presented her with the Resolution of Commendation and a trophy award.

Ms. Mitchell thanked the Commission for the kind words. She stated that it has been a pleasure working with Commissioners and the regional cooperation made it easy to partner with NVTC. She is proud of DRPT's accomplishments over the last eight years. She also acknowledged the impact and work of former Secretaries of Transportation Aubrey Layne and Shannon Valentine, as well as Deputy Secretaries Nick Donohue and John Lawson. She is thrilled that Jennifer DeBruhl is taking the lead at DRPT as she will continue to build on the great progress that has been made.

#### Minutes of the March 3, 2022 NVTC Meeting

Mr. Skiles moved, with a second by Mr. de Ferranti, to approve the minutes of the March 3, 2022 meeting. The vote in favor was cast by Commissioners Aguirre, Bagley, Clemente, de Ferranti, Gilroy, Letourneau, Meyer, Skiles, Smedberg, Snyder, Tuck, Turner and Walkinshaw. Ms. Palchik abstained. A roll call vote followed for those Commissioners participating electronically. Commissioners Alcorn, Cristol and Ebbin cast affirmative votes. The motion passed.

#### Consent Agenda

Chair Aguirre stated that there are eight actions on the Consent Agenda:

- A. Approve Resolution #2474: Authorize the Executive Director to Execute a Contract for NVTC Financial Auditing Services
- B. Approve Resolution #2475: Approve the NVTC Title VI Program and Authorize the Executive Director or Her Designee to Submit the Program to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
- C. Authorize the Executive Director to Send a Letter Certifying Receipt of Certain Documents from WMATA Required by State Code
- D. Authorize the Chair to Send a Letter of Endorsement for the City of Alexandria's Application for the U.S. Department of Transportation's Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Discretionary Grant
- E. Authorize the Chair to Send a Letter of Endorsement for the City of Alexandria's Application for the Federal Transit Administration's Low or No Emission Vehicle and Bus and Bus Facilities Discretionary Grant Programs
- F. Authorize the Chair to Send a Letter of Endorsement for Arlington County's Application for the U.S. Department of Transportation's Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Discretionary Grant
- G. Authorize the Chair to Send a Letter of Endorsement for Fairfax County's Application for the U.S. Department of Transportation's Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Discretionary Grant

- H. Authorize the Chair to Send a Letter of Endorsement for Loudoun County's Application for the U.S. Department of Transportation's Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Discretionary Grant

Ms. Palchik moved, with a second by Mr. Letourneau, to approve the Consent Agenda. The vote in favor was cast by Commissioners Aguirre, Bagley, Clemente, de Ferranti, Gilroy, Letourneau, Meyer, Palchik, Skiles, Smedberg, Snyder, Tuck, Turner and Walkinshaw. A roll call vote followed for those Commissioners participating electronically. Commissioners Alcorn, Cristol and Ebbin cast affirmative votes. The motion passed.

#### Proposed Amendments to the FY 2023 NVTC General and Administrative Budget

Chair Aguirre stated that the Commission is being asked to approve proposed amendments to the FY 2023 NVTC General and Administrative Budget in the amount of \$50,000, a 1.2% increase. He reported that the Executive Committee discussed this at their meeting tonight and took action to approve the proposed amendments for submission to the Commission for action.

Ms. Mattice explained that NVTC historically attempts to align salary adjustments with those of the member local jurisdiction. The FY 2023 Budget was developed this past fall before long-term inflation concerns and the jurisdictions' budget assumptions were fully known. The NVTC budget, which was approved in January, includes a conservative 2% cost-of-living (COLA) adjustment and 2% for potential merit increases. FY 2023 advertised budgets for NVTC's larger jurisdictions on average include approximately 6% in salary increases for COLA, step and merit increases. She explained that a budget amendment for employee compensation of \$40,000 would allow for a COLA adjustment approaching 4%, combined with budgeted merit increases of 2% as well provide a modest increase in travel and training funds to allow for those rising costs. She stated that the source of funds would be taken off the top of the state aid.

Mr. Smedberg moved, with a second by Ms. Palchik, to approve the amendments to the FY 2023 NVTC G&A Budget. The vote in favor was cast by Commissioners Aguirre, Bagley, Clemente, de Ferranti, Gilroy, Letourneau, Meyer, Palchik, Skiles, Smedberg, Snyder, Tuck, Turner and Walkinshaw. A roll call vote followed for those Commissioners participating electronically. Commissioners Alcorn, Cristol and Ebbin cast affirmative votes. The motion passed.

#### Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)

Report from the WMATA Board Members. Mr. Letourneau stated that since the Commission last met in early March, the WMATA Board adopted its FY 2023 Budget. When compared to the proposed budget introduced in the fall, the approved budget found an additional \$43 million in savings. WMATA was also awarded \$120 million in American Rescue Plan Additional Assistance Funding. These savings against the proposed budget and additional revenues help to reduce the sizable operating budget gap that is expected with the FY 2024 budget.

Mr. Letourneau also reported that the WMATA Board received an update on WMATA's Sustainability and Zero Emission bus efforts. In regard to zero-emission bus, WMATA is moving forward and the next immediate steps are the purchasing of buses and equipment. This year, WMATA applied to USDOT for a RAISE grant of \$25 million for the Northern Bus Garage Electrification project and is committed to continue pursuing competitive discretionary federal grant opportunities.

Mr. Letourneau also reported that the WMATA general manager released a return to service plan, which is a three-step process to improve the frequency, capacity and reliability of Metrorail. Initiatives include restoring fifty 6000-series cars by May to increase Green and Yellow Line service where there has been crowding. The second step is to concurrently work with the WMSC on approvals for daily inspection of the 7000-series trains using a digital gauge. This will provide an additional eight trains to provide better reliability and reduce crowding. Third, WMATA will work to install multiple automatic wayside inspection stations that take measurements as trains pass by on the lines. This will permit the gradual restoration of the 7000-series this summer, ultimately improving service on all lines.

Mr. Smedberg stated that WMATA has announced new safety initiatives to engage the community, target enforcement efforts and increase police visibility on buses, trains and in stations. The Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD) has developed a three-pillar approach: education, outreach and enforcement. Hopefully these initiatives will make a difference. Mr. Smedberg also reported that the new general manager search is well underway.

Mr. Skiles asked about the status of the Bus Transformation Study from 2019 in light of WMATA purchasing zero-emission buses as well as ridership changing dramatically due to the pandemic. He asked how does route redesign factor into this. Mr. Letourneau observed that for bus ridership, it did not drop significantly during the pandemic. The Bus Transformation Study ultimately leads to a bus network design phase, which is expected to launch this summer and will look at all the routes.

Ms. Palchik expressed her appreciation for WMATA's efforts of outreach to the community at the Vienna Metro Station.

Mr. McKay arrived at 7:35 p.m.

Ms. Cristol asked about the order of magnitude in bringing the 6000-series back into service. She is still concerned about the long headways, especially during this time when people are making decisions on how they will return to work. Mr. Letourneau stated that fifty 6000-series cars are being brought back into service now, with an estimate of 30-40 more coming out of retirement. Hopefully the 7000-series railcars can be gradually brought back into service.

Report from the Chair of the NVTC WMATA Committee. NVTC WMATA Committee Chair Walter Alcorn reported that the committee met on April 21 and received a presentation from WMATA staff on bus priority and a briefing from NVTC staff on how WMATA is funded, as well as on WMATA's preliminary FY 2024 Operating budget gap. While discussing WMATA funding, there was widespread agreement among committee members that WMATA and its jurisdictions need

a new funding model. As committee chair, he will work with NVTC staff and Virginia's WMATA Board members to facilitate this broader conversation throughout the year.

Mr. Alcorn stated that at the meeting, the committee also directed staff to prepare a letter for Commission action to send to WMATA regarding Virginia's Priorities for the Blue/Orange/Silver Corridor Capacity and Reliability Study. During the committee's update from the Virginia WMATA Board members, Mr. Letourneau previewed that WMATA would solicit public input on the alternates presented in the Blue/Orange/Silver Corridor Capacity and Reliability Study, which the committee was briefed on in October. The committee discussed the long-standing need to fix the bottleneck at Rosslyn and relieve train congestion and crowding where the Blue, Orange and Silver lines meet. Committee members expressed concerns that the solutions proposed in the study include the expansion of Metrorail lines beyond the need to relieve congestion and crowding in the Rosslyn Tunnel. The committee recommends that the Commission send a letter of comment that asks WMATA to approach investments in the corridor that:

- Prioritize improvements that address the bottleneck at Rosslyn,
- Take a phased approach to capacity improvements, and
- Strategically pursue federal funding opportunities provided by the Infrastructure and Jobs Act and other federal programs.

Mr. Alcorn concluded his remarks by announcing the next two NVTC WMATA Committee meetings, which are scheduled for June 16 at 6:00 p.m. and July 21 at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Alcorn moved to authorize the chair to send the letter to WMATA regarding Virginia's priorities for the Blue/Orange/Silver Corridor Capacity and Reliability Study. Ms. Palchik seconded the motion. Mr. de Ferranti thanked staff for drafting the letter so quickly. The vote in favor was cast by Commissioners Aguirre, Bagley, Clemente, de Ferranti, Gilroy, Letourneau, McKay, Meyer, Palchik, Skiles, Smedberg, Snyder, Tuck, Turner and Walkinshaw. A roll call vote followed for those Commissioners participating electronically. Commissioners Alcorn, Cristol and Ebbin cast affirmative votes. The motion passed.

#### Report from the Chair of the Program Advisory Committee

Chair Aguirre asked Program Advisory Committee Chair David Snyder to give his report. PAC Chair Snyder reported that the committee met in mid-April.

Transit Resource Center. Mr. Snyder stated that the Commission is being asked to take action to authorize the executive director to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for consulting services for the Envision Route 7 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Strategic Implementation Roadmap. The Envision Route 7 BRT project is planned as a high performing BRT service that connects Tysons (via Falls Church, Seven Corners and Bailey's Crossroads) to the Mark Center in Alexandria where a portion of the service will share infrastructure with the West End Transitway BRT in Alexandria.

Mr. Fye introduced the newest member of the NVTC team, Xavier Harmony, who is a familiar face for those at the staff level having worked both at WMATA and the Northern Virginia DRPT

office. At NVTC he serves as the Transit Resource Center Program Manager which oversees the Envision Route 7 BRT project as well as data collection and analysis efforts.

Mr. Harmony gave a brief update on the Envision Route 7 Strategic Implementation Roadmap, which is the next phase of the project. He explained that key issues that will be addressed include project governance, phased implementation and strategic funding decisions. This phase is a partnership between Fairfax County and NVTC and will cost \$50,000, being split evenly between the two partners.

Mr. McKay moved, with a second by Ms. Palchik, to authorize the executive director to issue an RFP for the Envision Route 7 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Strategic Implementation Roadmap. The vote in favor was cast by Commissioners Aguirre, Bagley, Clemente, de Ferranti, Gilroy, Letourneau, Meyer, Palchik, Skiles, Smedberg, Snyder, Tuck, Turner and Walkinshaw. A roll call vote followed for those Commissioners participating electronically. Commissioners Alcorn, Cristol and Ebbin cast affirmative votes. The motion passed.

I-66 Commuter Choice FY 2023-2024 Staff-Recommended Program of Projects. Mr. Snyder stated that staff briefed the Program Advisory Committee on the projects being considered for funding under the I-66 Commuter Choice FY 2023-2024 Program of Projects. NVTC received a total of 11 applications seeking a total of \$22.3 million in funding under the call for projects that concluded in January. Nine applications with a total funding request of \$21.8 million met eligibility criteria and are under consideration for funding.

Mr. Snyder stated that staff anticipate approximately \$13.4 million to be available for new projects in the FY 2023-2024 period. This amount comprises carryover balances, a modest amount of new I-66 Inside the Beltway toll revenue and two years' installments of Outside the Beltway Express Lanes concessionaire payments to the Commonwealth. He stated that no action is being requested tonight and staff will bring this back for action at the June meeting.

Mr. Owen stated that based on project scores and expected funding, NVTC staff are proposing a draft program that includes the six top-scoring projects, totaling \$12.4 million. These can be accommodated within the \$13.4 million available for projects. NVTC is finalizing its anticipated program administration costs for the FY 2023-2024 period. Projects in the recommended program include:

- Two long-lived capital investments that would benefit I-66 commuters for decades to come and leverage over \$160 million in other federal/state/local funding.
- Continuation of three established commuter bus routes that are experiencing rebounding ridership; two of these will use the Outside the Beltway (OTB) Express Lanes leading to faster and more reliable travel.
- A half-fare campaign for five OmniRide commuter routes from western Prince William County into Arlington and DC for the first months of the OTB lanes being open, to help build on rebounding ridership.

Mr. Owen stated that NVTC received a request from Fairfax County staff to consider partially funding the seventh highest scored project, which is the trail access to the Vienna Metrorail Station with the remaining \$1 million left over from the program total. Staff is considering the



request and have asked the county to identify other funding sources for the rest of the project. Staff will report back next month on this issue.

Mr. Owen stated that for the first time, NVTC looked at the projected reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and fuel savings. In total, the six recommended projects are projected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 84% and save over \$2 million in annual fuel costs for commuters relative to drive-alone travel. NVTC developed vehicle miles traveled (VMT) savings estimates for representative commute trips that would use these projects and then applied factors from the California Life-Cycle Benefit/Cost Analysis Model (Cal-B/C), a nationally recognized tool for measuring emission reduction and fuel savings with transit projects.

Mr. Owen stated that additional program benefits include 16 million fewer vehicle miles and 83,000 hours of delay saved each year (travel times are starting to go back up in the corridor). NVTC also estimates the six projects will account for over 4,000 daily trips in the I-66 corridor.

Mr. Owen stated that NVTC conducted a comprehensive public comment process which opened April 15 and will close May 16. For the first time, NVTC produced both English and Spanish versions of all published materials as well as a streamlined feedback survey. As with the last couple of funding rounds, the public comment process was (almost) fully online – including a virtual town hall in late April with info on the program and projects, and an opportunity for the public to get answers to questions about the projects. NVTC staff are reviewing the public input received and will share it with the Commission next month, prior to seeking adoption of a Program of Projects and referral to CTB for inclusion in the FY 2023-2028 Six Year Improvement Program. Then NVTC will distribute project agreements. Implementation of funded projects may begin with the start of the new fiscal year on July 1. He thanked those Commissioners who helped to get the word out about the public comment period to their constituents.

Ms. Palchik expressed her support of the trail access to the Vienna Metrorail Station project and thanked staff for working with county staff on this. This project is critical, and Fairfax County is ready to commit to the remaining funding needed. She also commended staff on the bi-lingual aspect of the public comment process. Mr. McKay echoed those comments. He stated that he understands that staff has conservatively estimated the revenue. Since the \$13.4 million is a conservative estimate, NVTC should earmark every penny of that. If it turns out Fairfax County needs to supplement that project by \$1.2 million, the county will commit to do so, but every penny of the revenue received should be used. He is concerned that if NVTC waits for the next cycle, this project will be more expensive and will not be ready for people to use. Mr. Meyer stated that this trail is a classic example of regional investment where everybody benefits, so he supports this approach.

#### Report from the Chair of the Legislative and Policy Committee

Chair Aguirre asked Legislative and Policy Committee Chair David Meyer to give a legislative update.

General Assembly Update. Legislative and Policy Chair Meyer stated that the regular General Assembly Session ended on March 12 and when they adjourned there was not an

approved budget and there were several bills still in conference committee. The General Assembly reconvened on April 4 for a Special Session. He stated that NVTC was closely watching SB 6001, Governor Youngkin's proposal to suspend the state gas tax for three months, phase it back in by 50% for two months and cap the consumer price index (CPI) index at 2% moving forward. Last week, the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee voted to "pass by indefinitely," which effectively stops the legislation from progressing. On behalf of the entire Commission, he thanked Ms. Perron Siebert for all her hard work and coalition-building she did on this issue. He asked her to provide an update.

Ms. Perron Siebert extended her appreciation for the large coalition of agencies, including NVTC, who worked on this gas tax issue. She explained that technically the legislation is still alive on the House side. As far as the Veto Session, Senator Ebbin's SB 281 dealing with bus procurement, had a minor amendment and did pass and has been signed into law. Senator Ebbin thanked Ms. Perron Siebert for her help to get this legislation passed. Ms. Perron Siebert reported that NVTC was also monitoring SB 342 and HB 142 (Transit Ridership Incentive Program) which had a sunset amendment added that the bills don't go into effect until 2024.

Mr. Snyder thanked all the legislators and representatives in Richmond for all their hard work during the Session.

Transit Service Delivery Advisory Committee (TSDAC) Update. Ms. Mattice reported that the Transit Service Delivery Advisory Committee (TSDAC) has been meeting monthly over the past few months. She serves as a member of TSDAC representing the Virginia Transit Association (VTA). TSDAC began their triennial revaluation of the Commonwealth's state and operating funding allocation approach. Throughout the year, TSDAC will be convening monthly to review the MERIT Capital and Operating grant programs and the Transit Strategic Plans. This is a full year process and currently no official recommendations have been made by the committee to DRPT. All TSDAC findings and recommendations will be brought to the Commonwealth Transportation Board for approval. Prior to CTB approval, recommendations will be presented to relevant House and Senate committees.

Ms. Mattice noted that NVTC will receive another TSDAC update at the June meeting and the Commission will have an opportunity to discuss whether the Commission may wish to submit comments. She made it clear that this work does not affect WMATA funding.

Federal Update. Ms. Mattice reported that in mid-April, both Representatives Don Beyer and Gerry Connolly reached out to NVTC which resulted in NVTC providing information to their offices to support a FY 2023 Community Project Funding effort for a \$2 million grant to complete planning and environmental analysis for Envision Route 7 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). If funded, this study would bring the project one step closer to entering the Project Development phase of FTA's Capital Investment Grants program as well as make it eligible for SMART SCALE funding, Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) funding and Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) discretionary grant consideration. She observed that there is still a long road ahead for this earmark effort, but NVTC is happy to have the support of both Representatives Beyer and Connolly.

## Virginia Railway Express (VRE)

Chair Aguirre announced that VRE CEO Rich Dalton was unable to attend tonight's meeting, but VRE Chief of Staff Joe Swartz is present to give a brief VRE update.

VRE Ridership Recovery Update. Mr. Swartz reported that the COVID-19 pandemic took a huge toll on VRE ridership, which plummeted from over 355,000 monthly riders in February 2020 to 10,000 riders in April 2020. Since last fall, VRE has seen a slow but steady increase in ridership. VRE is now seeing between a 10-40% increase each week. Today, VRE just missed reaching 6,000 daily riders. VRE is now at 30% of its pre-pandemic totals. Prior to the pandemic, VRE did not need to do much marketing since trains were full. Now, VRE is ramping up its marketing efforts to attract riders. He reviewed some of these initiatives and their early results. VRE is handing out QR codes for one free ride so people can try the service. VRE will be providing marketing materials to elected officials for them to share with their constituents. With the upcoming Metrorail shutdown of the Yellow Line, VRE is exploring possible changes that would make VRE even more attractive to these Metro riders.

Mr. Walkinshaw announced that Sarah Bagley has agreed to serve as the VRE Operations Board Secretary.

VRE Deed of Ground Lease for Manassas Park VRE Station. Mr. Walkinshaw stated that on the recommendation of the VRE Operations Board, the Commission is being asked to approve Resolution #2476, which will authorize the VRE CEO to execute a Deed of Ground Lease and Parking Garage Agreement with the Economic Development Authority of the City of Manassas Park and the City of Manassas Park for a parking garage at the VRE Manassas Park Station. He explained that VRE and City of Manassas Park staff have worked collaboratively to negotiate the terms of a Ground Lease and Parking Garage Agreement. The city has conveyed the site for the parking garage to its Economic Development Authority (EDA) in order to allow for the long term of the Ground Lease. The City of Manassas Park and the EDA are therefore parties to the Ground Lease. The proposed Ground Lease addresses terms of operations and maintenance as well as the city's request to have the ability to reacquire the parking garage site in the event VRE service at the Manassas Park Station is discontinued.

Ms. Bagley reported that she is excited that VRE will now allow bikes on all trains at all times, which encourages multi-modal thinking.

Mr. Skiles moved, with a second by Mr. Walkinshaw, to approve Resolution #2476 (copy attached). The vote in favor was cast by Commissioners Aguirre, Bagley, Clemente, de Ferranti, Gilroy, Letourneau, Meyer, Palchik, Skiles, Smedberg, Snyder, Tuck, Turner and Walkinshaw. A roll call vote followed for Mr. Alcorn, Ms. Cristol and Mr. Ebbin, who all are participating electronically and they cast affirmative votes. The motion passed.

## Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)

Acting DRPT Director DeBruhl stated that DRPT is currently on a statewide tour of public meetings for the FY 2023 -2028 Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP). Last night the joint hearing with

VDOT, NVTC, VRE and the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) was held in Northern Virginia. Once the public meetings are done, the SYIP will be finalized to be presented to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) in June. The FY 2023 program allocates \$1.1 billion statewide for transit and rail, with the majority going to public transportation. \$473 million is dedicated to WMATA. \$269 million will come to NVTC for operating and capital needs.

Acting DRPT Director DeBruhl stated that in April the CTB approved the FY 2023 budget for the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPRR). She concluded that she has big shoes to fill following Jennifer Mitchell, but she is grateful for the opportunity to lead DRPT.

### Executive Director Report

Ms. Mattice encouraged Commissioners to read her Executive Director Newsletter. She reported that last night, several NVTC staff joined VDOT, NVTA, DPRT and VRE at the first in-person annual public meeting since the pandemic. Staff had the opportunity to share with the public the projects being considered for the latest round of I-66 project funding. Ms. Mattice also highlighted some of staff's speaking opportunities and events NVTC participated in March and April, including the APTA Mobility Conference, the U.S. Fleet Electrification Conference, the Urban Land Institute, and the Council of Governments' employer outreach training.

Ms. Mattice also reported that NVTC's new marketing campaign will launch the week of May 30. It will include ads on radio and streaming audio, streaming video, online and on social media. NVTC will also conduct several rounds of email marketing. And for the first time ever, a significant portion of the campaign will be presented in Spanish. NVTC also recently learned that funding will be available from DRPT for another round of transit marketing once the Yellow Line Bridge/Tunnel reconstruction work wraps up next spring. Staff will look to apply for funding and staff hopes the regional partners will once again join NVTC for that effort. Staff will come back to the Commission to authorize applying for a grant likely later this year.

DRPT FY 2023 Draft Six-Year Improvement Plan (SYIP) – NVTC Funding. Ms. Mattice stated that DRPT presented the Draft FY2023 Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP) at the April 19 Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) workshop, including the state aid that can be anticipated to be received by NVTC jurisdictions for their payments to WMATA as well as for capital and operating their local transit systems. The final SYIP is scheduled to be approved in June.

Ms. Mattice stated that the draft SYIP includes \$43.8 million in operating assistance applied for by NVTC for its local systems, an increase of 5.1% over the prior year, and \$272.8 million in assistance for the jurisdictions' share of WMATA capital and operating commitments, a 2.9% increase. The draft program funds all of the NVTC local capital requests for state of good repair and minor expansion. No jurisdictions in NVTC's district applied for major expansion projects this fiscal year.

Ms. Mattice reported that DRPT is recommending funding NVTC's Regional Zero-Emission Bus Strategic Plan and the Regional Bus Transit Analysis. It is also anticipated that funding will continue for NVTC's successful fellows program. The draft SYIP also includes the

Commonwealth's \$50 million annual commitment to match one third of the federal PRIIA funding for WMATA. This assistance is not applied for through NVTC and is contracted directly by DRPT with WMATA.

Financial Reports. Ms. Mattice noted that the February and March Financial Reports were provided in the written meeting materials. Commissioners had no questions.

### Adjournment

Without objection, Chair Aguirre adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Approved this 2<sup>nd</sup> day of June 2022.

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Canek Aguirre  
Chair

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Matt de Ferranti  
Secretary-Treasurer



## RESOLUTION OF COMMENDATION

**SUBJECT:** Commending Jennifer Mitchell on Her Departure from NVTC

**WHEREAS:** The Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC) serves as the voice of public transit in Northern Virginia, promoting the region's transit network through effective and efficient public transit and ridesharing programs to foster economic vitality in the region and the Commonwealth;

**WHEREAS:** In January 2014, Jennifer Mitchell was appointed by then Governor Terry McAuliffe to be the director of the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT);

**WHEREAS:** The Department of Rail and Public Transportation oversees and supports the funding, planning and implementation of public transportation and rail services throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia;

**WHEREAS:** Ms. Mitchell joined NVTC as an Alternate Commissioner in February 2014 and has supported and partnered with NVTC on several major efforts to improve transit in Northern Virginia;

**WHEREAS:** Ms. Mitchell was instrumental in creating two multi-decade agreements (I-66 Inside the Beltway and I-395/95) to create and fund the Commuter Choice Program, an innovative, first of its kind program to invest toll revenue in multi-modal projects along two major interstate corridors in Northern Virginia;

**WHEREAS:** Ms. Mitchell was a steadfast and valued proponent of dedicated funding for WMATA and VRE, resulting in long-term financial investments in Northern Virginia's two rail systems and enabling them to provide safe and reliable service that supports Northern Virginia's growing economy; and

**WHEREAS:** Ms. Mitchell has overseen the creation and operational startup of the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority, a vital Commonwealth agency that supports the growth of intercity passenger rail and is a vital partner to the ongoing and future growth and success of VRE.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission hereby commends Jennifer Mitchell for her service to the citizens of Northern Virginia and to the Commonwealth of Virginia.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NVTC congratulates Ms. Mitchell on her appointment as deputy administrator of the Federal Railroad Administration and looks forward to continuing to work with her in her new role.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NVTC prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Ms. Mitchell as an expression of its gratitude and in appreciation for her leadership and work on the Commission in promoting and funding public transit and ridesharing in Northern Virginia.

Approved this 5<sup>th</sup> day of May 2022.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Canek Aguirre", is written over a horizontal line.

Canek Aguirre  
Chair



## RESOLUTION #2474

**SUBJECT:** Authorize the Executive Director Execute a Contract for NVTC Financial Auditing Services

**WHEREAS:** On December 2, 2021, the Commission authorized the executive director to issue a Request for Proposals for financial auditing services for NVTC jointly with VRE and PRTC for a base period of three years, with options for two additional two-year periods;

**WHEREAS:** On February 10, 2022, NVTC issued a Request for Proposals for financial auditing services on behalf of both Commissions and VRE;

**WHEREAS:** Six proposals were received and ranked by the selection committee in accordance with the guidelines specified in the RFP, with interviews conducted with the top four firms;

**WHEREAS:** The selection committee recommends that the contract be awarded to PBMares, LLP, the highest ranked proposing firm; and

**WHEREAS:** The NVTC Executive Committee, acting as the Audit Committee, recommends approval of this contract award.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission hereby authorizes the executive director to execute a contract with PBMares, LLP for NVTC financial auditing services for a base period of three years for \$74,550 with options for two additional two-year periods to be exercised at the executive director's discretion, for a total potential contract value of \$181,200.

Approved this 5<sup>th</sup> day of May 2022.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Matt de Ferranti".

Matt de Ferranti  
Secretary-Treasurer

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Canek Aguirre".

Canek Aguirre  
Chair





## RESOLUTION #2475

- SUBJECT:** Approve NVTC's Title VI Program and Authorize the Executive Director or Her Designee to Submit the Program to the Federal Transit Administration
- WHEREAS:** The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requires grant recipients to submit a Title VI Program every three years;
- WHEREAS:** Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act requires that "No persons in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance;"
- WHEREAS:** NVTC staff has reviewed these requirements and has prepared a Title VI Program in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964;
- WHEREAS:** NVTC must collect its subrecipient's Title VI Programs and review the programs for compliance;
- WHEREAS:** NVTC staff has reviewed the Title VI Programs of its subrecipients, the City of Falls Church and the City of Alexandria, and ensured their compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964;
- WHEREAS:** NVTC will maintain a copy of its subrecipient's Title VI Program on file, internally, to document compliance with this subrecipient monitoring requirement.
- NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission hereby approves the Title VI Program (covering the period August 2022 – July 2025) and authorizes the executive director or her designee to submit it to the Federal Transit Administration.

Approved this 5<sup>th</sup> day of May 2022.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Matt de Ferranti".

Matt de Ferranti  
Secretary-Treasurer

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Canek Aguirre".

Canek Aguirre  
Chair



**RESOLUTION #2476**

**SUBJECT:** Authorize the VRE CEO to Execute a Deed of Ground Lease and Parking Garage Agreement at the VRE Manassas Park Station

**WHEREAS:** Pre-pandemic parking demand at the Manassas Park VRE Station exceeded available spaces;

**WHEREAS:** Pre-pandemic VRE ridership forecasts estimated ridership/boardings would continue to grow in the future at the Manassas Park VRE Station;

**WHEREAS:** The City of Manassas Park and VRE began work on a joint project for the design and construction of a parking garage on City-owned property located across the Norfolk Southern railroad tracks near City Hall;

**WHEREAS:** The City of Manassas Park has agreed to create and ground lease to VRE, through the City's Economic Development Authority, a parcel of land approximately 2.5 acres in size from the formerly city-owned property, now owned by the Economic Development Authority, located across the railroad tracks from the Manassas Park Station;

**WHEREAS:** VRE and city staff have successfully negotiated terms of the Deed of Ground Lease and Parking Garage Agreement;

**WHEREAS:** The terms are consistent with previous board actions and agreeable to VRE; and

**WHEREAS:** The VRE Operations Board recommends the following action.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission hereby authorizes the VRE Chief Executive Officer to execute the Deed of Ground Lease and Parking Garage Agreement with the Economic Development Authority of the City of Manassas Park and the City of Manassas Park.

Approved this 5<sup>th</sup> day of May 2022.



Matt de Ferranti  
Secretary-Treasurer



Canek Aguirre  
Chair