

AGENDA ITEM #5: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

SUBJECT:

Minutes of the previous Passenger Rail Task Force meeting.

BACKGROUND:

Minutes from the Passenger Rail Task Force meeting held on December 17, 2013.

Attachment 5

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Approve the minutes.

**Summary Minutes of the
HRTPO Passenger Rail Task Force Meeting
December 17, 2013**

The HRTPO Passenger Rail Task Force Meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. in the Regional Boardroom, 723 Woodlake Drive, Chesapeake, Virginia, with the following in attendance:

Members:

Paul Fraim, NO	Emily Stock, DRPT
Michael King, NN	Julie Timm, HRT
Alexander Metcalf, TEMS	Jackson C. Tuttle II, WM
Jeff Raliski, NO	Susan Wilson, PO
Mark Shea, VB	Kenneth I. Wright, PO

Members Absent:

W. Keith Cannady, HA	Jay McArthur, AMTRAK
Timothy C. Cross, YK	Allen Murphy, Jr., JC
Kevan Danker, WATA	Reed Nester, WM
Anne Ducey-Ortiz, GL	Jamie Oliver, IW
Sherry Early, SU	Kevin Page, DRPT
John Friedmann, NSCorp	Thomas G. Shepperd, YK
Marc Hoecker, NSCorp	C. Earl Sorey, Jr., CH
Quintin Kendall, CSX	Kevin Wyne, PQ

HRTPO Staff:

Dwight Farmer	Camelia Ravanbakht
Arkopal Goswami	Chris Wichman
Jessica M. Nappi	

Other Participants:

Barry Bishop, Greater Norfolk Corporation	Steve Lambert, CH
Will Christopher, HRPTA	Martha McClees, VB Vision
Paul Fillion, NO	Bryan Pennington, NO
Robbyn Gayer, NO	Danny Plaughter, VHSR
Louis Guy	Scott Plum, Norfolk Southern
LJ Hansen, SU	Derek J. Piper, Parsons Brinckerhoff
Yang He, TEMS	Eric Stringfield, VDOT
Tim Kerr, Chesapeake Alliance	Bryant Thomas, NO
Edwin "Chip" Kraft, TEMS	

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 10:03 a.m.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There were no public comments.

3. SUBMITTED PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no submitted public comments.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Fraim asked for additions or deletions to the agenda. Mr. Shea Moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Mr. King. The Motion Carried.

5. VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF RAIL AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION: MAJOR PASSENGER RAIL INITIATIVES

Ms. Stock briefed the Passenger Rail Task Force on several DRPT's major passenger rail initiatives that impact the Hampton Roads region, including the following highlights:

- **Amtrak Virginia**
 - During its 9.5 months of operation in FY 2013, the Norfolk service ridership was 39,000.
 - The FY 2013 ridership indicates that the Newport News to Washington, DC service is the 5th most popular in the state.
- **Norfolk Service Expansion**
 - Funds are scheduled to be programmed in FY 2016-2018 for trains 2 and 3, with service starting in year 2022.
- **Southeast High Speed Rail: Tier II Richmond Area to Potomac River Segment and Raleigh Segment (expected to finish in 2014 ROD and FEIS)**
 - The Virginia-North Carolina Interstate High Speed Rail Compact is scheduled to meet on January 7, 2014.

6. HAMPTON ROADS PASSENGER RAIL STUDY – PHASE 2B DRAFT REPORT: OPERATIONS PLAN AND COSTS

Dr. Metcalf briefed the Passenger Rail Task Force on the Operations Plan and Cost component of the Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Alternatives Analysis Study (Phase 2B). This component of the study develops the financial and business plan evaluation of the Norfolk-Richmond, Washington, DC high-speed corridor.

Dr. Metcalf stated that we are currently in Month 10, with the Rail Alternatives, Ridership and Revenue, Rail Service Analysis, Operating and Capital Costs, and Financial and Economic Analysis tasks completed.

Dr. Kraft briefed the Task Force on the Background/Context for the Operational Analysis and the Route Options under Development for the Norfolk-Richmond-Washington, DC high-speed corridor. Dr. Kraft stated that there are several route options from Norfolk to Washington, DC under analysis: existing rail corridor, northern and southern Greenfields via Petersburg and Hopewell, and Richmond Direct Greenfield:

- Route Option 1 – Via Petersburg
 - Option 1A – Southern Greenfield
 - Option 1B – Northern Greenfield
- Route Option 2 – Via Hopewell
 - Option 2A – Northern Greenfield
 - Option 2B – Southern Greenfield
- Route Option 3 – Richmond Direct

The speeds under analysis are 130-mph and 220-mph.

Dr. Kraft indicated the performance of the options at both speeds under analysis will be dependent on the characteristics of the option that is ultimately developed between Richmond and Washington, DC. However, it is likely that the 130-mph diesel would operate between 1:05 and 1:30, and the 220-mph electric would likely operate between 0:55 and 1:30.

Dr. Kraft stated that the Petersburg and Hopewell route options have the same times, and that these route options are five minutes slower than Option 3 – Richmond Direct, plus an additional five minutes if a stop is added. Dr. Kraft indicated that this time difference is not enough to drive major differences in ridership between the options. The route selection would most likely be made based on cost, environmental factors, and route synergies.

Dr. Kraft concluded his briefing stating that the all the options at both speeds under analysis indicate the Operating Ratio is positive, with a surplus to cover the capital costs.

7. HAMPTON ROADS PASSENGER RAIL STUDY – PHASE 2B DRAFT REPORT: RAIL RIDERSHIP AND REVENUE FORECASTS

Dr. Metcalf briefed the Passenger Rail Task Force on the Rail Ridership and Revenue Forecasts component of the Hampton Roads Passenger Rail Alternatives Analysis Study (Phase 2B). This component of the study provides estimates of total yearly demand, segment volumes, station volumes, and revenues on an annual basis over the study period 2013-2050. This also includes sensitivity and risk analysis for a range of factors such as socioeconomic growth, train frequencies, train fares, and gas prices to show how demand could be impacted over time.

Dr. Metcalf indicated that the travel market forecast for the study area – which extends from Boston to Charlotte – is expected to increase to 67 million in 2025, to 72 million in 2035, and increases to 79 million in 2045.

Dr. Metcalf presented the passenger rail ridership forecasts for the Hampton Roads – Richmond – Washington Corridor for 2025, which indicated that the passenger rail system generates 3.66 to 3.73 million trips in 2025 for 130-mph options. For 220-mph options, the ridership ranges from 5.28 to 5.38 million trips.

Dr. Metcalf also presented the corridor transportation mode market share forecasts in 2025 for each of the options under analysis. In addition, Dr. Metcalf provided statistics on the sources of the rail trips for each of the options, stating that the trips diverted from other modes – primarily auto – are the most important source of rail trips, which accounts for 68 to 73 percent of overall rail travel market. Dr. Metcalf stated that induced travel demand in the corridor as result of the new passenger rail service is 7.8 to 11 percent of the rail travel market. As for the diverted trips from other modes, more than 90 percent trips are from auto mode, but the auto driving still dominates future travel market, as this is still a very effective option for shorter trips in the current Hampton Roads – Richmond – Washington Corridor.

After some discussion, Mr. Tuttle questioned whether the Peninsula market was being properly captured in the study analysis. Mr. Farmer indicated that while the Phase 2B study does capture the Peninsula market, the study does not include detailed engineering, environmental, and data collection for the Peninsula.

8. HRT TRANSIT EXTENSION STUDIES UPDATE: HRT

Ms. Timm briefed the Passenger Rail Task Force on the two transit extension studies currently underway – the Virginia Beach Transit Extension Study (VBTES) and the Naval Station Norfolk Transit Extension Study (NSNTES).

Ms. Timm stated that the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requires an analysis of two different technologies for the VBTES: light rail and bus rapid. There are three fixed guideway alignment alternatives from Newtown Road under study for the VBTES. Ms. Timm provided the estimated capital costs (YOE 2018) for the Newtown Road to the Rosemont SGA, Newtown Road to the Oceanfront via Norfolk Southern RR alternative, and Newtown Road to the Oceanfront via Hilltop by technology. Ms. Timm also provided the estimated annual operations and maintenance costs (local share only) as well as the forecasted 2034 average weekday boardings and the annualized boardings with tourism (2034) by alternative. Ms. Timm indicated that the VBTES is currently under the Draft Environmental Impact Study (EIS) and provided an overview of the upcoming EIS major milestones. Ms. Timm pointed out that a major milestone will be in September 2014 when the City of Virginia Beach Council will select the Locally Preferred Alternative LPA and completion of Draft EIS. Ms. Timm indicated that they anticipate the completion of the EIS and a Record of Decision in March 2016.

Ms. Timm stated that the NSNTES is currently in the Local Corridor Planning phase, and that possible future phases could include FTA Federal New Starts Process and the Alternative Process. She indicated that the major milestones of the study include defining the purpose and need and the broad range of alternatives, and refining alignment alternatives. Ms. Timm stated that public and stakeholder involvement will be throughout all milestones of the study. Ms. Timm indicated that the City of Norfolk is in the completing the Local Corridor Planning phase to determine the purpose and need and reasonable corridors for fixed guideway transit services between the Tide Light Rail service and Naval Station Norfolk. Once the Local Corridor Planning study is complete, Ms. Timm indicated that HRT and the City of Norfolk will seek to begin a Draft EIS, which will review a reasonable range of corridor and technology alternatives.

Ms. Timm stated that the budget for the Peninsula Fixed-Guideway Transit Study is \$1.9 million, and that the Local Corridor Planning is necessary to identify areas in need of high capacity, fixed guideway transit connectivity between Hampton and Newport News.

9. PASSENGER RAIL STATION DEVELOPMENT

City of Newport News – Multimodal Station Development

Mr. Piper briefed the Passenger Rail Task Force on the efforts currently underway in the City of Newport News on the Multimodal Station at Bland Boulevard and Jefferson Avenue. Mr. Piper indicated that this multimodal station would accommodate current and future modes, including Amtrak, vehicular, bicycle/pedestrian, rail/air connection, HRT bus, and future light rail. Mr. Piper stated that the site alternatives development and screening is underway as this is undergoing the NEPA process. In addition to the alternatives analysis, the following tasks are underway: NEPA documentation, public outreach, business model, preliminary and final design, cost estimates, and construction management. Mr. Piper stated that they anticipate the following expected outcomes: Class 1 Amtrak facility, iconic passenger rail facility, access to and accommodation for existing and future multimodal transportation, and minimize impacts on CSX operations. Mr. Piper indicated that a soliciting community input and establishing a work group comprising of key stakeholders to participate in the process of defining the vision in the master plan. Mr. Piper provided an overview of the project schedule, indicating that construction is anticipated to begin in September 2015 and complete in February 2018.

City of Norfolk – Amtrak Station at Harbor Park

Mr. Filion briefed the Passenger Rail Task Force on the completion of the Amtrak Station in Harbor Park. Mr. Filion indicated that the grand opening of the 3,500 sq. ft. station was on December 2, 2013. In addition to the architectural details and amenities, Mr. Filion provided additional information on the lease with Amtrak and train and bus schedules.

10. SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING

Mr. Farmer stated that the next meeting of the Passenger Rail Task Force will be scheduled in February 2014.

11. FOR YOUR INFORMATION

12. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

There were no items to discuss.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no more business before the Hampton Roads Transportation Programming Subcommittee, the meeting was adjourned at 12:37 p.m.