



City of Alexandria

Transportation Commission

Regular Meeting

January 20, 2015

7:00 p.m.

Council Workroom

MINUTES

Commissioners Present: Commissioner Jake Jakubek, Chair Nathan Macek, Vice Chair Jerry King, Commissioner Stephen Klejst, Commissioner James Lewis, Commissioner Christine Michaelis, and Appointed commissioner Dave Brown

Commissioners Excused: Commissioner Annika Moman, Councilman Lovain

Staff Present: Allan Fye – T&ES, Gabriel Ortiz – T&ES, Patrick Reed - T&ES, Carrie Sanders – T&ES , Ramond Robinson – T&ES, Steve Sindiong -T&ES, Karen Callaham – T&ES, and Carrie Beach - P&Z

Chair Nathan Macek called the Transportation Commission meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

1. December 16, 2015 Meeting Minutes

Chair Nathan Macek asked if there were any edits to the December 16, 2015 minutes. There being no edits, Commissioner Jerry King made a motion to approve the November minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner Stephen Klejst, voted on and unanimously approved by the Commission.

2. Updates to Receive (Consent Items)

The Commission received funding updates for the following ongoing projects: the West End Transitway, the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan, the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station, the King Street Metrorail Station, the Motorcoach Task Force / Study, and the Seminary Road High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Ramp.

T&ES Acting Deputy Director of Transportation Carrie Sanders reported that the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) released the HB2 project scores on January 19, 2016. Analysis and scoring is complete and three of the City's projects were ranked on the list for funding by the CTB. Ms. Sanders reiterated the project application amounts: \$1M for conduit and traffic signal improvements along Eisenhower Avenue; \$7M for the integration of traffic signals into the City's Intelligent Transportation System network, and \$5.2M for the Old Cameron Run Trail.

Chair Macek noted that staff should consider having a future Commission meeting at the Traffic Operations Center, so that Commissioners could see how it operates.

Commissioner Jakubek stated he served on the West End Transitway Policy Advisory Group, which held its sixth and last meeting on December 3, 2015. He added that a project fact sheet was distributed to the group in response to discussions during that meeting. It provided requested information related to the alternatives and provided information on ridership, capital and operating costs, benefits accrued by each alternative, funding and financing consideration. He asked if staff would follow up before the Transportation Commission's vote during the February meeting on why the Transportation Systems Management (TSM) option would not qualify for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Capital Investment Grant funds and also inquired why the option may not be competitive enough to receive regional and state funds available through Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) and Commonwealth processes. He asked how the TSM option would be pursued without the availability of those funds, and also asked if there are alternate funding sources that could be identified for the TSM alternative. He specified the Draft Capital Funding Plan for the Build Option indicated the City could expect \$62,140,000 in 70% NVTA funds, \$50,660,000 in FTA small start funds, and \$27,200,000 in Private Capital Contributions. He pointed out those funds would be more than enough funding for the TSM option. He asked for a similar chart breaking down the cost for all alternatives. He mentioned that Washington, DC used Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funds for their street car project and wanted to know if those funds could be explored for TSM streetscape improvements. Commissioner Jakubek inquired about the source of funding for bus acquisitions for the West End Transitway and asked if the plan would change depending on the alternative chosen. Commissioner Jakubek additionally asked what costs are involved in the stormwater management improvements for each of the alternatives. Chair Macek requested staff to follow-up Commissioner Jakubek's request, and also include guidance on the FTA Small Starts program. He indicated that staff should highlight what capital improvements would be eligible and state requirements. He also asked staff to include the framework for how flex funds are used in Virginia.

Commissioner Christine Michaelis stated that her community is very concerned about the Seminary Road HOV Ramp and the potential for a significant increase in traffic traveling east on Seminary Road. The community is specifically concerned about the possibility that the ramp may be changed from HOV-3 to HOV-2. Commissioner Michaelis inquired about Seminary Road traffic counts for 2016, noting that the VDOT counts were done during construction and may not reflect normal conditions.

3. Commission Updates

Commissioner Stephen Klejst reported the DASH General Manager reported that the testing for the real time bus data will begin in March with implementation by June. He added that DASH applied for two Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) demonstration grants for traffic mitigation and a computer-aided dispatch system.

Commissioner Lewis indicated the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Confederate Memorials and Street Names will hold its first meeting in City Hall on January 27, 2016 in Sister Cities Room 1101 from 7 - 9 pm. He shared that the meeting's handouts will be posted on the City's City Manager's office webpage.

Commissioner Michaelis reported that at the January 19, 2016 Ad Hoc Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Advisory Committee meeting, staff presented the City's draft plan of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Update. The draft was well received by most in attendance. She also stated citizens have until January 31, 2016 to go online and provide feedback on the draft plan by visiting AlexEngage, the City's online engagement forum.

David Brown, who will be the new Planning Commission representative on the Transportation

Commission, was in attendance. Chair Macek asked Mr. Brown to share his background, including a list of the other City groups/committees Mr. Brown has served or currently serves. Mr. Brown served on the West End Transitway Policy Advisory Group and is currently a member of the Ad Hoc Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Advisory Committee.

4. Six Year Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan

T&ES staff member Gabriel Ortiz stated that he is the City's TDM Manager. Mr. Ortiz defined TDM as policies, strategies and programs aimed to reduce the demand-side of congestion. The City's Local Motion program is essential to the City's TDM initiatives and programs. He gave an overview of Local Motion's incentives, events, and services. He stated that the Long Range Transportation Demand Management Plan was initially mandated by DRPT in 2011. A Long Range Plan was required of any jurisdiction receiving annual TDM grant funding. In December 2014, DRPT disseminated a new requirement for grant recipients to develop a six-year Transportation Demand Plan instead of the 25 year plan to more closely align with how transit agencies do their planning and receive funding. In partnership with DRPT, City staff consolidated actions in the adopted master plan to a six-year timeframe. In addition to updated funding information, the six-year plan includes recent developments and changes to the City's TDM Program such as the mobile transit store, collaborations with Arlington County, and the addition of a new marketing and outreach contractor. The City's TDM Strategic Plan for Fiscal Year 2017 – Fiscal Year 2022 will be heard by City Council at its February 23, 2016 meeting. The Commission discussed the need to do more outreach to the school population to reduce vehicular drop off / pick up at schools, and the need for a Virginia Rail Express (VRE) ticket kiosk at the VRE office.

Commissioner James Lewis made a motion to communicate to City Council the Commission's support of TDM marketing efforts, emphasizing the importance the TDM Plan's new marketing and outreach efforts. The Transportation Commission additionally recommended further coordination between the City and Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) to encourage ACPS to consider TDM strategies to reduce vehicular commutes and improve traffic management in the vicinity of schools. Finally, the Commission encouraged the Council to identify funding in order to implement the Plan as many of the strategies within the TDM Plan require additional funding for implementation. Commissioner King seconded the motion, which was voted on and approved unanimously by the Commission.

5. WMATA FY 2017 Budget Update

T&ES staff Ramond Robinson gave a recap of the WMATA FY 2017 budget process. He reiterated WMATA's top priorities: 1) to ensure the safety and security of customers and employees; 2) to regain the trust and satisfaction of current customers; 3) to draw new customers to the system; and, 4) to reduce costs, bring expense growth in-line with expected revenues, and reduce jurisdictional subsidy requirements. He stated the primary challenge in the budget is that expense growth is outpacing revenue growth. This is leading to year-over-year increases in the required jurisdictional operating subsidy. Closing this gap is critical to the long-term financial stability of WMATA.

For its operational budget, WMATA has proposed no fare increases, no service cuts, and for jurisdictional subsidies to remain flat. WMATA has proposed to fund more preventative maintenance activities in the capital budget; reduced the Board efficiency work plan by \$20M and a \$2M administrative reduction.

Metro's proposed FY2017-2021 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) financial plan relies on an anticipated investment of \$6.0 billion from the federal government, state, and local government partners, \$1.1 billion long-term financing, and other sources. This CIP focuses on WMATA's state of good repair by improving the condition of existing facilities and systems, with particular emphasis on projects that minimize life-cycle costs. Metro and the contributing jurisdictions are now focused on completing and executing a one-year extension to the current Capital Funding Agreement (CFA) that

expires at the end of FY2016. Under this approach, the existing agreement between WMATA and the jurisdictions would continue through the end of FY2017. The extension would include a 'not to exceed' amount for required jurisdictional capital contributions (including local match, system performance, and debt) for FY2017. Once the one-year extension is in place, WMATA and the jurisdictions will resume work on a comprehensive multi-year funding agreement, including the addition of Loudoun County in advance of the opening of Silver Line Phase 2.

Next steps include a public hearing and outreach on the CIP and a CFA work session. The approval of the CFA by jurisdictions is needed by March 2016. The budget adoption and approval of the CFA extension is slated for April 2016. In May, WMATA will submit federal grant applications and begin the FY 2017 budget on July 1, 2016.

6. FY 2017 Interdepartmental Work Program / 2016 Transportation Commission Work Plan

T&ES staff Steve Sindiong introduced Planning & Zoning (P&Z) staff Carrie Beach. Ms. Beach stated that each year, City departments and agencies that are engaged in long range planning and plan implementation jointly prepare a draft work program for the upcoming fiscal year. Ms. Beach gave a recap of the 2016 projects that were completed and the nine projects to be completed in 2017. She mentioned that the Office of Performance and Accountability (OPA) and P&Z will be kicking off an update to the new City's Strategic Plan this spring which will be brought to the Transportation Commission for feedback on the transportation principles. The last strategic plan update was in 2010. The goal is to have a draft by end of the fiscal year and adoption in September 2016. She spoke about familiar new projects starting in FY 2017 and new projects that have not appeared on any lists. A number of projects on the list are dependent upon funding. The Planning Commission considered this item on January 7, 2016 and was in general agreement with the proposed draft work program. The Planning Commission noted that North Potomac Yard remains a high priority for the City and should proceed in a timely manner. They would also like to see parking addressed on a Citywide basis in the future, especially the parking districts process.

Mr. Sindiong stated that each year, staff provides to the Transportation Commission a calendar year work plan that is reflective of the existing and proposed Interdepartmental Work Program, and includes additional information on transportation programs, funding items, and regional projects. He stated the work plan provides an indication to the Commission of the items that will be brought to them over the course of the calendar year. The Transportation Commission work plan is a working document that is often changed during the course of the year, as project schedules change and other previously unanticipated items are added. Mr. Sindiong provided an overview of the transportation projects on the list and indicated the Commission has received updates on many of them and the Work Program includes additional meeting dates that the projects are anticipated to be brought to the Commission.

7. Other Business

Chair Macek indicated the Transportation Commission bylaws state the Commission shall elect its Chair and Vice Chair among its voting members by majority vote at its regular meeting in the month of December. Because of the number of vacancies in December, it was recommended to postpone the elections to January. He stated each officer selected shall serve for a term of one year and no person may serve for more than two consecutive terms in either office. After informing members of the open voting process, nominations were made and the Commission voted. Commissioner King was elected as Chair and Commissioner Macek was elected as Vice Chair.

Commissioner Macek made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 pm. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Lewis, voted on and unanimously approved by the Commission.