

CTB Rail and Transit Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
VDOT Central Office-HR Training Room
1221 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219
8:30 am
October 16, 2019

The Meeting began at 8:32 am

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

1. Director's Report-Director Mitchell gave her report and reviewed the Agenda for the day.

The following points were noted:

- Director Mitchell shared that October was the 10-year Anniversary of Passenger Rail service in Virginia and said that there will be a promotion in October with \$10 dollar fares October is also Passenger Rail month.
- Director Mitchell introduced new DRPT employee Kate Youngbluth who is the Manager of Rail Projects in Northern Virginia. Kate formerly worked at the District Department of Transportation (DDOT).
- Director Mitchell said that DRPT had also hired two other new Rail staff members, Fyiad Constantine, the Director of Northern Virginia Rail Projects, and Ashwini Tamhane, who is the new Rail Support Specialist.
- Ridership for Amtrak is the highest year yet at 924, 657 which is 10% higher than FY2018. Roanoke Service is up by 7%
- There is now expanded through way bus service in Hampton Roads and ADA improvements have been made in Ashland.
- Mr. Smoot asked how they know which track the train will come in on in Ashland? Jeremy Latimer said that PIDS is being installed, which will depend on Amtrak and CSX to dispatch accurately which track the trains will be located.

2. Coordinated Human Service Mobility Plan-Jennifer DeBruhl and Brittany Voll

Jennifer DeBruhl and Brittany Voll gave a presentation on the Coordinated Human Service Mobility Plan (CHSM). Jennifer DeBruhl indicated the plan is updated by DRPT every three years as a federal requirement. The last plan was divided by planning district commissions, which resulted in more than 20 plans for the state. . The 2019 plan is one statewide plan with regional elements that mirror the state's Medicaid regions.

Brittany Voll said that this plan incorporates specialized populations beyond the elderly and the disabled, including low-income, veterans, youth, and precariously housed individuals. DRPT conducted 9 months of outreach to various groups as the plan was being developed. A Major recommendation of the plan is to develop a Statewide Advisory Committee to help with recommendations on ways to improve moving forward. Regional recommendations are contained in the plan to address differing needs by region. The plan will be finalized by December 1. Written feedback is being accepted through October 31. The following discussion points were noted:

- John Malbon asked if DRPT is working toward mobility service with connection options such as a single pay system.
- Jennifer DeBruhl said that DRPT is currently working to streamline technology and interconnectivity. She said that it will take time and baby steps to get there.
- Director Mitchell said that DRPT is seeing trends toward this across the country. Hampton Roads Transit is incorporating this technology into their service now with payments connecting to other transit service to make it seamless for the rider. They have to figure out how an Uber or Lyft ride can be replicated with publically funded transit.
- Jennifer DeBruhl said that Hanover County is now looking at how to implement a service by contracting with a specialized TNC to serve the entire county.
- Jennifer DeBruhl said there are also federal innovative mobility grants available. DRPT has applied for three – one for autonomous shuttles in NoVA; one as a member of a autonomous bus coalition; and one for rural micro transit with Bay Transit on the northern neck and Mountain Empire Older Citizens.
- John Malbon commented that there are a lot of resources and funding throughout the country.
- Jennifer Mitchell said that this was the focus of discussions at the recent APTA conference. Services are very expensive in rural areas on a per trip basis.
- Mary Hynes asked if they heard from anyone in the non-English speaking community when doing outreach.
- Jennifer DeBruhl and Brittany Voll will check into that. They noted that the VA Breeze has technology to translate on board
- Mary Hynes said that in Arlington there is a large group from the Spanish speaking community who are interested in public transportation and have been encouraged to reach out.
- Ray Smoot asked what percentage of needs are being met?
- Brittany Voll said that it really depends on the area and what type of trip you are looking at. She said that, for example, Hampton Roads would have a high percentage of people

who feel their needs are being met because of availability of and access to transit whereas someone in a more rural area of the state like southwest VA, may feel their needs are not met because of the lack of transportation in their area. Also, some organizations are able to serve one type of trip but not others so individuals who can access transportation to medical appointments may still not have access to get to the grocery store or religious services.

- Jennifer DeBruhl said that DRPT has heard from a large number of Veterans who are also depending on these types of services.
3. Approval of September 17th Minutes- Director Mitchell asked the Board to approve the minutes. Ray Smoot entered the motion, John Malbon seconded the motion and the minutes were unanimously approved.
 4. Review of Rail Programs-Jeremy Latimer

Jeremy Latimer gave an overview of DRPT's Rail Grants Programs. He discussed funding sources for these grants (Federal versus State) and gave descriptions of the programs. He said that Rail Enhancement Fund (REF) and Intercity Passenger Rail Fund (IPROC) projects enhance both the freight and passenger rail networks. He said that the Long Bridge Project is being funded by DRPT, as well as other sources of funding. The following discussion points were noted:

- John Malbon asked if DRPT has a State of Good Repair (SGR) budget? Director Mitchell said that there is an SGR program for transit but not for rail. Some SGR projects are funded through the Rail Preservation fund. Other projects are capacity expansions and not SGR projects.
- John Malbon asked if passenger service puts a strain on SGR? Director Mitchell said that the state funds operations and O & M for Amtrak service. Mary Hynes said that Class 1 railroads are responsible for their SGR needs because they own the track.
- John Malbon asked what the Intercity Passenger Rail Fund (IPROC) was used for. Director Mitchell said it is for capacity and funding for Amtrak to operate. She said that the state pays 30% of VRE's operating costs as well. They pay trackage fees to the RRs.
- Ray Smoot asked if state sponsored train using the tracks are paying per mile. Jeremy Latimer said that the Host Railroad charges fees which goes to maintaining the tracks. The host railroad is paid an on-time fee for Amtrak being on the line.

- Director Mitchell said that in the past the Rail Enhancement Fund (REF) program and IPROC program were very application driven. The state is being more deliberate now about how we use these funds and are using the REF and IPROC funds together to maximize our granting ability. Long Bridge is a good example of DRPT and the CTB directing where we want to see our funds being utilized
- Mary Hynes said that she liked DRPT utilizing funds toward higher state initiatives.

5. Critical Rail Structures Criteria-Jeremy Latimer

Jeremy Latimer gave an update on the process of developing Shortline Critical Infrastructure criteria. He said that DRPT is developing a prioritized inventory of Shortline Critical infrastructure. DRPT has requested a rough order of magnitude cost and incorporated the critical needs into VTRANS. DRPT is using VDOT's definition of Critical Infrastructure – VITAL (Very Large, Indispensable, Transportation Asset List) This would be infrastructure which if out of service would render a debilitating impact on the railroad's ability to recover within a reasonable amount of time. The following were examples to think about with failure of critical infrastructure – significant detour; unique operational need (tunnel); access to other critical locations/infrastructure (Port); significant impact on traffic – rail or otherwise (signals); passenger rail service (impacts of failures on ability to move passengers). Jeremy said DRPT has initial results of types of infrastructures from several shortlines and are still collecting information. The next step is to create priority tiers and develop further criteria for prioritizing the needs; identify funding strategies (federal, state, and regional); include findings in VTRANS (working with OIPI). The following discussion points were noted:

- John Malbon asked if DRPT knows what the needs will be in 5 years? Jeremy Latimer said that the SYIP has needs for the next 6 years but these do not include critical infrastructure. Director Mitchell said that we are working toward that but we don't have a program to serve this need; we are currently working with the shortlines to figure out what this will cost
- Mary Hynes said that If the General Assembly is going to step up and fund these needs it is important to get this information on the table now.
- Ray Smoot asked if the state should get involved if a VITAL structure on a Class 1 network fails? Jeremy Latimer said that DRPT is currently looking at the shortline network only. Director Mitchell said that DRPT will bring this back to the subcommittee as it develops and it will not only be critical infrastructure from the Shortline perspective but also from the State's priority perspective
- John Malbon said that the Carriers should take on this responsibility.

- Director Mitchell said that the state has funded critical infrastructure projects when other upgrades the State has made have impacted a railroad's infrastructure
- John Malbon asked if it is up to the railroad to maintain the repair once the state has funded it? Jeremy Latimer said that with funding comes a responsibility for the RR to commit to annual carloads.

6. Economic Impact of Long Bridge-Randy Selleck

Randy Selleck gave an update on the Economic study prepared by The Stephen S. Fuller Institute of George Mason University. The Study was conducted at the request of DRPT to analyze the economic impact of expanded Long Bridge and additional passenger rail service; the role of rail commuting in the economy; and commuting by cyclists and pedestrians. The study showed that an expanded Long bridge results in \$3B in direct construction impact to VA; \$200M impacts annually by 2040 to VA from O&M expenditures as well as direct economic impacts to the Washington Region. The economic impact was assessed for the Long Bridge Corridor, which includes the Long Bridge Project (new 2 track span across Potomac; 5 smaller bridges a bike/pedestrian bridge and associated track & improvements, VRE L'Enfant Station improvements including 4th track, VRE crystal city station improvements and the Alexandria 4th track project. The following discussion points were noted:

- John Malbon asked what outlay and output means? Randy Selleck said that outlay included initial spending, while output is initial spending plus secondary spending benefits like more jobs, etc.
- Mary Hynes said that these benefits are to Virginia and the rest of the region.
- Director Mitchell said that direct construction benefits are one time benefits.
- Randy Selleck said that by creating additional mobility in the area it also incentivizes employees to stay at jobs longer. Long Bridge is the only rail crossing between VA and DC – if this bridge fails there will be no service to include passenger, commuter, or freight.
- John Malbon asked where the state is on Long Bridge. Director Mitchell said that the environmental draft is out for public comment; after that DDOT will work on the Final EIS and Record of Decision. DRPT is working with the National Park Services on mitigation. Preliminary Engineering is funded in our SYIP; the FRA will let us know when work can start; and we expect to have the Record of Decision by this time next year.
- Kate Youngbluth said that the preliminary engineering is underway and the conceptual design is at 15%.
- Mary Hynes said that she commended DRPT on getting this information on Long Bridge because everyone is looking favorably on the project. Increases in income

in NOVA has larger impacts. She asked DRPT to look for a way to get more information on the direct benefits to people out to the public. She said that if the study becomes a part of the story the benefits to people such as hours saved and additional income should be added. The more you can tie this piece into the study the more support you will gain. She said that the State's economic benefit provides justification to the story.

- Director Mitchell said that when the Northeast Corridor is discussed, the effects on Virginia are very much a part of the discussion. Even though Virginia is not a part of the Northeast Corridor it is very important piece in maintaining connectivity.

7. Public Comment

Danny Plaughter from the Virginians for High Speed Rail signed up for public comment. He congratulated the State for its 10-year passenger rail service Anniversary. Virginians for High Speed Rail has helped to secure 300 positive comments on Long Bridge. Director Mitchell thanked the Virginians for High Speed Rail and the Virginia Rail Policy Institute for all of their support.

8. Director Mitchell said that there is no Rail and Transit Subcommittee scheduled for November. She said that there will be a tour of Long Bridge on November 21st during the Governor's Innovation Conference. The Meeting Adjourned at 9:51.