



City of Alexandria

Transportation Commission

Regular Meeting

March 15, 2017
7:00 p.m.
Council Workroom

MINUTES

Commissioners Present: Chair Jerry King, Commissioner David Brown, Commissioner Ryan Jones, Commissioner James Lewis, Commissioner Christine Michaelis, Commissioner Melissa McMahon, Commissioner Carolyn Schroeder, Commissioner Ryan Jones, and Commissioner Jake Jakubek

Staff Present: Allan Fye – T&ES, Carrie Sanders – T&ES, Yon Lambert – T&ES , Christopher Ziemann – T&ES, Charonne Gray -T&ES

Chair Jerry King called the Transportation Commission meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

1. **March Meeting Minutes**

Chair Jerry King asked if there were any edits to the minutes. Chair King and Commissioner Steven Klejst submitted changes to the minutes. Chair King asked staff if they had changes to submit for the minutes. A motion to accept the changes was made by Commissioner Klejst and seconded by Commissioner McMahon. The minutes were unanimously approved.

2. **Updates to Receive (Consent Items)**

Chair King stated to the Commission that the Consent Items are not action items. The purpose is to give the Commission updates on various projects. Meeting materials are submitted a week early before the actual Commission meeting and will likely not change. Discussion will be limited on the Consent items, with the purpose of focusing more attention to the Action Items. If there is a topic on which a Commissioner would like more information, staff is available to discuss.

Commissioner Klejst described how the Dash Board conducts its meetings: Director Yon Lambert reports on the outcome of the Director's Report, which takes 10 – 15 minutes. The report is submitted in advance to board members which reduces the amount of time spent during the Dash Board meetings. Commissioner Klejst suggested that this same method be adopted for a better use of the Commissioner's time.

3. **Commission Updates**

The Commission received updates on WMATA's Safe Track project. Acting Transit Division Chief Allan Fye informed the Commission that WMATA's surge is on schedule. During a telephone call on Tuesday, March 13, 2017, WMATA and Mr. Fye discussed possible delays due to the inclement weather. Personnel assigned to Safe Track were reassigned to snow removal to ensure the rail system remained operational. WMATA's intentions are to extend Safe Track work into off-hours to ensure they finish work within the dates they established for the public. Any work delayed due to inclement weather will be put into the maintenance schedule.

Commissioner Ryan Jones provided updates on the North Potomac Yard Advisory Group. The Group will provide a draft of the Transportation Chapter which will be presented to the Commission explaining the transportation analysis and results in April 2017.

Commissioner Jake Jakubek notified the Commission that the Landmark Eisenhower Group was to meet on Thursday, February 22, 2017 but the meeting was rescheduled. A new meeting date will be provided at a later time.

Commissioner Steve Klejst stated February was Josh Baker's first full month as General Manager at DASH and the transition has gone well. Cheiko Clark is a newly selected Board member. She is a full time employee at the Patent Office and is a resident of Alexandria. She has served on the Board in Washington, D.C. and comes with a great deal of experience.

Richard Lawrence is replacing Emily Baker as one of the City Representatives to the Board.

Commissioner Melissa McMahon reminded the Commission that the Commercial Parking Standards Task Force starts next week on March 21, 2017 at 7:00 pm located at City Hall in the Council Work Room. For those who are interested in attending, this will be the first kick-off meeting.

4. FY 2018-27 Budget

Deputy Director Carrie Sanders introduced Christopher Ziemann as the new Division Chief of Transportation Planning replacing Steve Sindiong who is now the Transit Capital Program Manager working under the direction of Acting Transit Division Chief Allan Fye.

Christopher Ziemann spoke to the Commission about his past experiences working for the District of Columbia Department of Transportation for four (4) years where he lead the 15th Street protected bike lane project, conducted motorcoach and traffic calming studies, and worked with public space management. For the City of Chicago, he served as the Bus Rapid Transit Project Manager for several years. Most recently, he was a Fellow working with transit agencies in Hamburg, Germany.

Deputy Director Carrie Sanders provided FY 2018 – FY 2027 Transportation Budget updates. Staff is requesting that the Transportation Commission review and provide guidance to the City Council for consideration and action on the FY 2018 – FY 2027 budget. Each year the Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES) department requests that the Transportation Commission review the economic conditions of the capital budget. The budget development process for the City Departments began in September 2016, and in October 2016 the Commission provided initial budget guidance.

The current budget priorities are Schools: increasing school funding to address the capacity and capital maintenance needs of Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS); WMATA: increasing capital investment needs; State of Good Repair: protecting the City's investments in existing public facilities and infrastructure; and Economic Development: continuing planning and implementation of high

priority City projects and economic development initiatives. The proposed budget is \$2 billion over a 10 year span for the Alexandria Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The proposed 10 year CIP includes substantially increased funding of \$160.6 million to improve Metro safety and reliability, a \$144 million increase for funding school capital projects, and \$386 million for accelerated combined sewer projects. The DASH and transit capital funding in the proposed CIP includes \$26 million for DASH bus fleet replacement and will allow the purchase of four buses. In FY 2018 there was a decrease in funding by \$650,000. The proposed CIP includes \$3.8 million for hybrid buses and trolley battery pack replacement. Additional funding is for DASH technology and electronic fare payment, city bus shelters, and benches.

In the City's FY17-26 CIP (Capital Improvement Program), the Potomac Yard Metrorail station is funded at \$285M, including prior year funding; \$270M of which is funded in FY17. The West End Transitway is a high capacity BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) project that will provide segments of dedicated lanes, improved traffic and transit signal systems, full BRT stations, and bike / pedestrian improvements between the Van Dorn Metrorail Station and the border of Arlington (King Street at N. Beauregard). In the FY17-26 CIP, the project is funded from a variety of sources, including: Developer Contributions, \$27.2 million; NVTA (Northern Virginia Transportation Authority) 70% Funds, \$62.1 million; State/Federal Grants, \$51.6 million; and TIP (Transportation Improvement Program) Funds, \$2.1 million. The planned NVTA 70% Funds and FTA (Federal Transit Administration) grants are not yet secured.

A budget for Public Safety and Transportation was proposed to fill Police vacancies and add additional steps at the top of the pay scale for General, Police, Fire, Fire Marshalls, Medics, and Deputy Sheriff employees. The proposed funding also includes the Complete Streets program with a budget of \$75,000 for Vision Zero implementation.

Director Yon Lambert updated the Commission on the City Council's vote on March 14th to advertise a tax increase to \$1.13 and pursue a new Joint Municipal Facilities planning effort with ACPS. The current budget proposal rate is \$0.027 to \$1.10 per \$100.00 of assessed value and maintains a 2.2 cent reservation for transportation. Commission McMahon inquired about the estimated cost if Council was to fully fund the school CIP. Staff stated it was \$0.06.

The State of Good Repair is a key priority that protects the existing investments with a focus on facilities and infrastructure. The CIP proposed budget is \$51.6 million and the proposed capital budget is \$5.3 million. An additional \$1.5 million in city funds is invested over the planned FY 2017 – 2026 approved CIP to address the State revenue sharing shortfall.

There are multiple budget work sessions in progress: a preliminary Add/Delete discussion on Tuesday, April 25, 2017; a final Add/Delete discussion on Monday, May 1, 2017; the Livable, Green, and Prospering City work session on Tuesday, March 21, 2017; and a special adoption Budget Meeting on Thursday, May 4, 2017.

Chair King expressed some concerns regarding the budget and stated that the best way to change our emphasis is to change funding priorities on the operational and capital budgets, for example street resurfacing in conjunction with Complete Streets. It is suggested that the Complete Streets guidelines be used to plan street resurfacing. If the guidelines are not used during the planning phase of a resurfacing project, there is a possibility that it will not be done for another ten years.

Commission Schroder inquired to Staff about the Old Cameron Run Trail for \$2.8 million. The trail is in the Eisenhower Valley area and runs between Brooks Run and the Eisenhower Metro Station.

Staff noted there is not a trail at this time but plans for design and construction will be in the future. The project is currently funded for \$6.9 million total and funding from the grant is \$6.8 million which is a \$100,000 increase from the previous TIP.

Funding for the Van Dorn multi-modal project was requested through the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Smart Scale program for \$20 million. \$200,000 is for the bridge which will come out of the next fiscal year budget.

The proposed budget allocated for the Complete Streets program is \$452,000. After accounting for staff expenses, less than 50% of the funding is available for projects in FY 2016 and FY 2017. The Complete Streets program was funded at a \$100,000 reduction from the previous year. Staff explained that Council approved a onetime funding increase for FY 2017 but not for FY 2018.

Staff provided the Commission a progress report which highlights the Transportation and Environmental Services goals. Prior year capital funds remain for Complete Streets, totaling approximately \$1 million. Much of this amount is already reserved for projects.

The Commission approved edits to the letter to Council providing guidance on the FY 2018 budget for Staff to prepare.

5. Other Business

Carrie Sanders introduced Mr. Durham to the Commission to present the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)'s Safe Routes to School project in conjunction with Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS). In recent years, the City of Alexandria and ACPS has made a significant effort to make walking and biking safer. The implementation of the City's Complete Streets program under the leadership of the program's manager and coordinator includes features such as safer pedestrian crossings and integrated bike lanes. The adoption of the new Bicycle and Pedestrian Chapters of the Transportation Plan in April 2016 has an increased emphasis on safety, measureable goals, and objectives. Another part of the City's initiative is the completion of numerous sidewalk projects, installation of pedestrian crossing signals, installation of over 30 Capital Bikeshare stations, increased enforcement of traffic laws, and the initiation of walk audits for all Alexandria Elementary Schools with the completion of three school audits in 2016 and the remaining school audits to be completed by Spring 2017.

The most compelling evidence of Alexandria's enduring commitment to making streets safer is the City's adoption of the Vision Zero Policy in January 2017. The City has initiated the development of its own action plan for achieving its Vision Zero policy goal of eliminating traffic deaths and serious injuries by 2028.

ACPS initiatives in recent years include Safe Routes to School; supporting a health and wellness goal in the ACPS 2015 – 2020 Strategic Plan; updating school health policies to explicitly promote walking and biking; hiring an instructor to educate students in health, physical education, and family life education; and initiating the Bicycles in the Schools (BITS) program to incorporate bicycling skills and safety training into Physical Education programs.

The Commission approved the endorsement of the Safe Routes to Schools grant application for the ACPS as consistent with the Transportations Master Plan.

At 9:00 pm, Commissioner McMahan made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was second by Commissioner Michaelis, voted on and unanimously approved by the Commission.