



NVTC LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, May 17, 2023

Via Electronic Participation

Public Streaming Via [YouTube](#)

6:00 p.m.

*This meeting is an **all-virtual public meeting** as permitted under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and NVTC's Electronic Participation Policy. The meeting may be viewed via the [NVTC YouTube Link](#).*

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AGENDA

1. Meeting Summary of the September 29, 2022 Legislative and Policy Committee Meeting
2. General Assembly Update – NVTC Legislative Liaison Aimee Perron Seibert
3. NVTC Staff Presentations
 - A. Value of Transit Study Results
 - B. Overview of NVTC's Metro Operating Funding and Reform Working Group
4. Future Strategies for the 2024 Legislative Session
5. Other Items

Members:

Canek Aguirre, Chair
Adam Ebbin
Libby Garvey
Matt Letourneau
Catherine Read
Dave Snyder
James Walkinshaw

MEETING SUMMARY
NVTC LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY COMMITTEE
2300 Wilson Blvd., Suite 230 and via Electronic Participation
Public Streaming via YouTube
September 29, 2022

NVTC Legislative and Policy Committee Members Present:

David Meyer, Chair
Canek Aguirre
Adam Ebbin
Libby Garvey
David Snyder
James Walkinshaw

NVTC Legislative and Policy Committee Members Absent:

Matt Letourneau

NVTC Staff and Others Present:

Kate Mattice, Executive Director
Genoveva Cutrell
Allan Fye
Rhonda Gilchrest
Tenley O'Hara
Melissa Walker
Carter McCoy (Cardinal Infrastructure)
Aimee Perron Seibert (Commonwealth Strategy Group)
Alex Thorup (Commonwealth Strategy Group)

Legislative and Policy Committee Chair David Meyer called the meeting to order at 4:36 p.m. He stated that this meeting is being conducted electronically as permitted under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and NVTC's Electronic Participation Policy. This meeting is also simultaneously being broadcast to the public and can be viewed on NVTC's YouTube link.

Chair Meyer asked for any changes to the May 25, 2022 Legislative and Policy Committee Meeting Summary. Senator Ebbin noted that at the previous meeting he had asked what percentage of Metro's operating expenses came from fare revenue, and that Mr. Letourneau had later updated the committee that the Fiscal Year 2023 (FY 2023) revenue made up 13% of Metro's adopted budget. Senator Ebbin wanted to clarify if that meant FY 2023 farebox revenue. Ms. Mattice replied that staff would find the answer and send it to the committee as soon as possible. (See page 3 for answer.) Committee members then accepted the previous meeting summary with no changes.

Federal Update from Cardinal Infrastructure

Carter McCoy, standing in for Anja Graves from Cardinal Infrastructure, provided the committee with federal updates including information about the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). He stated that the Department of Transportation (DOT) has experienced a record amount of grant applications and that staffing to manage and oversee the programs is currently a main priority. Mr. McCoy also noted that Federal Transit Administration (FTA) received a 58% increase in funding from FY 2021 levels, and that similar numbers are expected next year if Democrats hold both chambers, but they may drop if Republicans take one or both chambers. Chair Meyer asked whether the U.S. Department of Transportation will be able to meet these staffing requirements and Mr. McCoy assured that they will most likely be able to reach their goals and have been able to keep up with the increased workload despite staffing shortages.

2023 State Legislative Priorities

Aimee Perron Seibert, NVTC's state legislative liaison, provided an update on proposed 2023 state legislative priorities. These priorities are currently drafted as continuing to protect existing transit funding, restoring lost transit funding from the state grocery tax, supporting VRE's priority to remove their operating funding from a bus-based state formula model and supporting funding and reducing barriers for implementing transit technologies such as zero-emission vehicles. Ms. Perron Seibert asked Senator Ebbin if he had anything to contribute and he mentioned that a letter about restoring the funds lost by the grocery tax might be something to consider.

Mr. Walkinshaw mentioned that VRE funding is a critical issue for VRE in the next five to 10 years and it's important to recognize that ridership recovery is slower on commuter rail than it is for bus systems. Keeping VRE in the same funding model for bus systems would therefore lead to a big reduction in funding to VRE. Mr. Snyder asked where VRE's ridership is now compared to 2019. Mr. Walkinshaw replied that pre-pandemic they were at 18,000-19,000 riders per day, and this past month they were at 8,000 riders on their peak days. Mr. Snyder then asked what the Virginia Administration's thoughts are on transportation expenditure. Ms. Perron Seibert replied that it has been relatively quiet on that front so far, other than the discussions on the gas tax and extra federal funds during special sessions over the summer. The committee then discussed the messaging on transit funding with the changing of commuter patterns and how to make sure NVTC adapts its messaging in this new environment.

2023 Federal Legislative Priorities

Ms. Mattice then gave an update on NVTC's federal legislative priorities. These include maximizing the region's access to opportunities in the new infrastructure bill, including awarding of USDOT and FTA discretionary funding pots, securing project funding to complete planning and NEPA for the Route 7 BRT and encouraging federal return to work policies that can maximize the local transit network and leverage transit benefits. Discussion focused on disbursement of federal funds and messaging to improve odds of transit funding.

Ms. Mattice noted that with this feedback, staff can prepare the legislative agenda and present it to the Commission at the November meeting. In addition, an answer was found to Senator Ebbin's earlier question regarding the WMATA budget. Farebox revenue was budgeted to make up 13.4% of the WMATA FY 2023 operating budget. Ms. Mattice also updated the committee about NVTC and PRTC's 2022 Legislative Forum, which will be held in Springfield on Monday, December 5.

Chair Meyer asked if Commissioners had any questions or comments before adjournment. There were none. He adjourned the meeting at 5:30 p.m.