

CTB Rail and Transit Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
VDOT Central Office Training Room
1221 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219
February 19, 2019

The Meeting began at 8:30 am

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

1. Approval of January 15th Minutes-A motion to approve the January 15th minutes was made by Mary Hynes, seconded by Stephen Johnsen and unanimously approved.
2. Director's Report- DRPT Director Jennifer Mitchell gave the Director's report. She noted that on March 4th service will begin for the 2nd Norfolk train and that an event for the inaugural run will be held in Norfolk that day. Director Mitchell let the group know that the Department of Rail and Public Transportation had opened its new Northern Virginia office in Alexandria. She said that an open house would be held on March 13th. She said that the office is a one seat ride from Richmond.

Director Mitchell told the subcommittee that a vote by the CTB on the new Statewide Transit Operating Formula had been postponed until March. She said that there is pending legislation and changes to the budget that could affect the formula and that the CTB did not want to get ahead of the General Assembly. She said that the agency had set aside 3 million dollars of the operating reserves to provide transition assistance to transit agencies negatively affected in FY 2020 by the new formula. Language in the House version of the budget mirrors this. Director Mitchell also noted that the Senate Bill would delay implementation of the formula by a year, which DRPT opposes.

Director Mitchell said that there was pending legislation initiated by the Port proposing a change to the Rail Enhancement Fund that would allow Federal funds to be used to meet the 30% match requirement for freight rail projects. Mary Hynes pointed out that that legislative change would be helpful with Long Bridge.

Director Mitchell reviewed the agenda for the subcommittee meeting and said that the focus of the meeting's agenda would be to set the stage for approval of the SYIP. She said that applications closed on February 1st.

3. Updates on Transit Capital Applications-Jennifer DeBruhl

Jennifer DeBruhl gave a high level overview of the transit capital applications received by the agency. The following discussion points were noted.

- a. John Malbon asked for the definition of Human Service Transportation. Jennifer DeBruhl said that it was transportation for seniors, veterans, and individuals with disabilities.
- b. Ray Smoot asked for the scope of Transit. Jennifer DeBruhl said that it includes all providers in the state with the exception of Metro and intercity bus. She said that Virginia Railway Express (VRE) is considered commuter rail and is therefore governed by the Federal Transit Association.
- c. Stephen Johnsen asked how innovation was factored into the transit capital applications. Jennifer DeBruhl said that DRPT has a Demo Program that is focused on innovation. The Demo program is used for technology projects, as well as, providing new service in underserved areas.
- d. Jennifer Mitchell pointed out that the agency has been given direction by the CTB to clear out the backlog of old grants and has put emphasis on that in the application process.
- e. Jennifer Mitchell said that a mix of funding would be used for transit capital projects associated with the new Amazon headquarters in Crystal City. Mary Hynes mentioned that the 4 projects associated with the expansion have been in development a long time. They have been planned by the localities, and the localities are the ones who have applied for funding, not WMATA.
- f. Jennifer DeBruhl said that DRPT had been allocated 15 million of funding from the VW emissions settlement to replace aging bus fleets with clean fuel engines and had received 3 applications for this funding.
- g. John Malbon asked how much transit capital funding was available, and what the difference was between what had been applied for and what was actually available. Jen DeBruhl said that she did not know but would find out and report back in an update next month.

4. Presentation of Rail Programs and Applications (FY20-25)-Michael McLaughlin and Jeremy Latimer

Michael and Jennifer gave a high level overview of DRPT's rail programs and the applications that have been received. The following discussion points were noted.

- a. Ray Smoot asked about the Rail Preservation Fund and what its funds were used for. Jeremy Latimer said that grants from that fund had been instrumental in saving railroads, such as Bay Coast Railroad on the Eastern Shore.
- b. Ray Smoot asked for an example of a Capital Improvement that the IPROC fund would be used for. Jeremy Latimer said an example of that would be a capacity improvement to the network. Ray Smoot also asked how much the state has to

pay for Amtrak equipment. Jeremy Latimer said that he was not sure but would follow up with the answer.

- c. Ray Smoot asked if the 2nd Norfolk Train was an extension of the Richmond to Washington line. Jeremy Latimer said that it was.
 - d. Stephen Johnsen asked if Long Bridge would be a Design Build Grant. Director Jennifer Mitchell said that was still to be determined.
 - e. Mary Hynes asked who was leading the bigger rail capital projects. Director Jennifer Mitchell said that the agency should know by the end of the year who would be leading Long Bridge and Atlantic Gateway.
 - f. Ray Smoot asked when rail applications were due. Jeremy Latimer said that they are due on February 1st.
 - g. On Slide 18 of the presentation Jennifer told the subcommittee to disregard the totals column which erroneously reported an inaccurate total of unobligated funding. She also said that the unobligated money will be gone because the Long Bridge and Atlantic Gateway projects will require a significant amount of funding.
 - h. Jennifer Mitchell said that the Rail team will bring back updates on the applications in March and April.
5. Amtrak Survey Results-
- Chris Smith from DRPT and Jane Broadbent from Siddall communications reviewed results of the Amtrak Survey with the subcommittee. The following discussion points were noted.
- a. Jane Broadbent mentioned that the Virginians for High Speed Rail group had participated in the survey. Mary Hynes asked who they were. Jane Broadbent said they were mostly business travelers. Ray Smoot asked if they were primarily Richmond to Washington riders. Jane said that they are a statewide group but are based in Richmond.
 - b. Jennifer Mitchell said that the marketing efforts will focus on both the leisure and business travelers.
 - c. Stephen Johnsen asked how many people who participated in the survey knew who the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation were. Jane Broadbent said she will look at those numbers and then follow up.
 - d. Ray Smoot asked about interstate vs. intrastate passenger ridership and asked what the most popular destination is for Virginia riders. Chris and Jane said they would pull that data.
6. No one was signed up for Public Comment.