

## **DRAFT HRT0 Subcommittee Minutes – June 10, 2019**

Suffolk Public Works Operations Center, Suffolk, VA

The meeting was chaired by Robert Lewis (Suffolk). The meeting started at 9:35 am.

### **1. Public Comment Period**

- Nobody from the public requested to speak.

2. **Minutes** of the May 13<sup>th</sup> meeting were reviewed. Motion for approval was made by Brian Fowler (Norfolk) and seconded by Frank Hickman (Virginia Beach). The minutes were approved.

### **3. Hampton Roads Operations Strategy**

- Mike Miller (VDOT) started the topic by mentioning that the dialog about the HRT0 goals document was good last month. He added that the essence of document is still valid, even if there are additional additions and modifications that need to be made. Mike and Robert then asked to go around the room to see what each municipality needs to reach a consensus or if there were specific concerns about the document.
- Frank Hickman spoke for Virginia Beach. He mentioned that he would personally like for his chain of command (Public Works Director and Deputy City Manager) to see these goals, but this is not the right time for Virginia Beach. Frank added that Virginia Beach has been meeting on Smart Cities concepts and C/AV technologies, and interest of these concepts in the city is rising. He ended by noting that he thinks the response will be positive in Virginia Beach and that there's enough generality in each of the goals to be acceptable.
- Leo Blades spoke for Hampton. Leo started by stating that he agreed with Frank that he needed to talk to city management, including the Public Works Director. Leo added that he has no concerns with the document and that it's a good place to start. He also thinks that it needs an IT piece.
- Kevin Eppley spoke for Chesapeake. Kevin also needs to talk with city management. However, Chesapeake has lost a city engineer and the City Manager will soon be leaving. But he has no concerns with the document. Kevin also mentioned that the city has an RFP out for a next generation fiber network.
- Brian Fowler spoke for Norfolk. Brian noted that Norfolk won't be as on board as other cities. He is concerned with the communications piece when he has the conversation with city management. Brian added that we need the "Why?", and "what are we going to get out of this?" We need to relate it to benefits for the city, such as improved travel time reliability, safety, or economic development, since this is what city leaders think about. He can't see taking this to city management without having more layperson info that shows what we get out of it. Brian also noted other concerns:
  - The word "Embrace" is used a lot in the document. What does it mean? Should we embrace shared contracting opportunities?

- For goal #6, he is not sure about being consistent with other localities. Will we always want to do what others are doing?
- Norfolk has a Department of Transit, which is different than other cities. Norfolk is looking more at moving people than vehicles.
- For goal #8, he is more interested in the goal than true strategies.
- Randy Cooper spoke for Newport News. Randy stated that he thinks it looks good. He added that they work with other cities and the state on many of these goals and some of it is already being done. He cautioned that anything that takes money from other projects could be an issue but that money coming from elsewhere, however, would probably be supported. Randy finished by noting that we need to work together with incident management plans (i.e. for the James River Bridge and interstates) when we push/divert traffic towards other cities or VDOT roadways.
- Robert Lewis spoke for Suffolk. Robert noted that they were behind this effort, but that he also needed to share this with his City Manager and Mayor. He added that it is written to be very general/broad. For example, for goal #1 he doesn't think it is looking at a particular spec or equipment but rather the ATC standard. It's more about interoperability/communications.
- Mike Miller spoke for VDOT. He has vetted this with many others at VDOT. Based on last month's HRT0 meeting he talked with the consultant about making changes but he thought it was getting too specific. Mike was looking to get behind it "in essence". It's a list that we can use when talking with Feds about regional projects.
- Mike M. asked Brian F. how can we bring Norfolk along. Brian stated that we are missing the higher level piece that explains why we are doing this. He also noted that we need a purpose and needs statement, and he would feel better if it had a different title. Mike M. responded that we would be amiss if we don't have a document showing this when we go to the Feds with a project.
- Robert L. added that we need to start with grand vision. To start the journey we need a first step, which are these goals and objectives, even though each locality will be a little different within these goals. Goal #1 might be different in Suffolk vs. Virginia Beach vs. Norfolk. But the needs are similar. To this point we've talked about regionalism, but then do nothing.
- Leo Blades (Hampton) said that it should be easy to come up with a purpose and need for this project. Mike M. added that the more we add the less general it comes. There's no right or wrong way to come up with this.
- Brian F. mentioned that the goals are not project specific. But what does it mean in terms of funding/staffing? Why are we doing it and what is the outcome? If it goes to the TPO Board, is this the type of info they would want? He doesn't feel good about it but doesn't want to be in the way.
- Frank H. stated that we need an independent voice speaking for the region (i.e. a consultant).

- Mike M. asked if this is something that we need to go to with the TTAC or TPO Board? Keith Nichols (HRTPO) responded that generally, we only take items to the TPO Board when there is an action to take or for adoption.
- Brian F. mentioned that we need to be ready to answer tough questions. He would love to have ultimate process document and gaps analysis that includes strategies that need to be implemented to get the desired outcome. He would feel much better taking that to city management.
- Robert L. stated that the reality is VDOT is already taking the lead on a lot of this. Do we want to follow them or go our own way? We haven't said we're going with the new statewide controller but practically we will be. He then added that we can go to the consultant to get a more specific purpose and need. Brian F. responded that it would probably be a similar purpose and need as other areas. We can probably use others.
- Robert L. said that the purpose and need has nothing to do with not enough funding or staffing. A purpose and needs has to do with things like automated vehicles and new technologies. It's a vision of where we are going.
- Brian F. stated that we can't get away from the fact that it won't work without proper maintenance and funding. But it helps sell it if we have a regional document. Mike M added that once we have a regional document, it will eventually come. This will help us get there, although some will take longer than others. Smart technologies are coming whether we like it or not. Frank H. added that this is what gets us there.
- Kevin E. brought up that it always goes back to "What's in it for me" and we need to stop doing that. Robert added that if we don't get out of the "What's in it for me?" mindset then the people working well after us will still be talking about this.
- Robert L. noted that the next step will be to run this through each of the cities, and he asked the group how long this will take. Frank H. responded that it would take 60 days for Virginia Beach. Brian F. said that he was not sure for Norfolk since he hasn't had to go through this process before. Randy C. said 60 days is good for Newport News.
- Iris Vaughn (FHWA) asked if we are looking for someone at FHWA to look at these goals and provide their opinions. Robert noted that it would be beneficial to get a look from FHWA to get a specialized opinion, and Iris responded that she would pass it along to those at the FHWA Resource Center that can help with this. Mike M. said that it would be great to be able to meet with FHWA to discuss.
- Frank H. asked if we have a Powerpoint of this. Then every city will be on the same page. Robert L. responded that we will get one. Mike M. added that this Powerpoint will be a high level type of document noting what the vision is and why it's important with talking points. Brian F. also added that there is a Vision Statement in the Operations Strategy document.
- Robert L. concluded the topic by stating that the next HRTPO meeting will be in September to give everybody time to talk with their cities. There will be no July or August meetings. He also said that he would keep the group up-to-date with the Powerpoint status and FHWA feedback.

#### **4. HRTPO Update**

- Sam Belfield (HRTPO) provided a summary of the RCTO-TIM Committee meetings held on May 14<sup>th</sup> and May 15<sup>th</sup>. Highlights of the presentation included:
  - SHRP 2 “TIM” Training update – 6,608 total personnel trained since 2011.
  - Virginia Multidisciplinary Crash Investigation Team (VMCIT) presentation. The team consists of a psychologist, a Virginia State Trooper, and an engineer position which is currently vacant.
  - Drone demonstration – York-Poquoson Sherriff’s office and York County Fire.
  - The VDOT Hampton Roads District will host a demonstration of drones on August 12th. Sam will provide further information once it becomes available.
  - Sam concluded by showing pictures of some of the benefits of using drones for incident response.
  - Chris Mills (WSP) added that VDOT just released an RFI related to drones, and VDOT is preparing a user manual for drone usage.
- Keith Nichols (HRTPO) mentioned that, with hurricane season approaching, he would soon be updating the regional Operations Emergency Contacts phone and email list. He indicated that he would send last year’s list to committee members in the next two weeks and ask for updated contact info.

#### **5. For Your Information**

- Robert L. mentioned the benefits of the SHRP-2 training workshops. Mike Corwin (VDOT) added that he had his staff attend one of the training sessions last month. He said that the class is great for safety awareness and as a refresher course, and Jim Stanek will conduct the training wherever he is asked to.

#### **6. Meeting Schedule**

- Based on the conversation earlier in the meeting, it was decided that the next HRTPO meeting will be held in September. Brian Fowler volunteered to host the meeting in the City of Norfolk and provide a demo of their digital video management system.
- Steve Hetrick (Albeck Gerken) mentioned that the VDOT local programming workshop will start the day of the scheduled September 9<sup>th</sup> HRTPO meeting. The committee decided to move the meeting to September 16<sup>th</sup>.

The meeting adjourned at 10:35 am. A tour of the center was conducted following the meeting.