

CTB Rail and Transit Subcommittee Meeting Minutes  
VDOT Central District Auditorium  
1221 East Broad Street, Richmond, VA  
8:30 am  
April 9, 2019

The Meeting began at 8:40 am

CTB Rail Subcommittee Members Present: DRPT Director Jennifer Mitchell, Ray Smoot, Mary Hynes, Stephen Johnsen and John Malbon.

1. Approval of March 20th Minutes-Stephen Johnsen moved to approve the minutes, Mary Hynes seconded, and the minutes were unanimously approved.
2. Director's Report-Director Mitchell gave her Director's report. She said that content for the day's meeting would be building up to the release of the draft SYIP. She said there would be a briefing on Long Bridge during the workshop. She noted that the DC2RVA final environmental impact statement was close to being approved by the FRA and that the approval is key to getting the FASTLANE grant funding obligated. Director Mitchell shared that Interstate 81 Legislation had been passed and that some money would be set aside for multimodal improvements. She said that the Secretary and the Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment would be making a presentation on the legislation during the full CTB meeting. Director Mitchell also shared that Amtrak ridership was up by 5% in March and 2.6 % for the year to date. She also said that there was a 7.2% increase year to date for ridership on the Roanoke train.
3. Update on MERIT-Jennifer DeBruhl

Jennifer DeBruhl shared that she had talked to the subcommittee a lot about DRPT's capital program and wanted to talk to them about some of the agency's special programs. She reviewed the other transit programs including Senior/Human Service Transportation, Demonstration/Technical Assistance and Travel Demand Management. The following comments were noted.

- a. Stephen Johnsen asked if the 67 accessible vehicles awarded through the FTA 5310 program for Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with disabilities were replacement or expansion vehicles. Jennifer DeBruhl said that they were both.
- b. Ray Smoot asked how these applications were reviewed. Jennifer DeBruhl said age and mileage of vehicles was looked at, as well as the service impact of the assets.

- c. Mary Hynes asked if funds can be used to make bus stops accessible. Jennifer DeBruhl said that projects for retrofitting so that bus stops comply is eligible for transit capital.
  - d. Mary Hynes asked a question about the pilot for the Albermarle County demonstration grant for the Crozet Connex. The graph showed that UVA riders pay nothing for the Crozet Connex. Jennifer DeBruhl clarified that the UVA rider pays nothing out of pocket, that UVA provides transit benefits for their employees. She said that the graph shows the benefits to using the service for different types of riders. Ray Smoot asked how often this service operates and Jennifer DeBruhl said that it would operate every 30 minutes.
  - e. John Malbon asked if there was a private sector partner for the Fairfax County-CAV Shuttle Pilot being funded through the demonstration and technical assistance program. Jennifer DeBruhl said that the partner was Dominion Energy. The county would operate the service. John Malbon asked for raw numbers on cost. Jennifer DeBruhl said that she would have to get back to him with those numbers.
  - f. Mary Hynes suggested bringing people who have innovative transit ideas to the CTB or other regional meetings to celebrate them. Jennifer DeBruhl said that they are working on metrics to quantify innovation.
4. Update on Rail Applications-Michael McLaughlin

Michael McLaughlin opened up the presentation. Jeremy Latimer joined in to discuss the selection criteria. Michael McLaughlin said that the administration's priority is Long Bridge. The following discussion points were noted.

- a. Ray Smoot asked what the Charlottesville Planning study that was highlighted as a goal of the state rail plan. Jeremy Latimer said that it is a needs assessment of the Amtrak station in Charlottesville.
- b. John Malbon asked about the movement of funds from the Rail Preservation Fund to the Rail Enhancement fund. Director Mitchell said that Rail Enhancement fund is a very overprescribed program and that the agency needs a more data driven prioritization process.
- c. The Bedford station that was not recommended for IPROC funding was discussed. DRPT staff that that the two studies that looked at adding a station in Bedford found that it would only net about 40 new riders a day and would be taking away from riders in Lynchburg and Roanoke.
- d. John Malbon asked about the progress of the CSX multimodal facility in North Carolina. Michael McLaughlin said that it could help with traffic out of the port. John Malbon was interested in seeing if this could support additional passenger trains. He said that the Commonwealth is looking into acquiring the S line along 85 for dedicated passenger rail that could help with higher speed rail from

Richmond to Raleigh. Michael McLaughlin said that DRPT is meeting with NCDOT to see the location and will come back to the subcommittee with more information on the facility and how it could help Virginia. Director Mitchell said that in 2022 there will be a third train to Norfolk.

5. Dr. David Phelps from the Bedford/Franklin Regional Rail Initiative signed up for public comment. He said that he was part of a group comprised of business members, concerned citizens and the chamber of commerce. He said the group was disappointed and puzzled that their application was not approved. Dr. Phelps said that the group understood the importance of Long Bridge but needed a place in line. He said that the group had prepared their application so that it met the criteria of the station policy and found a major discrepancy between their self-evaluation and what was reported by DRPT. He asked that the group be debriefed with DRPT so they can understand what happened and possibly be reconsidered. Ray Smoot, the Salem area CTB member, said that the issue seemed to be with the potential ridership. He said that there is a cost associated with any stop and that it seems the group from Bedford put a lot of hard work into the application and that it may come down to constrained resources. DRPT assured the team from Bedford that a follow up meeting would be scheduled.
6. The meeting adjourned at 9:35 am.