



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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APPROVED MINUTES **CTB Rail and Transit Subcommittee Meeting**

VDOT Central Office – HR Training Room
1221 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219
Tuesday, April 19, 2022, 9:00 am

The CTB Rail and Transit Subcommittee held a meeting on April 19, 2022. The location was VDOT HR Training Room, located at 1221 East Broad Street, Richmond, Virginia, 23219.

CTB MEMBERS PRESENT

Jennifer DeBruhl (Chair), Stephen Johnsen, Mary Hynes, Frederick Stant, III, Thomas Fowlkes, Mark Merrill, Wayne Coleman, and Dr. Raymond Smoot.

STAFF

Tanyea Darrisaw (VDRPT), Sheila Beard (VDRPT), Jennifer Mayton (VDRPT), Emily Stock (VDRPT), Haley Glynn (VDRPT), Michael Todd (VDRPT), Katy Miller (VDRPT), Mary Olivia Rentner (VDRPT), DJ Stadtler (VPRA), Miriam Foster (VDRPT), Linda Balderson (VDRPT), Donita Harper (VDRPT), Tiffany Dubinski (VDRPT), Michael McLaughlin (VPRA), Dan Sonenklar (VDRPT) and Grant Sparks (VDRPT).

CALL TO ORDER

Chair DeBruhl called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

APPROVAL OF THE March 15, 2022 MINUTES

The March 15, 2022, CTB Rail and Transit Subcommittee meeting minutes were approved.

DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Presented by Chair Jennifer DeBruhl

Chair DeBruhl informed everyone that the agency would be presenting the FY'23 budget along with the Six-Year Improvement Plan. She also notified the Subcommittee the Six-Year Improvement Plan will be rolled out in stages on the open data portal which will be much more interactive. The data portal can be accessed at data.drpt.virginia.gov.

Another item mentioned to the committee was the tracking of performance. The trends are looking good with ridership increasing slowly. Richmond GRTC ridership has reached a pre-pandemic level. DASH is also doing well. They were able to complete an entire system redesign during COVID.

Transit Electrification Update

Presented by Grant Sparks, Acting Chief of Public Transportation

Grant provided a breakdown to the Subcommittee pertaining to the statewide transit fleet vehicle types, which includes 2,168 transit buses. More than half of those buses run on diesel fuel, a third run on gasoline, and the remainder run on compressed natural gas (CNG), propane, or battery power. While battery-electric buses (or BEBs) don't currently make up a large share of the statewide fleet, DRPT is anticipating that they will sometime in the near future. Currently, there are 26 BEBs in operations in Virginia and another 31 have either been ordered or are waiting to be ordered. He discussed the pros and cons of acquiring BEBs. While the total cost of ownership for a BEB is expected to be less than a diesel bus, there are much higher upfront capital costs with BEBs, and there are also concerns with battery range and capacity. To convert the entire statewide transit fleet DRPT has estimated an \$800M incremental capital cost increase for the buses and another \$300M to design and upgrade utility infrastructure to charge the buses.

At the conclusion of the presentation, he discussed funding opportunities for battery-electric buses and mentioned that DRPT plans to conduct a statewide electrification study to further investigate the impact of BEBs on DRPT's funding programs.

STATEWIDE RAIL PLAN UPDATE

Presented by Emily Stock, DRPT

Emily Stock presented an overview of the Rail Plan format, which is developed using the web-based application ArcGIS StoryMaps. The plan will include narrative content complemented by interactive maps that provide the opportunity to explore the data at multiple scales (statewide, regional, local) that allow the user to navigate through the plan to find the data/information they seek more effectively. It provides the ability to review 'big data' as it relates to rail – economics, commodities, infrastructure, and projects, available from high-level to granular review at the click of a button.

Subcommittee members asked how this format actually presents the plan. Response: The plan aggregates proposed investments planned for the passenger and freight rail from a variety of sources (Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP), Transforming Rail in Virginia Projects, Short-Line Freight Projects (Rail Lines), Long Range Investment Program), which will all be mapped with detailed descriptions, cost estimates, etc. Emily Stock showed slides that demonstrate how passenger projects will lead to phased service enhancements implemented by VPRA. The benefits of those projects are being evaluated and that analysis will be included in the plan. The phased project plans and the supporting data will feed into applications for federal funding through the IJJA/BIL. Specifically, this data can be used to develop corridor recommendations for the FRA's Corridor Identification and Development process. Dr. Smoot questioned if there is a Freight Plan. Response: OIPI prepared the VTrans Freight Element, which serves as the Commonwealth's official multimodal Freight Plan. We will also be including information in the Rail Plan about DRPT's freight programs, associated project plans, and related policies.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public listed for comment

ADJOURNMENT

Chair DeBruhl adjourned the meeting at 10:10 a.m. All presentations to the Board and meeting video can be found at www.drpt.virginia.gov/rail/ctb-rail-transit-subcommittee/

Respectfully Submitted: Sheila Beard, Executive Assistant