

MINUTES
NVTC COMMISSION MEETING – APRIL 5, 2001
NVTC CONFERENCE ROOM - ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

The meeting of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission was called to order by Vice-Chairman Zimmerman at 8:04 P.M.

Members Present

William Bogard
Sharon Bulova
William D. Euille
Paul Ferguson
Jay Fisette
Katherine Hanley
Dana Kauffman
Elaine McConnell
Scott Silverthorne
David F. Snyder
Christopher Zimmerman

Members Absent

James F. Almand
Leo J. Bevon
Richard H. Black
Gerald Connolly
Kerry J. Donley
Roger J. McClure
William C. Mims
Mary Margaret Whipple

Staff Present

Tamara Ashby
Julie Bourbon
Rhonda W. Gilcrest
Scott Kalkwarf
Sharmila Samarasinghe
Pete Sklannik, Jr. (VRE)
Jennifer Straub
Dale Zehner (VRE)

Minutes of NVTC's Meeting of March 1, 2001

On a motion by Mr. Kauffman and a second by Mrs. Bulova, the commission unanimously approved the minutes. The vote in favor was cast by commissioners Bogard, Bulova, Euille, Fissette, Hanley, Kauffman, McConnell, Silverthorne, Snyder, and Zimmerman.

Pentagon Renovation Project/Metro Entrance Facility

Sharmila Samarasinghe introduced Chuck Malacarne (Project Manager), Mike Yopp, and Brett Eaton from the Pentagon Renovation Office. She stated that NVTC has continued to monitor this project and NVTC staff attends regular bi-weekly meetings regarding the project. Mr. Malacarne stated that the real impetus behind this project is security. Congress has mandated that every federal building meet safety and security requirements. With the current circulation to the bus and Metrorail facilities, passengers and vehicles can come within a few feet of the Pentagon. Mr. Malacarne stated that the construction contract has been awarded to the firm of Henzel Phelps and is designed to minimize impact to commuters. Mr. Yopp provided commissioners with an overview of the specifics of the project. Ground breaking for the new bus facility was on February 7, 2001. Phase II will begin on April 9, 2001.

Vice-Chairman Zimmerman noted that the project has improved a great deal from the original version and many of the concerns and suggestions raised by local staff, other interested agencies, and WMATA have been addressed. He stated that Senator Warner and Congressman Moran helped to bring about these changes. He also stated that as construction begins, impact to commuters will need to be assessed. He expressed his concern that it may have a long-term effect on transit service. NVTC may want to do some analysis in the future on the long-term implications of this project.

In response to a question from Mrs. Bulova, Mr. Yopp stated that the cost of the project is being paid for by all of the branches of the armed services.

Mr. Malacarne stated that the website (<http://metro.pentagon.mil>) will provide updated construction information and photographs, with links to a help line. There will also be project brochures distributed to the public and informational displays will be set up at the Pentagon.

Legislative Items

State Issues. Governor Gilmore has signed HB 2224, Delegate Almand's bill establishing 80 percent as the combined state matching ratio for FY 2002 for the transit formula (operating assistance) and 95 percent thereafter. Without additional state funding, however, the bill will not increase state aid received by NVTC. It does establish a firm target for equal treatment of transit and highways.

Governor Gilmore also signed Delegate McClure's HB 2606 without any changes. The bill creates a new regional transportation authority for Northern Virginia. The Barry Subcommittee will meet on May 9th, July 11th, and September 12th.

Federal Issues. Among the issues of importance to NVTC are bills that would increase the limit on tax-free employee benefits for transit to \$175 (to match parking). Senator Schumer's S 217 is co-sponsored by Senator Warner; HR 318 is sponsored by Representative McGovern and two others.

The VRE Operations Board has requested that the commission contact its congressional delegation to support two legislative initiatives that would benefit VRE. The High-Speed Rail Investment Act of 2001 (S 250) was introduced by Senators Biden and Hutchison with 49 co-sponsors. It would authorize Amtrak to issue \$12 billion of bonds over 10 years. Holders of the bonds would receive federal tax credits in lieu of interest. States would be required to provide a 20 percent match. For VRE, a share of these funds would leverage the \$67 million already provided by the Virginia General Assembly to allow construction of rail improvements in the Washington-Richmond Corridor that should allow VRE to add trains in the future. Another rail initiative supported by the VRE Operations Board is a draft bill (to be introduced by Representative Clement) that would provide a forum for resolving disputes with freight railroads regarding passenger trail access. APTA's Commuter Rail Committee and others are still working on the details.

Mrs. Hanley moved, with a second by Mr. Kauffman, to authorize NVTC's chairman to send a letter to NVTC's congressional delegation in support of pending legislation that would encourage the use of Metrochek and benefit VRE. The vote in favor was cast by commissioners Bogard, Bulova, Eulle, Fisette, Hanley, Kauffman, McConnell, Silverthorne, Snyder, and Zimmerman.

Mr. Snyder suggested NVTC's Legislative Committee work to prepare a proposal regarding the new regional transportation authority and provide it to the Barry Subcommittee. Vice-Chairman Zimmerman agreed, especially since there will likely be revisions to HB 2606 during next year's General Assembly Session. Mrs. Hanley stated that NVTC and local jurisdictions already have taken positions as reflected in NVTC correspondence and the Mayors and Chairs' letter. Mr. Fisette suggested that this issue be put on NVTC's agenda each month.

WMATA Items

Washington Regional Mobility Initiative. Vice-Chairman Zimmerman stated that the resolution describes the concept of the joint effort of WMATA, the Federal City Council and the Greater Washington Board of Trade to identify Metro access requirements (e.g. parking, pedestrian, bicycle) and provide political support to implement the resulting initiatives. He stated that there will probably be some modification to the resolution before the WMATA Board approves it.

Proposal to use TIF for Huntington Parking. The WMATA Board has proposed to allocate a portion of Virginia's share of the \$30 million TIF to Fairfax County to add 500 additional parking spaces at Huntington.

Silver Anniversary Celebration. Plans are being made for a year-long commemoration of Metrorail's 25th anniversary.

Expanding Bike-on-Rail Hours. Mr. Kauffman noted that a six-month trial has been proposed that would expand hours for bikes aboard Metrorail from 5:30 to 7:00 A.M. and 2:00 to 4:00 P.M. on weekdays starting May 29, 2001.

Record Metro Ridership. Weekday Metrorail ridership for January, 2001, averaged 588,500 trips (up 18.2 percent from the previous January). Metrobus ridership was up 15.8 percent, to 473,900. Mrs. Hanley reported that ridership has been up during Cherry Blossom Week and there have been no problems.

Other WMATA Item, Mrs. Hanley reported that WMATA staff has proposed a new Metrorail line crossing the Wilson Bridge. Fairfax County representatives were unaware that this proposal would extend into Fairfax County and board action has been tabled.

Regional Items

Route 1 Transit Improvements Study Update. There were 140 attendees at the five public outreach meetings held throughout Fairfax and Prince William Counties for the Route 1 Corridor Bus Study. Much of the comments will be incorporated in the draft final report, which will be presented at the Route 1 Corridor Location Study Steering Committee meeting following NVTC final approval in May, 2001.

Falls Church Electric Bus Project Update. Tamara Ashby reported that two buses were delivered on February 25, 2001. NVTC, WMATA and AVS are working to develop a rigorous testing program to establish the reliability of the buses before placing them in service.

TPB's Regional Mobility and Accessibility Study. On March 16th, the Joint Technical Working Group for the Regional Mobility and Accessibility Study met and

discussed the revised technical approach and schedule, as well as the potential measures of effectiveness. The group also heard input from the Chesapeake Bay policy committee. The next meeting of the working group is scheduled for April 13, 2001.

Job Access and Reverse Commute Program Update. Both WMATA and the state of Maryland are requesting a third year of funding from the Access to Jobs and Reverse Commute Grant Program. The program was authorized by TEA-21 to provide transportation services to assist the low-income population in accessing employment and to increase collaboration between regional transportation providers, human service agencies, and employment and training agencies. WMATA's FY 2001 grant application is for \$997,800, which requires a 50 percent match. Maryland is requesting \$2,394,720 statewide this year.

VTA Conference. Julie Bourbon reported that the program for the VTA Spring 2001 conference will be mailed soon. NVTC is hosting the conference to be held June 6-8, 2001 at the Springfield Hilton.

VDOT's HOV Website. Ms. Samarasinghe stated that VDOT has developed a unique website (www.HOVcalculator.com) which enables commuters to calculate how much time they will save by sharing a ride. The website was developed at a cost of \$25,000 as part of a larger marketing campaign to encourage greater use of the HOV/carpooling highway infrastructure in Northern Virginia.

Dulles Corridor Project Update. Ms. Samarasinghe reported that the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors recently approved a Memorandum of Cooperation for the Dulles Corridor Transit Project between Fairfax County and the Dulles Corridor Transit Project partners. Also, the results of the NEPA study will be included in the draft EIS study to be completed in the fall. VDOT completed a study that establishes that the proposed rail alignment will not preclude or prohibit the planned highway development.

Mr. Snyder asked for the status of the proposed increased parking at the West Falls Church Metrorail Station. Shiva Pant, of WMATA staff, stated that in FY 2002 work will start on additional parking at the West Falls Church Metrorail station. He also stated that it has been proposed to have a rail spur to the Dulles Corridor from the existing rail line between East and West Falls Church Metrorail stations. Mr. Snyder stated this makes additional parking at West Falls Church even more important.

Mr. Fisette asked if there has been a decision made on where the stations will be located in Tysons Corner. Mrs. Hanley stated that the decision has not been made yet. Three options remain (no build, three stations on Rt. 123, and loop service).

Capital Beltway Rail Study Final Policy Advisory Meeting. On March 22, 2001, the Policy Advisory Committee for the Capital Beltway Rail Feasibility Study met for the final time to discuss the draft final report. Conclusions and recommendations regarding rail transit in the Beltway corridor were discussed and defined. The most feasible transit

alternatives for the corridor were determined to be monorail, heavy rail, and light rail along different, specific alignments in the vicinity of the Beltway. These alternatives were shown to improve mobility in the corridor enough to warrant further investigation. In addition, the committee recommended that consideration be given to other transit projects identified in the Northern Virginia 2020 Plan so that coordination can be achieved. The final report is currently being revised and is expected to be released in early April. The report will then be forwarded to the General Assembly for consideration.

NVTC Financial Items

The financial report for February, 2001 was provided to commissioners and there were no questions.

VRE Items

Report from the VRE Operations Board. Commissioners were urged to read the minutes of the March 16, 2001 VRE Operations Board meeting.

Mechanical Engineering Consultant Procurement. Mrs. Bulova stated that the VRE Operations Board recommends approval of Resolution #873, which would authorize the VRE Chief Operating Officer to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for VRE Mechanical Engineering Consulting (MEC) services. Due to the need for both specific project work and system-wide improvements, VRE has found the use of a general engineering consultant to be more time and cost efficient than completing numerous, separate procurements. The contract with VRE's current mechanical engineering consultant, Railplan International, Inc., was awarded in 1999 and is approaching the authorization limit of \$3 million. After competitive proposals have been evaluated, VRE staff will return to the commission with a recommendation for award. The proposed contract will be a task order agreement with a value of \$5 million for a term not to exceed five years. Funds supporting the Mechanical Engineering Consulting services are budgeted through specific projects in VRE's adopted, federally funded Capital Improvement Program.

On a motion by Mrs. Bulova and a second by Mrs. McConnell, the commission unanimously approved Resolution #873 (copy attached). The vote in favor was cast by commissioners Bogard, Bulova, Euille, Fissette, Hanley, Kauffman, McConnell, Silverthorne, Snyder, and Zimmerman.

Task Order for Environmental Analysis and Design in the Washington-Richmond Corridor. Mrs. Bulova reported that the VRE Operations Board recommends approval of Resolution #874. This resolution would authorize the VRE Chief Operating Officer to issue a task order not to exceed \$208,978 (including a 10% contingency) to HDR Engineering, Inc. This task order would complete the required environmental documentation and initiate conceptual design work for high priority capital

improvements identified as part of the Washington-Richmond Corridor project. Funding for this task order is provided by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation as part of a FY01 state grant amendment to NVTC.

Mrs. Bulova moved, with a second by Mrs. McConnell, to approve the resolution (copy attached). The vote in favor was cast by commissioners Bogard, Bulova, Euille, Fissette, Hanley, Kauffman, McConnell, Silverthorne, Snyder, and Zimmerman.

Engineering Services for Washington-Richmond Corridor Improvements. Mrs. Bulova stated that the VRE Operations Board recommends approval of Resolution #875. The resolution would authorize the VRE Chief Operating Officer to issue a task order not to exceed \$204,065 (including a 10% contingency) to HDR Engineering, Inc. that would provide engineering and program review services to accomplish railroad improvements related to the Washington-Richmond Corridor project. The previous resolution authorized completion of environmental work for several projects. The professional engineering services acquired through this resolution will provide program review, preliminary engineering and conceptual design work needed to increase train capacity for freight and commuter service for several additional projects in this corridor. Projects include program management of the Quantico Bridge and conceptual design for the Virginia Avenue tunnel, among others. Funding for this task order is provided by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation as part of a FY01 state grant amendment to NVTC.

Mrs. Bulova moved, with a second by Mrs. McConnell, to approve the resolution (copy attached). The vote in favor was cast by commissioners Bogard, Bulova, Euille, Fissette, Hanley, Kauffman, McConnell, Silverthorne, Snyder, and Zimmerman.

Mrs. Hanley asked a question about the Virginia Avenue Tunnel and Ms. Straub responded that VDR&PT is funding this initiative since it is part of the Washington-Richmond Corridor Project.

Lease with Prince William County for Land for Parking Expansion at Broad Run. Mrs. Bulova reported that the VRE Operations Board recommends approval of Resolution #876, which would authorize the VRE Chief Operating Officer to execute a proposed lease agreement between Prince William County (PWC) and the two commissions providing for the use of PWC owned land adjacent to the VRE Broad Run parking lot for a parking expansion project. The current lot is at capacity and expansion plans have been underway for some time. Environmental and design work are almost complete and will expand the current 383-space lot by as much as 320 parking spaces. The lease being acted on in this item applies to the land needed for the parking expansion project. The lease is for 20 years and mirrors the existing parking lot lease agreement. The lease agreement is essentially a no cost lease although the cost of constructing the expanded parking lot will be VRE's responsibility.

On a motion by Mrs. Bulova and a second by Mrs. McConnell, the commission unanimously approved the resolution (copy attached). The vote in favor was cast by

commissioners Bogard, Bulova, Euille, Fissette, Hanley, Kauffman, McConnell, Silverthorne, Snyder, and Zimmerman.

New Fredericksburg Mid-Day Train. Mrs. Bulova reported that the VRE Operations Board recommends approval of Resolution #877. This resolution would authorize the VRE Chief Operating Officer to add early afternoon train service on the Fredericksburg line once the option becomes available from CSXT. VRE is actively pursuing the addition of such service and considers it the first priority in service enhancements. CSXT is actively considering the request for this additional service and staff is working to resolve issues related to corridor improvements that should provide for this service. VRE is asking for this authorization now so that service can be implemented as soon as an agreement can be reached with CSXT. The addition of an early afternoon train would not require an additional train set and with elimination of parallel "JumpStart" bus service and an anticipated 200 new riders the train would be subsidy-neutral.

Mr. Ferguson joined the meeting at 8:52 P.M.

Mrs. Bulova moved, with a second by Mrs. McConnell, to approve the resolution (copy attached). The vote in favor was cast by commissioners Bogard, Bulova, Euille, Ferguson, Fissette, Hanley, Kauffman, McConnell, Silverthorne, Snyder, and Zimmerman.

Adjournment

Without objection, Vice-Chairman Zimmerman adjourned the meeting at 8:55 P.M.

Approved this 3rd day of May, 2001.

Kerry J. Donley
Chairman

Elaine McConnell
Secretary-Treasurer