

**RICHMOND REGIONAL  
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

**MINUTES OF MEETING  
February 7, 2019**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Patricia S. O’Bannon, **Chairman** ..... Henrico County  
John Hodges, **Vice Chairman** ..... Town of Ashland  
Andreas D. Addison ..... City of Richmond  
Parker C. Agelasto ..... City of Richmond  
Manuel Alvarez, Jr. .... Goochland County  
Joi Taylor Dean ..... RMTA  
Jennifer B. DeBruhl ..... DRPT  
Kimberly B. Gray ..... City of Richmond  
James M. Holland ..... Chesterfield County  
Angela Kelly-Wiecek ..... Hanover County  
John Lumpkins, Jr. .... Goochland County  
Cynthia I. Newbille ..... City of Richmond  
Patricia A. Paige ..... New Kent County  
W. Canova Peterson, IV ..... Hanover County  
Mark Riblett (Alternate) ..... Secretary of Transportation Designee  
Herbert A. Richwine (Alternate) (Nonvoting) ..... CTAC  
Frank J. Thornton ..... Henrico County  
Barton A. Thrasher ..... Secretary of Transportation Designee  
Von S. Tisdale (Nonvoting) ..... RideFinders  
David T. Williams ..... Powhatan County  
Garland W. Williams (Alternate) ..... GRTC Transit System  
Christopher Winslow ..... Chesterfield County

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Cliff Burnette (Nonvoting) ..... VDA  
Charles H. Carter (Nonvoting) ..... CTAC  
Steve A. Elswick ..... Chesterfield County  
Melissa McGill (Nonvoting) ..... FTA  
William E. Melton ..... Powhatan County  
Floyd H. Miles, Sr. .... Charles City County  
Ivan Rucker (Nonvoting) ..... FHWA  
John B. Rutledge ..... CRAC  
C. Thomas Tiller, Jr. .... New Kent County

**ALTERNATE MEMBERS PRESENT, NOT VOTING**

Mark Riblett (Alternate) ..... Secretary of Transportation Designee

**CALL TO ORDER**

Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RRTPO) Chairman Patricia S. O’Bannon called the February 7, 2019 RRTPO meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. in the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission board room.

**CERTIFICATION OF MEETING QUORUM**

RRTPO Program Assistant Sharon Robeson reported that a quorum was present.

## **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

At the request of the Chairman, Patricia A. Paige led the RRTPO in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

## **WELCOME**

Chairman O'Bannon introduced and welcomed Chester A. "Chet" Parsons as the new Richmond Regional Planning District Commission Director of Transportation.

### **A. ADMINISTRATION**

#### **1. Approval of RRTPO Agenda**

Chairman O'Bannon requested that the agenda be changed today and going forward to move the Consent Agenda up in the agenda closer to the beginning of the meeting, just before the Open Public Comment Period. She called for other changes to the agenda and there were none. On motion of Angela Kelly-Wiecek, seconded by David T. Williams, the RRTPO unanimously approved the February 7, 2019 meeting agenda as revised.

#### **2. Approval of December 6, 2018 RRTPO Meeting Minutes**

Chairman O'Bannon called for changes to the minutes and there were none. On motion of Manuel Alvarez, Jr., seconded by David T. Williams, the RRTPO unanimously approved the minutes of the December 6, 2018 RRTPO meeting minutes as presented.

#### **3. Consent Agenda**

On motion of W. Canova Peterson, IV, seconded by Manuel Alvarez, Jr., the RRTPO unanimously approved the following resolutions:

##### **FY18 – FY21 TIP Amendment: Henrico County Automated Traffic Management System (ATMS)**

**a. RESOLVED**, that the Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization amends the *FY18 – FY21 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)* adding the following new project:

- UPC 109951: Automated Traffic Management System (ATMS) – adds this project to the TIP and obligates the preliminary engineering phase – Henrico

##### **b. Performance Based Planning: Safety Targets**

**RESOLVED**, that the Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization authorizes the RRTPO Secretary to submit the required letter of Submittal of 2019 Safety Performance Targets to VDOT fulfilling the requirements of the March 2016 FHWA final rulemaking (23 CFR 490) for National Performance Measures for the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) target setting.

#### **4. Open Public Comment Period**

There were no requests to address the RRTPO.

#### **5. RRTPO Chairman's Report**

Pat O'Bannon, RRTPO Chairman, reported on the following items.

**a. CTAC Update** – Chairman O'Bannon reviewed that the RRTPO had received a resolution from CTAC requesting RRTPO legislative advocacy at the General Assembly on distracted driving, which raised questions as to CTAC's mission. Chairman O'Bannon reported that she attended the January 17 CTAC meeting and shared the following information resulting from her discussion with CTAC:

- CTAC's main concern was with information flow; they feel they are not being asked for their recommendation on issues before the RRTPO and when CTAC sends an item to the RRTPO for its consideration, they are not fully apprised of RRTPO discussion or action on such matters; there is no feedback.
- CTAC does not know or understand its mission as it relates to the RRTPO and feels isolated and without direction from the RRTPO; they do not feel respected.
- Concern was expressed about the Elderly and Disability Advisory Committee (EDAC) being rolled into CTAC and about the structure and composition of the CTAC Transportation Equity Work Group.

Eric Gregory, RRPDC Legal Counsel, read the section from the MPO Bylaws regarding the purpose and mission of CTAC and the CTAC Transportation Equity Work Group and noted the importance of interface between the RRTPO and their representatives on CTAC for clarity on expectations of the committee.

Chet Parsons said CTAC has significant potential and the personalities and skill sets inherent in CTAC are an asset to the RRTPO. Mr. Parsons will develop a roadmap of how CTAC can better function to serve the RRTPO and the region and will provide an outline for CTAC review and feedback. Communication is a concern and a better framework will be developed for how all of the boards and committees can communicate better with each other and provide regular updates on a more transparent basis.

Chairman O'Bannon noted there are five vacancies on CTAC and Martha Shickle clarified that the vacancies are for additional at-large member organizations. CTAC Vice Chairman Herbert Richwine expressed appreciation for Chairman O'Bannon's attendance and communication with CTAC at their January 17 meeting. There was additional discussion of how to address CTAC concerns including having the Chairman attend at least one CTAC meeting each year and the possibility of addressing transportation barriers to getting to meetings.

- b. **Other** – Chairman O'Bannon noted that in response to RRTPO member requests to have time to bring up concerns not on the agenda, she will add a Member Comment Period under Other Business on agendas to provide for such an opportunity.

## 6. Interim RRTPO Secretary's Report

Martha Shickle, Interim RRTPO Secretary, reported on the following items:

- a. **Ashland Rail Safety Resolution Update** – There was discussion of this item at the January TAC meeting; staff is researching how other communities handle support for rail safety regulations. This will go back to TAC for a recommendation on how the RRTPO might move forward on this topic.
- b. **RRTPO Logo Update** – The West Cary Group developed a logo for the RRTPO; two color versions were passed around at the meeting for consensus on a preferred color scheme. The Executive Committee recommendation on this matter was reported to the RRTPO. No objections were voiced.
- c. **Appointment of RRTPO Secretary** – On motion of Christopher Winslow, seconded by David T. Williams, the Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RRTPO) voted unanimously to appoint Chester A. Parsons as Secretary to the RRTPO.

## 7. RRTPO Secretary's Report

Chet Parsons, RRTPO Secretary, reported on the following items:

- a. **Richmond and Tri-Cities Memorandum of Understanding Update** – The MOU is in the process of being signed and should be fully executed very soon.
- b. **SMART SCALE Results** – Spreadsheets showing FY20 SMART SCALE Project Scores for the VDOT Richmond District were distributed and discussed. Sulabh Aryal reviewed the results and noted that the Commonwealth Transportation Board has not taken action yet. There was significant discussion of the results with the following major points brought forward:
  - Many of the funded projects were smaller projects such as trails, pedestrian facilities, and parks rather than larger, more expensive road projects.
  - Larger jurisdictions should have sensitivity for the smaller jurisdictions and show more collegiality to their concerns to create a better region.
  - The region may want to consider getting rid of the MPO boundary; roads don't begin or end at the MPO boundary.
  - The I-64 construction is putting a strain on New Kent County secondary roads, fire and rescue services and citizens when traffic is rerouted through the county by GPS services; accidents increased in the county by 45 percent in 2018.
  - Gaps in large road construction projects are financial decisions made by breaking the full project into more affordable sections.

Additional comments or concerns should be communicated to Chet Parsons so they may be compiled and used in conversations about next steps. There was discussion of forming a work group to discuss this concern and look for solutions.

- c. **RRTPO November and December Work Status and Financial Reports** – The November and December Work Status Reports were included under tab four of the agenda package.

## **B. NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. VTrans Update**

Chris Wichman, Senior Transportation Planner for the Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment (OIPI), provided an overview of plans to update VTrans, Virginia's multimodal transportation plan. Mr. Wichman reviewed *VTrans2040*, the current plan noting that work on the plan began in 2015 and the plan was approved by the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) in December 2018. He reviewed the needs assessment and the recommendations from *VTrans2040* and current uses of this plan.

Mr. Wichman reviewed major components for the VTrans update and noted key modifications from the *VTrans2040* plan as well as expected outcomes, the tentative timeline, and stakeholder involvement efforts. Adoption of the mid-term needs is targeted for December 2019 and the VTrans update is expected to be finalized by 2020.

The needs assessment is conducted by travel markets, Corridors of Statewide Significance (CoSS), Regional Networks, and Urban Development Areas (UDAs). Additionally, PSI (potential for safety improvement) is considered in the needs assessment. Long term needs identification is being added as a component in the VTrans update. Other key modifications are being included in the update that consider trade-offs with regard to economic returns and transportation investments.

Stakeholder involvement with MPOs and PDCs is occurring this winter across the state. In the spring of 2019 there will be reviews of existing conditions and trends and economic

profiles as well as discussion of needs identification methodology. Informal updates and notifications will be part of the process as will MPO-initiated discussions.

Public involvement will occur in the spring of 2019 with public meetings in all nine CTB districts and there will be an active online and social media presence in the update process. A statistically significant survey will be conducted using an address-based randomized sample and the survey will also be available for completion at public meetings.

Mr. Wichman responded to RRTPO questions with the following major points addressed.

- VTrans provides two opportunities to look at commuter patterns for secondary roads, one in the regional networks assessment and another in the urban development areas assessment, which are designated growth areas.
- In addition to the randomized address-based survey, there will be polling on the website and by social media, public meetings and pop-up events will supplement the survey; results will be reported separately.
- Informing the RRTPO on when VTrans will have a presence at events could also provide an opportunity for the RRTPO to also provide an opportunity for public engagement.

Following the presentation on VTrans, there was a question as to attendance of the Richmond District CTB member at RRTPO meetings and Chairman O'Bannon noted that past CTB members have attended and provided regular reports at RRTPO meetings. Ms. Shickle noted that the current CTB member attends and participates in the annual Transportation Forum.

There was also a question regarding how the SMART SCALE process moves some projects ahead of others and where the local jurisdiction voice is in that process. Mr. Parsons made note of the question for future discussion.

## 2. CMAQ Program Status Reports

Chairman O'Bannon noted there would be reports from three agencies receiving annual funding from the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program.

- a. Port of Virginia, Barbara S. Nelson, Vice President of Government Affairs and Transportation Policy** – Ms. Nelson spoke briefly about the significance of the contribution of the Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization to the Port of Virginia and reviewed that the barge service was a concept in 2007 which launched in December of 2008 and has continued to sail for 10 years with increasing volumes. The initial hope was that the barge service would have positive impacts on the transportation system with environmental benefits and economic opportunities. Ms. Nelson expressed appreciation for the RRTPO contribution of approximately \$15 million inside of the gate in support of the barge service including the CMAQ funded Green Operator Program. The volumes at the Port have increased significantly year over year with consolidation of shipping lines and larger ships requiring fewer vessel calls. Imports and exports are balanced so boxes aren't being returned empty, which creates a sustainable service. Between fiscal years 15 and 18, the total volume on the barge increased by 50 percent. There have been reductions in all categories of emissions from FY17 to FY18. Comparing truck service to the barge service shows significant reductions in the tons of emissions that go into the air and demonstrates the air quality benefit of the barge service. Current customers were review and two new customers are anticipated to

add 5,000 containers a year to the barge thereby removing 5,000 truck trips from the I-64 corridor.

- b. City of Richmond, Dironna Moore Clarke, Multimodal Transportation Manager** – Ms. Clarke said the City of Richmond Employee Trip Reduction Program (ETRP) is part of the city’s larger Transportation Demand Management Program (TDM). The ETRP seeks to reduce the number of single occupancy vehicles driven to work by city employees by encouraging use of alternative forms of transportation for commuting to and from work. The program provides GRTC transit swipe cards and vanpool vouchers to city employees. Seven percent of the city workforce, 290 employees, participated in the program during 2018, short of the 400 participants anticipated. This led the city to expand its TDM scope to encourage other city businesses to participate. The annual program cost is \$140,000 and the city will utilize all FY17 CMAQ funds by June 30, 2019 and will use all FY18 CMAQ funds by June 30, 2020. The ETRP improves air quality, reduces dependence on single occupancy vehicles, improves the air quality and reduces the need for parking facilities. The program reduces vehicle miles traveled thereby removing .14 tons of hydrocarbons (HC) and .43 tons of nitrous oxide (NOx) per year from the air. Ms. Clarke responded to questions and noted that by the time the City comes back next year, there will be private sector participants in this expanded TDM program and there may be a request for funding in future years.
- c. RideFinders, Von S. Tisdale, Executive Director** – Ms. Tisdale said the expanded city ETRP program is an example of what RideFinders does with the private sector. with about 42 state agencies and private sector businesses already enrolled in similar ETRP programs. RideFinders has the same governing board as GRTC but also has a separate advisory board and separate bylaws. Ms. Tisdale reviewed funding sources and RideFinders services as well as 2018 program highlights including significant peer industry and agency awards for marketing campaigns and outreach programs efforts. The vanpool program had a total of 43,241 passengers travelling 87,847,359 passenger miles with 1,125,934 passenger trips. RideFinders does extensive training and education with trip planning, new technologies or services in order for customers to feel comfortable. Ms. Tisdale thanked the RRTPO for their investment in RideFinders which has been consistent, as well as to thank others providing funds to RideFinders.

**3. FY20 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Priorities**

Chairman O’Bannon noted the materials included under agenda tab six noting that the UPWP is what we base the RRTPO budget on and what is used to request funds from FHWA, FTA and other funding agencies.

Martha Shickle noted the staff report is the same as that distributed in December. This is what staff will use to begin work on developing the FY20 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), the RRTPO program of work for FY20. Ms. Shickle said approval of the priorities was delayed to allow the new RRTPO Secretary time to review the priorities. She said she wanted to make sure that there isn’t something significant missing that the RRTPO would want to be included in next year’s work program. She noted that these priorities follow the same format as the current year’s work program.

The focus is on meeting the findings of the certification review and considering the recommendations in preparation for meeting the requirements for the next certification review. The second set of priorities focuses on continuation of existing work efforts

and Ms. Shickle reviewed some of these efforts. The third set of priorities is FY20 focal areas which include transportation investments to capitalize on regional commerce, workforce mobility and accessibility; expanding access to transit through multimodal connectivity and park and ride facilities; increasing opportunity for residents of the region to engage in public planning processes; and identifying strategies for improving identified performance measures.

The FY20 UPWP will begin July 1 and will most likely come to the RRTPO in the April/May time frame. The RRTPO must meet set deadlines for providing the document to funding partners for their review and funding consideration. The RRTPO budget also feeds into the RRPDC budget for the next fiscal year. The following suggestions were provided by the RRTPO:

- There is a need to explore expanding funding resources to the region; SMART SCALE funding is decreasing for the region and there doesn't appear to be significant funding from the state.
- There was a suggestion to be prepared to consider forming a transit or transportation authority to receive funds should Richmond be selected for a casino; the General Assembly will study establishing casinos over the next year.
- Meeting with the Richmond Metropolitan Transportation Authority could be a productive way to begin exploring establishing a transportation funding authority. The membership could be expanded to include other jurisdictions.
- Establishing a work group to consider transportation funding for the region should continue; the work group established two years ago has not met for about a year. This matter of transportation funding should not fall by the wayside.

## **C. AGENCY AND COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **1. Transportation Agency Updates**

**a. VDOT** – Bart Thrasher, designee for the Virginia Secretary of Transportation, reported as follows:

- Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) Meetings Update:
  - SMART SCALE application scores were released at the January meeting. These scores will continue to be reviewed. There will be a spring SYIP public meeting when the CTB will receive comments; the RRTPO will be apprised of the date for that meeting.
  - The Ashland to Petersburg Trail Study was added to the Six-Year Plan at the January meeting.
  - The next CTB workshop meeting will be held February 19 with the full meeting to be held on February 20.

**b. DRPT** – Jennifer DeBruhl, DRPT Chief of Public Transportation, reported on the following:

- Rail Update:
  - Construction at Acca Yard is now complete and additional train slots are coming to the region; DRPT will be adding a second Norfolk train March 4 leaving Main Street Station at 6:35 a.m.
  - The additional Norfolk train will bring service through midday train will come through Staples Mill Rd around 11:10 to Ashland and on through D.C.

- Work continues with D.C. on expansion of the Long Bridge and will soon not be able add any northbound rail capacity. This may be a future topic the RRTPO would like to hear more about later this year.
- In partnership with VCU there will be a special Rams Amtrak care leaving the Staples Mill Station on March 14 heading to the tournament in New York.

Based on anecdotal information, Kim Gray inquired about pay stations going down for the Pulse with some riders riding for free and others using expired VCU IDs since there is no way to scan these for validity. She said she would appreciate information on this possibly at the March meeting.

**2. Community Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC) Meeting Report**

CTAC Chairman Charles Carter was not present and Chairman O'Bannon noted the meeting report included under agenda tab five saying CTAC was covered earlier in the meeting.

**D. OTHER BUSINESS**

**1. Future Meeting Topics**

Chairman O'Bannon noted the future meeting topics included in tab eight of the agenda package and asked that members call her with suggestions for additional topics.

**2. Next Meeting: March 7**

Chairman O'Bannon announced that the next RRTPO meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 7, 2019.

**E. ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman O'Bannon adjourned the meeting at 11:40 a.m.

CAP/sr