

RICHMOND AREA
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
MINUTES OF MEETING

July 9, 2009

MEMBERS PRESENT

REPRESENTING

Patricia S. O'Bannon, Chair	County of Henrico
Edward L. Henson, III, Vice Chair	Town of Ashland
Joseph Andrews, Jr.	County of Goochland
Viktoria W. Badger	City of Richmond
Robert M. Berry	RMA
Linda G. Broady-Myers (Nonvoting)	EDAC
Malvern R. Butler	County of Goochland
Karin Carmack	County of Powhatan
Deborah B. Coats (Alternate)	County of Hanover
Douglas G. Conner (Alternate)	City of Richmond
Timothy W. Cotman	County of Charles City
Robert A. Crum, Jr.	RRPDC
Marleen K. Durfee	County of Chesterfield
E. Todd Eure	County of Henrico
Thomas E. Flynn	City of Richmond
Daniel A. Gecker	County of Chesterfield
Thomas A. Hawthorne	VDOT
Corey W. Hill (Nonvoting)	VDRPT
James M. Holland	County of Chesterfield
George M. Homewood	County of New Kent
John M. Lewis	GRTC Transit System
Robert R. Setliff	County of Hanover
Barbara K. Smith (Alternate)	County of Chesterfield
Von Tisdale (Nonvoting)	RideFinders
Stran L. Trout	County of New Kent
Joseph E. Vidunas	County of Hanover
Joseph B. Walton	County of Powhatan
Dexter C. White (Alternate)	City of Richmond

MEMBERS ABSENT

REPRESENTING

Stephen R. Adkins (Nonvoting)	CTAC
Cliff Burnette (Nonvoting)	VDA
Tony Cho (Nonvoting)	FTA
Tammye Davis (Nonvoting)	FHWA
John Gordon	County of Hanover
Kathy C. Graziano	City of Richmond
John McCracken	County of Chesterfield
Jean M. Moore	County of Henrico

MEMBERS ABSENT (Cont.)

REPRESENTING

Ellen F. RobertsonCity of Richmond
John Rutledge.....CRAC
Frank J. Thornton..... County of Henrico

OTHERS PRESENT

REPRESENTING

Daniel N. Lysy, **Secretary** (Alternate)..... RRPDC
Nora Amos (Alternate)Town of Ashland
Jonathan BalilesCity of Richmond
John T. Benton Citizen
Jack Berry Richmond Metro Convention and Visitors Bureau
Kevin Farrelly Office of the Secretary of Transportation
Daniel T. Grinnell VDOT
Lawrence A. Hagin (Alternate).....GRTC Transit System
Kelly A. Hickok (Alternate)EDAC
Pierce R. Homer..... Virginia Secretary of Transportation
Mitch JohnsonPBS&J
Shelbra Jones Serve U Transportation , LLC
Gerald P. McCarthyCTB
Doris A. McLeod VDEQ
Steve McNeely VDOT
Daniel Plaughter..... VHSR
James P. Ponticello VDOT
Mark Riblett (Alternate) VDOT
Kim Scheeler..... Greater Richmond Chamber of Commerce
Stephen StoryJames River Bus Lines
Ronald Svejkovsky VDOT
Sherry SwinsonCounty of Powhatan
Sulabh Aryal RRPDC
Anne Darby RRPDC
Billy Gammel..... RRPDC
Brian Koziol..... RRPDC
Jin Lee RRPDC
Barbara Nelson..... RRPDC
Sharon Robeson RRPDC
Greta Ryan RRPDC
Randy Selleck RRPDC
Lee Yolton RRPDC

CALL TO ORDER

MPO Chairman Patricia S. O'Bannon called the July 9, 2009 meeting of the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to order at approximately 2:15 p.m. in the Board Room of the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission offices. At the Chairman's request, all present stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MPO MEMBER AND ALTERNATE MEMBER

Chairman O'Bannon announced that Corey W. Hill, Chief of Public Transportation for the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRPT), will serve as nonvoting MPO member and Amy M. Inman, VDRPT Planning and Project Manager, will serve as nonvoting alternate MPO member. Chairman O'Bannon noted that Mr. Hill will arrive late and will be introduced at that time. Ms. Inman was not in attendance at the meeting. Chairman O'Bannon welcomed their participation and comments as they serve on the MPO Board.

PRESENTATION

Chairman O'Bannon welcomed honored guests Pierce Homer, Secretary of Transportation for the Commonwealth of Virginia, and Gerald McCarthy, Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) member representing the VDOT Richmond District. Mr. McCarthy thanked the MPO for the opportunity to report on the status of transportation funding in the Commonwealth noting that when he joined the CTB seven years ago, he was told by a senior CTB member that Richmond is so deep in the hole they wouldn't have money for a decade. He said the Richmond District is in a much better situation today than anybody would have imagined possible seven years ago and he credited Secretary of Transportation Pierce Homer, among others, for providing the Richmond District opportunities resulting in accomplishment of the considerable list of projects started, completed, underway and expected to be completed within the next twelve months. Mr. McCarthy said Pierce Homer has a very simple straightforward approach to spending transportation dollars: we're going to do what we can afford, which translates into fewer projects, all of which will be completed. Mr. McCarthy said Secretary Homer is a product of local government by experience and a second generation local government expert, and he has leveraged his experience to provide real money for real projects for the Richmond District. Mr. McCarthy asked the MPO to join him in welcoming Secretary Pierce Homer and all present gave a hearty round of applause.

Secretary Homer thanked Mr. McCarthy for his very kind introduction and noted that the joy of local government has never left him and has proven invaluable. He spoke of the good things occurring in the Richmond District, the current state of transportation funding, and the forecast for the next six years using the following PowerPoint slides:

- "Transportation in Virginia" (cover slide with logos of Virginia transportation agencies)
- Table of Contents
- Accomplishments in the Richmond Region (two slides)
- Current Trends in Virginia
- Major Transportation Revenues (bar graph)
- ARRA Transportation Projects in Virginia Summary
- Three Year Comparison of Transit and Rail Six Year Program
- Investments in Public Transportation and Travel Demand Management
- Rail Programs: Rail Enhancement Fund and Demonstration Projects

- Major Transit and Rail Initiatives (map)
- Interstate and Primary Pavement Condition – 2008 (map)
- Commonwealth Priorities: Deficient Bridges (map scatter graph)
- Transit: State of Good Repair
- Total Draft Revised Six-Year Improvement Program (chart)
- Richmond Region Secondary and Urban Program Funding (chart)
- Six Year Program Funds Transferred to Highway Maintenance (bar graph)
- Transportation Revenues – HB 3202 Bonds
- Blueprint: 3-Pronged Approach
- Residency Consolidation (map)
- Equipment Shops (map)
- Mowing and Safety Service Patrols (with photos)
- Rest Areas and Welcome Centers Service Levels
- VDOT's Blueprint for the Future (pie graph)
- Ability to Meet Future Priorities (chart)
- Maintenance Funding and Ability to Match Federal Dollars
- Risk Factors Moving Forward
- Closing slide

Secretary Homer concluded his presentation and responded to questions making the following major points:

- In comparison to similar states, the Reason Foundation recently put Virginia in the top 10 to 12 states nationally for infrastructure and investment, and Governing Magazine named Virginia as one of the best managed states in America.
- The state's biggest weakness is infrastructure, and while the ports at Hampton Roads and the Port of Richmond are linked to the global economy, a breakdown in infrastructure, such as tunnel closure, can significantly disrupt the critical links.
- Obligating or borrowing money from the state's General Fund through FRANs to provide transportation funding for special projects, such as was done for Route 288, is no longer a viable transportation funding option.
- Virginia has a pressing need to develop and establish a blend of reliable, dedicated funding sources for transportation.
- Virginia will submit an application for \$1.5 billion for track and signal upgrades to provide higher speed rail from Petersburg to Washington, D.C.
- Non-reliability kills rail ridership, and while rail speed through this improved corridor will likely travel at 90 miles per hour, these improvements will allow for more passenger trains, greater on-time reliability and more convenient scheduling.
- Passenger rail service from Petersburg north will need to use existing right-of-way boundaries due to the high cost of right-of-way acquisition.
- The increase in train speed may require closure of some at-grade crossings and require improvements for others to insure safety.

Chairman O'Bannon again thanked Secretary Homer for his very informative presentation and Secretary Homer thanked Chairman O'Bannon for the opportunity to address the MPO.

I. ADMINISTRATION

Chairman O'Bannon noted the arrival of Corey Hill, VDRPT Chief of Public Transportation, and welcomed him as a new MPO nonvoting member representing VDRPT.

A. Certification by MPO Secretary of Meeting Quorum –

Dan Lysy reported that a quorum was present.

B. Additions to MPO Agenda –

There were no requests for additions to the agenda.

C. Minutes of the May 14, 2009 MPO Meeting –

On motion of George M. Homewood, seconded by Marleen K. Durfee, the minutes of the May 14, 2009 MPO meeting were unanimously approved as presented.

D. Open Public Comment Period –

Chairman O'Bannon opened the Public Comment Period of the meeting and recognized Jack Berry, President and CEO of the Metropolitan Richmond Convention and Visitors Bureau. Mr. Berry said VDOT Richmond District Administrator Tom Hawthorne advised them that the District will receive substantial levels of federal transportation funds for work on eleven (11) I-95 corridor bridges [i.e., \$54.5 million for I-95 Bridge Repairs] and he said the economic impact as well as the duration of the project will be significant. Mr. Berry reported there will be two public awareness meetings at the Convention Center on July 22, one at 10:00 a.m. and another at 3:00 p.m. He said Steve McNeely, VDOT Project Manager, would provide an overview.

Mr. McNeely provided a brief PowerPoint presentation on the project which provides for bridge replacement and rehabilitation of the decks and substructures of 11 bridges over about 5.5 miles through the City of Richmond and Henrico County from Lombardy to Upham Brook Road. He said this project is fully funded and well ahead of schedule with construction to begin around May of 2010 and scheduled to take about four to four-and-a-half years to complete. Mr. McNeely said most of the work will be done at night, 8:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m., with one lane in each direction remaining open for traffic and emergency response equipment with only one full closure anticipated to address a critical issue at Lombardy. There were no questions and Chairman O'Bannon thanked him for his comments.

There were no additional requests to address the MPO, and Chairman Graziano closed the public comment period.

E. MPO Chairman's Report –

1. Presentation to Outgoing MPO Chairman –

Chairman O'Bannon noted the absence of outgoing MPO Chairman Kathy Graziano and deferred this item until the next MPO meeting.

2. MPO Executive Committee Appointments –

Chairman O'Bannon reported the following MPO Executive Committee appointments for fiscal year 2010: MPO Chairman, Patricia S. O'Bannon, Henrico County; MPO Vice Chairman, Edward L. Henson, III, Town of Ashland; Timothy W. Cotman, Charles City County; Daniel A. Gecker, Chesterfield County; Malvern R. "Rudy" Butler, Goochland County; Robert R. Setliff, Hanover County; Stran L. Trout, New Kent County; Joseph B. Walton, Powhatan County; and Kathy C. Graziano, City of Richmond.

3. Other Business –

No other business was brought forward.

F. RRPDC Transportation Director's Report –

Mr. Lysy had nothing to report.

II. OLD BUSINESS

No old business was brought forward for consideration.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. MPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC) Meeting Report –

In the absence of the CTAC Chairman, Barbara Nelson noted information provided in tab three of the agenda package on the May 26 CTAC meeting and she provided a brief summary of major meeting topics including "Transit Talk"; Main Street Station as a Downtown Transfer Center; election of Officers for 2009-2010; and the topic for the July 28 meeting, "Human and Environment Report," which is a part of the VTrans2035 statewide transportation plan. There were no questions and Chairman O'Bannon thanked Ms. Nelson for her report.

B. MPO Elderly and Disabled Advisory Committee (EDAC) Meeting Report –

EDAC Chairman Linda Broady-Myers noted the report included in tab four of the agenda package. She mentioned an article, “Stranded and mistreated CARE van riders criticize GRTC,” which ran in the June 3 – 9, 2009 edition of *The Richmond Voice* and was of great concern to EDAC. The article criticized the Community Assisted Ride Enterprise service (CARE) operated by GRTC as being inadequate and insensitive to its disabled riders. EDAC Chairman Broady-Myers noted that GRTC Specialized Transportation Service has over 10,000 registered applicants to use the service, so the service volume is extremely high, and she acknowledged that while the service is not perfect, it has improved since GRTC brought the service in-house. She noted there are CARE Advisory Committee (CAC) meetings with GRTC staff present and available to answer questions and resolve issues as well as to brainstorm with clients to improve service. She emphasized the importance of the specialized transportation service to elderly and disabled clients who depend on it. Ms. Broady-Myers asked that VDOT, GRTC, and other transportation service providers not forget citizens with different needs and asked that they go beyond the minimum ADA requirements when considering where to offer paratransit service. Ms. Broady-Myers said that elderly and disabled citizens are already somewhat limited by the lack of affordable public transportation as to where they can live, socialize, seek medical services, and work, and noted that this segment of the population is growing rapidly. There were no questions and Chairman O’Bannon thanked Ms. Broady-Myers for her report and comments.

C. Resolution in Support of High Speed Rail –

Robert Crum, RRPDC Executive Director, said the Capital Region Collaborative, a joint organization of the Greater Richmond Chamber of Commerce and the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission (RRPDC), has worked to determine strategies to strengthen the Richmond Region. One item the Collaborative has focused on is the issue of high speed rail and Mr. Crum reported that the Collaborative organizing team recently took action to adopt a resolution supporting the extension of high speed rail service between the greater Richmond and Washington, D.C. metropolitan areas. Mr. Crum said they also requested all nine Richmond Region jurisdictions to adopt similar resolutions of support and he reported they have all taken that action as did the RRPDC Board. The hope is that this show of regional unity and support will strengthen the state’s application being submitted for high speed rail economic stimulus monies. He said the MPO is being asked to take action to support a similar resolution and he introduced Daniel Plaugher, Executive Director of Virginians for High Speed Rail, to provide background information on the high speed rail issue and to respond to questions.

Mr. Plaughter thanked all the localities for their support of high speed rail. He provided a PowerPoint presentation based on the following slides:

- High-Speed Rail and Richmond (cover slide)
- Virginians for High Speed Rail (statement of purpose and goals)
- VHSR Accomplishments
- What is High-Speed Rail?
- Vision for High-Speed Rail in America (map)
- Virginia's High-Speed Rail Corridors (two maps)
- Where are we?
- Where are we? (photos of Main Street, Staples Mill, and Ashland stations)
- Passenger Rail Service between Richmond and Washington (chart)
- Amtrak Ridership for FY 2008 for the Urban Express Corridor
- The Federal Money's Flowing!
- Federal Funding Streams
- Federal Schedule
- Washington to Richmond Corridor; Top Priority High Speed Rail Projects (map with project descriptions)
- Washington to Richmond Corridor (goals and impacts)
- What can you do?
- Thank You! Questions? (web address)

Major points brought forward from questions following Mr. Plaughter's presentation are as follows:

- Mr. Plaughter is not aware of plans to close any at-grade crossings under this project.
- There is money in the stimulus request to upgrade Main Street Station for additional tracks and for layover space for trains between runs; Mr. Plaughter is not aware of plans to have trains lay over in Petersburg.
- High-speed rail will run from Richmond north; conventional rail will still run between Richmond to Petersburg.
- All rail projects the state hopes to fund with stimulus money, including high-speed rail from Richmond to Washington and track improvements to Petersburg, must be submitted in the application tomorrow [July 10] to provide the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) the ability to see the big picture across the U.S.
- The application for high-speed rail funding for corridor development from Petersburg to Richmond to D.C., will be submitted by October 2.
- Projects along the priority high-speed rail corridor from Petersburg to D.C. will be prioritized according to which projects will add the most capacity.
- The City of Richmond, GRTC Transit System and the state are reviewing the use of Main Street Station as a high speed rail facility, as well as its serving as the transfer center for GRTC buses, to discover

potential conflicts and resolve them before finalizing plans. The City of Richmond is looking at how to incorporate high-speed rail needs into the old train shed considering the various rail needs as well as bus and paratransit needs.

Doug Conner noted that while he supports the resolution as currently stated, he wished to note for the record that the minutes reflect that Main Street Station is the destination for the Washington, D.C. to Richmond Region high speed rail service. No objections were voiced to this request and Chairman O'Bannon agreed to have the minutes reflect Mr. Conner's statement.

On motion of George M. Homewood, seconded by Malvern R. Butler, the MPO unanimously approved the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the connection of high speed rail service to the Richmond Region will offer significant economic opportunities for the Richmond Region, reduce traffic congestion along the I-95 corridor, save valuable commuting time, and improve air quality; and

WHEREAS, the Washington, D.C. to Richmond Region high speed rail connection is a critical section of the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor; and

WHEREAS, the Capital Region Collaborative Organizing Team has identified the extension of high speed rail service from the Washington Metropolitan Area to the Richmond Region as an important regional priority;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization hereby endorses the extension of high speed rail service from the Washington Metropolitan Area to the Richmond Region and encourages the preparation and submission of an application by the Commonwealth of Virginia for funding of this important infrastructure; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization strongly encourages the Federal Rail Administration to approve the Commonwealth of Virginia's funding application for monies to construct high speed rail from the Washington Metropolitan Area to the Richmond Region.

Resolved this ninth day of July 2009 by the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization.

D. 2008 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards Update and SIP Contingency Measure Addition –

Doris McLeod, Air Quality Planner with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ) provided information on the 2008 national ambient air quality standards and recommendations that VDEQ will submit to EPA concerning compliance status of Virginia jurisdictions and various other related matters using the following PowerPoint slides:

- 2008 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard (cover slide)
- Briefing Topics
- What is Ozone?
- 2008 Ozone Standard
- Virginia Recommendations
- Ozone Monitor Levels (2006 – 2008) (map of Virginia)
- Richmond-Petersburg Area (map of region and photo)
- Richmond-Petersburg Recommended Nonattainment Area (map of region)
- Richmond-Petersburg Ozone Historical Trend – Three Year Averages (line graph)
- 2008 NAAQS for Ozone, What's Next – Moving Forward
- 1997 Ozone NAAQS Contingency Measures Update
- Richmond-Petersburg Status
- What does the Current Maintenance Plan Say?
- Proposed Regulations
- Industrial Adhesives and Sealants
- Questions?

Ms. McLeod completed her presentation and offered to answer questions. Chairman O'Bannon commented that she appreciates Ms. McLeod and VDEQ always considering the cost impact of new regulations. She recalled that about seven years ago, the Metropolitan Richmond Air Quality Committee (MRAQC) voted to add 10 percent ethanol to gasoline to improve the region's air quality. She said that the proposed new regulations seem cost effective and should have a positive impact on air quality. There were no additional comments or questions and Chairman O'Bannon thanked Ms. McLeod for her presentation.

E. Exchanging RSTP and CMAQ Allocations on Two Hanover Projects –

Barbara Nelson noted in tab seven there is a request by Hanover County for MPO authorization to shift CMAQ funds from the Route 360/Lee Davis Road project to the Routes 33/54 project and to shift RSTP funds from the Routes 33/54 project to the Route 360/Lee Davis Road project, both regionally selected projects in Hanover County. Both projects have been reviewed through the MPO competitive project selection process, and both have allocations that were on the project prior to the competitive

project selection process as well as allocations received after the new process was implemented. At its June 18 meeting, the MPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) unanimously supported shifting \$3.8 million in CMAQ funds from the Lee Davis/Route 360 project to the Route 33/54 project and shifting a similar amount of RSTP funds from the Rt. 33/54 project to the Lee Davis/Rt.360 project. Ms. Nelson said the staff recommendation is to support the TAC recommendation for approval and offered to answer questions noting that Mr. Setliff is present from Hanover County to answer questions as well. There were no questions.

On motion of Viktoria W. Badger, seconded by Robert R. Setliff, the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization unanimously approved the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) supports the request by Hanover County and agrees to transfer \$3,860,000 in CMAQ allocations from UPC 13551, Route 360, to UPC 18948, Route 33/54; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that \$3,860,000 in RSTP allocations be transferred from UPC 18948, Route 33/54 to UPC 17768, Route 360.

F. RSTP and CMAQ Financial Project Closeout/Reconciliation –

Barbara Nelson stated that it took about four years to secure confirmation from VDOT on the closeout of 82 projects that resulted in a surplus allocation of approximately \$5.8 million in RSTP and CMAQ funds for our region. Staff received confirmation of the final allocation numbers from VDOT in November of 2008 and began the reallocation process in February 2009. Staff has worked with the VDOT Richmond District Office in Colonial Heights to effect the transfer of nearly \$3 million of that \$5.8 million. She noted that while working with the VDOT Richmond District Office has been a very satisfactory process, some challenges remain in moving that paperwork through the Central Office, but staff is hopeful that those challenges will soon be resolved. Ms. Nelson said projects to receive the remaining \$2.8 million should be defined by the end of the summer when staff expects to have all \$5.8 million reallocated to current projects. Ms. Nelson said staff concerns remain about what is the institutional process for closing out projects on a regular basis so that this expensive, time-consuming process for both VDOT and RRPDC staff will not recur in the future, and in an effort to resolve those concerns and explain the new process, Diane Mitchell, VDOT Programming Director, will meet with TAC, hopefully in August. Chairman O'Bannon thanked Ms. Nelson for her report.

G. Update on Obligations of ARRA Stimulus Funds --

Barbara Nelson said the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) is an opportunity to work with our federal partners to introduce some new funding for transportation in the Commonwealth. She noted that approximately \$43 million has been obligated to projects within the Richmond MPO area, noted on the first page of the staff report under tab nine. She said the MPO will have the authority to recommend the allocation and ultimate obligation for an additional \$20.8 million and TAC will begin the process of reviewing projects this summer providing the MPO with a recommendation by September or October anticipating that the funds will be obligated prior to the end of this year (RSTP/ARRA funds are due to be obligated by early March 2010). Ms. Nelson offered to answer questions and there were none. Chairman O'Bannon thanked Ms. Nelson for her report.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was brought forward for MPO consideration.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman O'Bannon inquired if anyone was aware of pressing business that would require the MPO to meet in August, and hearing none, announced that the August 13 MPO meeting is cancelled and the next meeting is scheduled for September 10. There being no further business, Chairman O'Bannon adjourned the meeting at approximately 4:15 p.m.