

**MINUTES**  
**NVTC COMMISSION MEETING – MARCH 1, 2001**  
**NVTC CONFERENCE ROOM - ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA**

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

**Members Present**

James F. Almand  
Leo J. Bevon  
Richard H. Black  
William Bogard  
Sharon Bulova  
Gerald Connolly  
Kerry J. Donley  
Paul Ferguson  
Jay Fisette  
Katherine Hanley  
Dana Kauffman  
Roger J. McClure  
William C. Mims  
Mary Margaret Whipple  
Christopher Zimmerman

**Members Absent**

William D. Euille  
Elaine McConnell  
Scott Silverthorne  
David F. Snyder

**Staff Present**

Tamara Ashby  
Ed Barber (VRE)  
Julie Bourbon  
Rhonda W. Gilchrest  
Scott Kalkwarf  
Steve MacIsaac (VRE)  
Sharmila Samarasinghe  
Pete Sklannik, Jr. (VRE)  
Jennifer Straub  
Richard K. Taube

Minutes of NVTC's Meeting of February 8, 2001

On a motion by Mr. Connolly and a second by Mrs. Whipple, the commission unanimously approved the minutes. The vote in favor was cast by commissioners Almand, Bevon, Black, Bogard, Connolly, Ferguson, Donley, Hanley, Kauffman, McClure, Mims, Whipple, and Zimmerman.

NVTC's FY 2002 State Transit Grant Application

Mr. Taube explained that the grant applications are due March 1, 2001 for the formula sub-program (administrative; fuels, tires and maintenance) and capital sub-program for WMATA and NVTC's jurisdictions, as well as VRE. Resolution #868 would formally ratify the applications.

For FY 2001, NVTC received about \$78 million in state aid and there is little or no reason to expect more this year, even though NVTC's total eligibility for FY 02 (\$135.2 to \$158.5 million) is larger than that of FY 01 (\$117 million). In other words, the shortfall of actual state aid compared to eligibility for aid is very likely to be significantly greater in FY 2002.

The marketing grant application proposes a three-year program of media and other promotions to spotlight public transit performance and new products/services. For the second year, \$137,750 of state funding is requested. In FY 2001, VDRPT provided \$152,000.

The ITS performance monitoring grant request seeks \$100,000 in federal planning funds or other resources available to VDRPT. In response to a question from Mrs. Hanley, Mr. Taube responded that staff would work closely with MWCOG and its ITS efforts. NVTC is proposing to do work that is not currently being done by any other agency. Through surveys and interviews, information will be sought on the performance of ITS improvements and how they impact transit. In regards to competing for limited grant funds, VDRPT is being asked to find funds that wouldn't jeopardize other ITS grant requests, by using federal planning funds available to VDRPT. NVTC's Management Advisory Committee has been involved in this process. Mrs. Hanley expressed her desire that there is not duplicate work being done by different agencies, and Mr. Connolly followed up to be certain that such duplication would not occur.

Mrs. Whipple moved, with a second by Mr. Zimmerman, to approve the resolution (copy attached). The vote in favor was cast by commissioners Almand, Bevon, Black, Bogard, Connolly, Ferguson, Donley, Hanley, Kauffman, McClure, Mims, Whipple, and Zimmerman.

## Legislative Items

Chairman Donley asked Mr. Taube to review the actions taken during the just concluded General Assembly session. Delegate Almand's bill (HB2224) passed, which establishes that the state shall provide 80 percent of transit systems' administrative and fuels, tires and maintenance costs in FY 02 and 95 percent thereafter. Previously, the statute used the term "may." The corresponding budget amendments did not pass, so no additional funding is available. The new uniform 80 percent ratio would allow NVTC and its jurisdictions to qualify for more funds, if they become available. The governor still needs to sign this legislation.

Mr. Taube explained that many of NVTC's local jurisdictions wrote or testified in support of Delegate Rollison's substitute for Senator Mims's SB1355 establishing a new transportation authority. The substitute did not specifically mention NVTC with regard to future consolidation with a new regional transportation authority. It also provided a voting mechanism that would require Fairfax County's approval before any action could be taken. On February 20<sup>th</sup> the House approved the substitute on a vote of 74-20. However, after a motion to reconsider, the bill failed to gain the required two-thirds approval on a vote of 64-36.

Commissioners Bulova and Fisetto arrived at 8:10 P.M.

Delegate McClure's HB2606 bill establishing a Northern Virginia Transportation Authority passed and awaits Governor Gilmore's signature. It expresses the intent of the General Assembly to have NVTC merged and consolidated with the new authority by July, 2003. It also calls on the Authority, in consultation with NVTC, to recommend amendments to accomplish the consolidation. HB2606 contains most of the provisions of Senator Mims's SB1355 before the House substitute. Whether or not the governor signs HB2606, the Barry Subcommittee will presumably consider the merits of the voting structure and other features of both bills in forging a regional consensus during the remainder of 2001.

In response to a request from Mr. Fisetto, Senator Mims reviewed the different provisions (voting, membership, etc.) of the bills that went through the General Assembly regarding the establishment of a new regional transportation authority.

Mr. Connolly noted that no provisions for funding the authority were included in the legislation. Senator Mims stated that this would be worked on during the 2002 General Assembly session.

Chairman Donley asked why PRTC is not included in the new transportation authority. Senator Mims responded that PRTC, to a greater extent, falls outside the Northern Virginia Transportation zone of jurisdiction. Chairman Donley noted that Prince William County would have representation on both the new authority and PRTC. Senator Mims stated that it was never his intention that the legislation would be unamended. It is a work in progress and in the future PRTC may want to negotiate a

different relationship in regards to VRE. Including PRTC in the new authority was beyond the scope of the legislation.

Mr. Zimmerman stated that consensus on this bill has not been achieved. In response to a question from Mr. Zimmerman, Senator Mims stated that he is comfortable with the version of the bill on the governor's desk, knowing that it's a work in progress to be completed over the next few years. This legislation moves the issue forward for discussion.

Mr. Zimmerman stated that the success of an authority depends on the consensus that can be achieved throughout the region. He stated that the Rollison substitute bill reflected a lot more consensus beyond the General Assembly. He expressed his frustration that of all the transportation bodies that could have been included, NVTC was singled out for elimination. NVTC is working well and now the General Assembly wants to replace it with a new organization that still needs to be defined. It puts Prince William County in the position of not having participated in Metro but now getting to own it and make decisions regarding it.

Delegate McClure stated one issue is whether NVTC wants the Governor to decide these issues or the Barry Commission. Nothing happens to NVTC legally under this bill and no changes will be made until 2003. It provides for the discussion to begin on a new authority. Chairman Donley stated that the fate of NVTC is clearly determined in one bill and not the other.

Senator Mims stated that the bill forces debate on this issue. He is not presuming that there will be a consensus. Mrs. Hanley stated the bill leaves the region still with two entities because PRTC remains. She expressed her concern that localities are not left paying the bill for the authority if no funding is appropriated. Senator Mims does not see legislation in the future mandating PRTC going out of existence, but he would not be surprised that when the new authority is in existence, PRTC would reexamine its position.

Mr. Fisette explained the anxiety of commissioners about the unknown aspects of a new authority, as well as believing that NVTC isn't broken and doesn't need to be fixed. Arlington County clearly preferred the Rollison bill.

Mr. Fisette moved to authorize NVTC's chairman to send a letter to Governor Gilmore, referring to the language of the Mayors and Chairs letter, requesting that, should he approve HB 2606, the final legislation contain the language of the House committee substitute for SB 1355. Mrs. Hanley seconded. The vote in favor was cast by commissioners Almand, Bevon, Bogard, Bulova, Connolly, Ferguson, Fisette, Donley, Hanley, Kauffman, Whipple, and Zimmerman. The vote passed with Senator Mims and Delegate Black abstaining and Delegate McClure voting in opposition.

Mr. Connolly moved, with a second by Mr. Zimmerman, to authorize NVTC's chairman to send a letter to Governor Gilmore urging no reductions in transit funding.

Mrs. Hanley stated that it has been rumored that the governor will take \$48 million out of the Transportation Trust Fund. Mr. Bevon clarified that the governor is considering moving \$48 million in general funds from the transportation budget. Senator Mims stated that a proposed constitutional amendment that would have prohibited taking money out of the Transportation Trust Fund passed the House but was defeated in the Senate.

The commission then voted on the motion and it passed. The vote in favor was cast by commissioners Almand, Bevon, Black, Bogard, Bulova, Connolly, Ferguson, Fiset, Donley, Hanley, Kauffman, McClure, Mims, Whipple, and Zimmerman.

### WMATA Items

Regional SmarTrip Fare Collection. Staff of Northern Virginia's local bus systems and VRE met at NVTC on February 20<sup>th</sup> with WMATA and VDRPT staff and representatives of Cubic to continue discussions about the joint procurement of SmarTrip-compatible fareboxes. NVTC will serve as the agent for this procurement through WMATA's contract with Cubic/GFI. The group intends to negotiate and execute the terms of this procurement as soon as possible, but no later than the six-month contractual limit which expires in July, 2001.

Mr. Zimmerman moved, with a second by Mr. Connolly, to authorize NVTC's participation in the regional clearinghouse project through signing a management agreement letter. The vote in favor was cast by commissioners Almand, Bevon, Black, Bogard, Bulova, Connolly, Ferguson, Fiset, Donley, Hanley, Kauffman, McClure, Whipple, and Zimmerman. Senator Mims was not present during the vote.

Public Transportation Partnership for Tomorrow. The WMATA Board has authorized \$150,000 for FY 2001 to participate in APTA's new effort to influence opinion leaders throughout the United States to have a more favorable image of public transit. The primary purpose is to help the transit industry as it seeks favorable reauthorization of TEA-21 for FY 2003. APTA's goal is \$30 million over five years, of which \$10 million would come from business members. WMATA's shares will be \$150,000 per year for five years (\$750,000). NVTC will be asked to contribute also, through VRE. The expected amount for VRE will be \$5,000 per year for five years. This APTA campaign will provide materials that can be used locally and the effort will be very useful to NVTC's new public outreach activities.

SmartMover Service and Fare Adjustment. The Montgomery-Tysons service began in September, 1998 and currently operates at 20-minute peak frequencies. The WMATA Board approved several changes, including widened frequencies to 30 minutes during the first and last hours of the peaks, discontinued mid-day service on express route 14A, and raised fares to \$2.00 from \$1.10 on all interstate trips. These changes will trim almost \$300,000 from the \$1.2 million annually subsidy.

### Exercise Options for FY 2001 and 2002 NVTC/VRE Audits

Mr. Taube reported that NVTC staff and the VRE Operations Board recommend that the commission authorize the NVTC executive director to exercise options for FY 2001 and 2002 for audits of NVTC and VRE by the commission's current audit firm, Dunham & Aukamp. The options cost \$31,650 for FY 2001 and FY 2002. NVTC's share of the cost is about a third and the balance is charged back to VRE.

Mrs. Bulova moved, with a second by Mr. Connolly, to authorize the NVTC executive director to exercise options for FY 2001 and 2002 for audits of NVTC and VRE by Dunham & Aukamp. The vote in favor was cast by commissioners Almand, Bevon, Black, Bogard, Bulova, Connolly, Ferguson, Fisette, Donley, Hanley, Kauffman, McClure, Mims, Whipple, and Zimmerman.

### Regional Items

NVTC's Tech Talk – Innovative Technologies in Transportation. As part of the 2001 NVTC workprogram, staff has been researching public transit innovations both nationally and globally. Information is being gathered on technologies and applications that might improve the transit network in Northern Virginia if implemented. Mr. Zimmerman complimented staff on the report.

NVTC's Quarterly Transit Service Change Report. The draft report has been reviewed by local staff. The final report will be released via NVTC's website and provided to persons on the mailing list.

Route 1 Bus Study Public Outreach Sessions. Five public outreach meetings with businesses and citizens begin in March, 2001.

Information on Importance of New Passenger Amenities for Bus Ridership and Performance. At its last meeting, NVTC heard draft recommendations for transit improvements in the Route 1 corridor and asked about the likely impact on future ridership. Staff has begun a national literature search in an effort to determine what type of research may be available on this topic. The results of NVTC's investigation will be provided together with the final recommendations of the Route 1 project in the near future.

Report from Portland on Car Sharing. The report provides a detailed evaluation of the car sharing project in Portland, Oregon including information on public private relationships and participants' satisfaction rates and travel behavior.

TPB's Regional Mobility and Accessibility Study. The first meeting on the Joint Technical Working Group was held on February 16, 2001. The group emphasized that

the study should be related to the goals of the TPB Vision and should be regional in focus. A major concern raised at the meeting was the process for selecting scenarios. On February 21, 2001, the issues and recommendations of the technical working group were presented at the special TPB Work Session. TPB members decided to take a two-phased approach. The first phase will consist of analyzing current CLRP conditions using the adopted measures of effectiveness. The second phase will then be to build scenarios based on the results of the first phase.

Suit Against Transit Agencies in San Francisco. Mr. Taube reported that a coalition of transit, environmental and community groups has filed a suit in the U.S. District Court in San Francisco on the grounds that the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and the two transit operators have not fulfilled promises to upgrade systems, boost ridership and improve air quality.

#### NVTC 2001 Handbook

Commissioners were provided with a copy of the handbook. It is also available on NVTC's website.

#### NVTC Financial Items

The financial report for January, 2001 was provided to commissioners.

#### VRE Items

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

New Glazing for Gallery Cars. Chairman Donley reported that the VRE Operations Board recommends approval of Resolution #869, which would authorize the VRE Chief Operating Officer to amend the contract with Northern Rail Car in the amount of \$300,450.89 to replace the existing windows (both fixed and removable emergency windows) with new glazing. This work was part of the original request for proposals, but window glazing was removed from the scope of work in order to meet the project budget. Since that time, VRE received additional funding through Governor Gilmore's VTA 2000 legislative package. This money allowed VRE to fully fund the gallery car refurbishment.

On a motion by Mrs. Bulova and a second by Mr. Connolly, the commission unanimously approved the resolution (copy attached). The vote in favor was cast by commissioners Almand, Bevon, Black, Bogard, Bulova, Connolly, Ferguson, Fisette, Donley, Hanley, Kauffman, McClure, Mims, Whipple, and Zimmerman.

Mid-Day Railcar Storage Agreement with Amtrak. The VRE Operations Board recommends approval of Resolution #870, which would authorize the VRE Chief Operating Officer to amend the existing Amtrak operating agreement in an amount not to exceed \$250,000. This amendment will allow Amtrak to perform real estate evaluation and appraisal services as well as preliminary engineering support for increased mid-day railcar storage in the vicinity of the VRE/Amtrak coach yard. Without adding additional capacity to the yard, VRE is unable to add more railcars to existing service that are needed as ridership continues to grow. Amtrak will provide these services on a reimbursable basis for professional time and materials, under the terms of the current operating agreement. Funding for this work is available in an approved grant from VDRPT.

Mrs. Bulova moved, with a second by Mr. Connolly, to approve Resolution #870 (copy attached). The vote in favor was cast by commissioners Almand, Bevon, Black, Bogard, Bulova, Connolly, Ferguson, Fisette, Donley, Hanley, Kauffman, McClure, Mims, Whipple, and Zimmerman.

Fredericksburg Parking Lease. The VRE Operations Board recommends approval of Resolution #871, which would authorize the PRTC Executive Director to enter into a five-year, capital-funded lease agreement with Cullen Incorporated that will allow VRE customers to continue to use 74 parking spaces near the Fredericksburg VRE station. The current lease expires on March 7, 2001. After completing a buy versus lease analysis, staff has recommended the continued lease of this lot at a cost of \$134,634 for the life of the five-year contract. Funding for the first two years of this lease is available in the existing federal grants. The last three years of funding are programmed in VRE's CIP and will be included in each respective grant application.

On a motion by Mrs. Bulova and a second by Mr. Connolly, the commission unanimously approved Resolution #871 (copy attached). The vote in favor was cast by commissioners Almand, Bevon, Black, Bogard, Bulova, Connolly, Ferguson, Fisette, Donley, Hanley, Kauffman, McClure, Mims, Whipple, and Zimmerman.

Woodbridge Station Lease. The VRE Operations Board recommends approval of Resolution #872. The resolution would authorize the VRE Chief Operating Officer to execute a lease with Prince William County, subject to final changes approved by counsel, for two 500 square foot enclosed spaces located inside the Woodbridge commuter rail station. As part of its parking lot management plan, VRE assumed control and responsibility for all stations in Prince William County through a 1998 Station Maintenance and Parking Management Agreement. Both Prince William County and VRE wish to extend this agreement for the period of March 1, 2001 to February 28, 2006. In addition to an extension, the agreement has also been amended with regard to two rentable spaces for which Prince William had previously been the landlord. This change would allow the two spaces to be leased to VRE so that VRE can be fully responsible for all aspects of the lease. There are no fiscal impacts related to this action.

Mrs. Bulova moved, with a second by Mr. Connolly, to approve Resolution #872 (copy attached). The vote in favor was cast by commissioners Almand, Bevon, Black, Bogard, Bulova, Connolly, Ferguson, Fisette, Donley, Hanley, Kauffman, McClure, Mims, Whipple, and Zimmerman.

### Adjournment

On a motion by Mrs. Hanley and a second by Mr. Zimmerman, the commission unanimously agreed to adjourn. The vote in favor was cast by commissioners Almand, Bevon, Black, Bogard, Bulova, Connolly, Ferguson, Fisette, Donley, Hanley, Kauffman, McClure, Mims, Whipple, and Zimmerman. Chairman Donley adjourned the meeting at 9:24 P.M.

Approved this 3rd day of April, 2001.

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Kerry J. Donley  
Chairman

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Elaine McConnell  
Secretary-Treasurer