



# Virginia Railway Express Operations Board

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## VRE OPERATIONS BOARD MEETING

*January 15, 2010 9:30 AM*

*PRTC HEADQUARTERS  
14700 POTOMAC MILLS ROAD*

### AGENDA

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
2. ROLL CALL
3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE DECEMBER 18, 2009, VRE OPERATIONS BOARD MEETING
5. INSTALLATION OF NEW OFFICERS
6. NEW CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS
7. INTRODUCTION OF KEOLIS MANAGEMENT TEAM
8. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT
9. VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS RIDERS' AND PUBLIC COMMENTS

## 10. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

- A. AUTHORIZATION TO ISSUE A SOLICITATION FOR REHABILITATION OF WHEEL SETS
- B. AUTHORIZATION TO ISSUE A SOLICITATION FOR LOCOMOTIVE AND CAB CAR RADIO REPAIR SERVICES
- C. AUTHORIZATION TO ISSUE A TASK ORDER FOR THE INSTALLATION OF ELECTRIC HAND DRYERS
- D. AUTHORIZATION TO ISSUE A TASK ORDER FOR THE INSTALLATION OF ELECTRONIC BELLS
- E. AUTHORIZATION TO AWARD A TASK ORDER FOR ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR THE BROAD RUN PLATFORM EXTENSION PROJECT

## 11. ACTION ITEMS

- A. AUTHORIZATION TO EXECUTE A WATER AND SEWER SERVICE AGREEMENT FOR THE BROAD RUN SERVICE AND INSPECTION BUILDING
- B. AUTHORIZATION TO ACQUIRE PROPERTY FOR A PARKING EXPANSION AT THE BROOKE VRE STATION

THE NEXT VRE OPERATIONS BOARD MEETING

FEBRUARY 19, 2010 - 9:30 AM



# MINUTES

## VRE OPERATIONS BOARD MEETING PRTC HEADQUARTERS – PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY, VIRGINIA JANUARY 15, 2010

### VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS

#### BOARD MEMBERS

**PAUL MILDE**  
CHAIRMAN

**SHARON BULOVA**  
VICE-CHAIRMAN

**PAUL SMEDBERG**  
TREASURER

**WALLY COVINGTON**  
SECRETARY

**MAUREEN CADDIGAN**  
**PATRICK HERRITY**  
**JOHN JENKINS**  
**MATTHEW KELLY**  
**SUHAS NADDONI**  
**KEVIN PAGE**  
**PAUL SMEDBERG**  
**JONATHAN WAY**  
**CHRIS ZIMMERMAN**

#### ALTERNATES

**MARC AVENI**  
**CHARLES BADGER**  
**HARRY CRISP**  
**MARK DUDENHEFER**  
**BRAD ELLIS**  
**JAY FISETTE**  
**FRANK JONES**  
**MICHAEL MAY**  
**JEFF McKAY**  
**MARTIN NOHE**  
**JOHN STIRRUP**

**DALE ZEHNER**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
OFFICER

1500 King Street, Suite 202  
Alexandria, VA 22314-2730

MEMBERS PRESENT	JURISDICTION
Sharon Bulova (NVTC)	Fairfax County
Wally Covington (PRTC)	Prince William County
John D. Jenkins (PRTC)	Prince William County
Matthew Kelly (PRTC)	City of Fredericksburg
Paul Milde (PRTC)	Stafford County
Suhas Naddoni (PRTC)*	City of Manassas Park
Kevin Page	DRPT
Paul Smedberg (NVTC)*	City of Alexandria
Jonathan Way (PRTC)	City of Manassas
Christopher Zimmerman (NVTC)	Arlington County

MEMBERS ABSENT	JURISDICTION
Maureen Caddigan (PRTC)	Prince William County
Patrick Herrity (NVTC)	Fairfax County

ALTERNATES ABSENT	JURISDICTION
Marc Aveni (PRTC)	City of Manassas
Charles Badger	DRPT
Brad Ellis	City of Fredericksburg
Harry Crisp (PRTC)	Stafford County
Mark Dudenhefer (PRTC)	Stafford County
Jay Fissette (NVTC)	Arlington County
Frank C. Jones (PRTC)	City of Manassas Park
Michael C. May (PRTC)	Prince William County
Jeff McKay (NVTC)	Fairfax County
Martin E. Nohe (PRTC)	Prince William County
John Stirrup (PRTC)	Prince William County

STAFF AND GENERAL PUBLIC	
Gregg Baxter – Keolis	Steve MacIsaac – VRE counsel
Jennifer Buske – Washington Post	April Maguigad – VRE
Anna Gotthardt – VRE	Jennifer Mouchantaf – VRE
Kelly Hannon – Free Lance-Star	Sirel Mouchantaf – VRE
Al Harf – PRTC staff	Dick Peacock – citizen
Christine Hoeffner – VRE	Lynn Rivers – Arlington County
Patrick Jeantet – Keolis	Michael Schaller – citizen
Ann King – VRE	David Sherfinski – Washington Examiner
Mike Lake – Fairfax DOT	Gary Skinner – Spotsylvania County
Trinh Lam – VRE	Steve Townsend – Keolis
Bob Leibbrandt – Prince William County	Dale Zehner – VRE

\*\* Delineates arrival following the commencement of the Board meeting. Notation of exact arrival time is included in the body of the minutes.

Chairman Zimmerman called the meeting to order at 9:30 A.M. Following the Pledge of Allegiance, roll call was taken.

[Mr. Naddoni entered the meeting just following roll call.]

### Approval of the Agenda – 3

Mr. Zehner stated that there are two changes to the agenda, including a new agenda item #11B "Authorization to Acquire Property for a Parking Expansion at the Brooke VRE Station" and an updated VRE CEO Report.

Mr. Kelly moved, with a second by Mr. Covington, to approve the amended agenda. The vote in favor was cast by Board Members Bulova, Covington, Jenkins, Kelly, Milde, Naddoni, Page, Way and Zimmerman.

### Minutes of the December 18, 2009, VRE Operations Board Meeting – 4

Ms. Bulova moved, with a second by Mr. Kelly, to approve the minutes as presented. The vote in favor was cast by Board Members Bulova, Covington, Jenkins, Kelly, Milde, Naddoni, Page, Way and Zimmerman.

[Mr. Smedberg arrived and joined the meeting.]

### Installation of New Officers – 5

Chairman Zimmerman introduced the new VRE officers for 2010:

Paul Milde, Chairman  
Sharon Bulova, Vice Chairman  
Wally Covington, Secretary  
Paul Smedberg, Treasurer

Chairman Zimmerman passed the gavel to Mr. Milde. Chairman Milde presented a gift of appreciation to Mr. Zimmerman for his outstanding service as Chairman in 2009.

### New Chairman's Comments – 5

Chairman Milde stated that he is proud and honored to be appointed VRE's Chairman. VRE has two new members who are not at this meeting. Susan Stimpson from the Falmouth District of the Stafford County Board of Supervisors and John Cook from the Braddock District of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. They both still need to be sworn in by their respective Commissions. They will be replacing Mr. Schwartz and Mr. Herrity respectively. Supervisor Skinner from Spotsylvania County will also become an official member of VRE at the February meeting.

Chairman Milde stated that VRE had a record year in 2009 with an annual ridership of 3,899,585 trips. VRE is one of the few transit operators that continues to see ridership growth. This last week, VRE broke all time high ridership numbers four days in a row. January 12<sup>th</sup> was VRE's highest ridership day ever with 18,915 trips. All week, daily ridership has been above 18,000 trips. Overall, on-time performance averaged over 90 percent systemwide, which is the best ever in the history of VRE. Chairman Milde stated that on-time performance on the Fredericksburg Line has been remarkable and customers are happy about it.

#### Introduction of the Keolis Management Team – 7

Mr. Zehner introduced three members of the Keolis team: Mr. Gregg Baxter, General Manager, who will be VRE's day-to-day point of contact and have an office in the Manassas area; Mr. Steve Townsend, President of Keolis Rail Services of America; and Mr. Patrick Jeantet, Executive Senior Vice President International, Keolis SA, who is based in Paris, France.

Mr. Jeantet thanked the VRE Operations Board for choosing Keolis to operate VRE service. This is an important opportunity for Keolis since it is their first contract in the United States. Keolis will work in partnership with VRE as it serves the passengers who will be transported every day. Mr. Jeantet stated that Keolis will do everything it can to improve the service for VRE's passengers. Chairman Milde stated that the VRE Operations Board is very excited about Keolis taking over service.

#### Chief Executive Officer's Report – 8

Mr. Zehner reported that VRE ridership continues to grow, especially in the past week, with standees on most of the trains. Feedback from some passengers is that they would still rather stand than drive on I-95. The proposed express trains should help with adding some capacity. Staff will begin to inform the passengers about these potential changes and return to the Board at the March meeting with passenger comments and concerns.

#### VRE Riders' and Public Comment – 9

Dick Peacock stated that ridership for the Amtrak Virginia train service to Lynchburg is doing extremely well with an average of 277 passengers per day, which is much higher than initially projected. VRE passengers can take this train from the Manassas Station at 10:21 A.M. He suggested that the step-up fare for VRE passengers to ride Amtrak trains be reduced from \$10 to \$5. Amtrak trains have excess capacity. Mr. Peacock stated that he is also excited about Keolis running VRE service.

Ms. Bulova asked staff to evaluate this suggestion regarding the step-up fare and its financial impact and report back to the Board at a future meeting.

Consent Agenda – 10

Mr. Kelly moved, with a second by Ms. Bulova, to approve the following Consent Agenda items:

Resolution #10A-01-2010: Authorization to Issue a Solicitation for Rehabilitation of Wheel Sets

Resolution #10B-01-2010: Authorization to Issue a Solicitation for Locomotive and Cab Car Radio Repair Services

Resolution #10C-01-2010: Authorization to Issue a Task Order for the Installation of Electric Hand Dryers

Resolution #10D-01-2010: Authorization to Issue a Task Order for the Installation of Electronic Bells

Resolution #10E-01-2010: Authorization to Award a Task Order for Engineering Services for the Broad Run Platform Extension Project

The Board voted on the motion and it unanimously passed. The vote in favor was cast by Board Members Bulova, Covington, Jenkins, Kelly, Milde, Naddoni, Page, Smedberg, Way and Zimmerman.

Mr. Jenkins asked if VRE's locomotive order has been placed. Mr. Zehner replied that there are 15 locomotives on order and the first is due to be delivered in the beginning of July 2010. VRE will then receive two locomotives a month starting in November 2010. VRE still has an option for five more locomotives. In response to a question from Ms. Bulova, Mr. Zehner explained that the new locomotives will allow VRE to add capacity to meet the growing ridership.

Mr. Way observed that in past Board discussions there were issues raised concerning longer trains because of mid-day storage and parking conflicts. Mr. Zehner reminded the Board that staff is looking at a plan to provide an express train as well as storage of two train sets at the L'Enfant station during the day. VRE may be able to do a 10-car set after the first locomotive arrives. Staff is looking at different scenarios and train set configurations to address capacity needs. Mr. Way asked if VRE is using seat notices to inform passengers about these issues so that riders can anticipate the new equipment. Ms. Maguigad stated that VRE has a monthly seat notice for passengers and the upcoming notice will include information about these preliminary plans. When details are finalized, VRE will update passengers on which trains will terminate at L'Enfant Plaza Station. Ms. Maguigad also reported that VRE has a weekly e-newsletter that provides valuable information to riders.

Authorization to Execute a Water and Sewer Service Agreement for the Broad Run Service and Inspection Building – 11A

Mr. Zehner stated that the Operations Board is being asked to authorize him as CEO to execute a Water and Sewer Service Agreement with the City of Manassas, which would establish water and sewer services to the new Broad Run service and inspection building. This authorization is being requested in an amount not to exceed \$115,403 and would be accomplished by Resolution #11A-01-2010.

Mr. Covington moved, with a second by Mr. Jenkins, to approve the resolution. The vote in favor was cast by Board Members Bulova, Covington, Jenkins, Kelly, Milde, Naddoni, Page, Smedberg, Way and Zimmerman.

Authorization to Acquire Property for a Parking Expansion at the Brooke VRE Station – 11B

Mr. Zehner stated that the VRE Operations Board is being asked to recommend that the Commissions authorize VRE's CEO to purchase two property parcels at 1717 Brooke Road in Stafford for the parking expansion at the Brooke VRE station. Resolution #11B-01-2010 would accomplish this.

Mr. Zehner explained that over the past year, VRE and Stafford County have been working to develop a parking expansion at the Brooke VRE Station. VRE hired a consultant to complete a draft Environmental Assessment (EA), which was submitted to FTA for review on October 27, 2009. The report identified a surface expansion lot to the south of the existing lot as the preferred alternative. The parcels proposed for purchase constitute the land required to complete the expansion. Over the last year, the property owner experienced financial hardship and the property was slated to be auctioned January 12, 2010. VRE worked with the FTA to receive an expedited Letter of No Prejudice for the advanced use of federal funding. The FTA also provided an Environmental Categorical Exclusion letter to allow for immediate property acquisition. On January 8, 2010, the FTA authorized VRE to acquire the property for the approved appraisal amount of \$500,000. VRE subsequently submitted an offer to the property owner with contingencies including Operations Board and Commission approval by February 11, 2010. Once the property is acquired, VRE will continue to work with the FTA to finalize environmental and property acquisition documents and begin final design.

Chairman Milde passed the gavel to Vice Chairman Bulova so he could make the motion.

Mr. Milde moved, with a second by Mr. Kelly, to approve Resolution #11B-01-2010.

In response to a question from Mr. Smedberg, Mr. Zehner explained that the FTA has indicated that they will approve the grant funding and that VRE will receive the funding sometime in March. VRE will use working capital in the interim and will replace that money when the grant is received.

The Board then voted on the motion and it passed. The vote in favor was cast by Board Members Bulova, Covington, Jenkins, Kelly, Milde, Naddoni, Page, Smedberg, Way and Zimmerman.

Vice Chairman Bulova returned the gavel to Chairman Milde.

Mr. Zimmerman stated that to the best of his knowledge there is no restriction on the ability of the Chairman to participate in discussion, make motions, and/or vote. Mr. MacIsaac stated that historically it has always been the practice of the Operations Board that the Chairman can do these things. Chairman Milde asked if VRE's By-Laws address this. Mr. MacIsaac stated that the By-Laws do not explicitly address this issue. Usually when an issue is not explicitly addressed in the By-Laws, it would technically default to Robert's Rules of Order, which would prohibit the Chairman from making a motion, but VRE has historically allowed it. Mr. Zimmerman observed that Robert's Rules of Order is an appeal for those issues that are disputed. Also, once an action is taken and accepted, the Board cannot go back and change it.

#### Other VRE Items

Mr. Zehner provided more details about the new electric hand dryers that will be installed in VRE trains within the next six months. Currently paper towels are available for use, but used paper towels are being found stuffed in the toilets causing damage to the toilet system. Not only will the new hand dryers be environmentally friendly, they will pay for themselves within 1½ years from the cost savings of not purchasing paper towels. Ms. Bulova observed that the machines are more sanitary too.

Ms. Bulova announced that the Amtrak Virginia train service to Lynchburg will now have a stop at the Burke Centre VRE Station. She thanked DRPT for working to make this a reality. Mr. Page stated that reservations for this station can be made now by telephone but after the weekend, people will be able to purchase tickets on-line. He thanked Ms. Bulova for her support.

Ms. Bulova also stated that it has been announced that Chip Badger is leaving DRPT after a 38 year career, including the last 18 months as DRPT's Director. Mr. Page stated that Mr. Badger did not seek reappointment and has opted to retire and step into the private sector. Ms. Bulova asked that VRE send a letter of appreciation to Mr. Badger congratulating him on his outstanding career at DRPT and wishing him future success. The Board unanimously agreed.

Mr. Jenkins asked staff to update the Board at the February meeting on the actions coming together for the construction of a parking structure at the Broad Run Station. He has had many complaints from riders concerning parking capacity issues at this station. Mr. Covington stated that the parking situation is getting so bad that they are beginning to hear about it during zoning cases. He would like to see how many Fauquier County residents are using this lot.

Adjournment

Mr. Smedberg moved, with a second by Ms Bulova, to adjourn. The vote in favor was cast by Board Members Bulova, Covington, Jenkins, Kelly, Milde, Naddoni, Page, Smedberg, Way and Zimmerman.

Chairman Milde adjourned the meeting at 10:47 A.M.

Approved this 19<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2010.

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Paul Milde  
Chairman

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Wally Covington  
Secretary

**CERTIFICATION**

This certification hereby acknowledges that the minutes for the January 15, 2010 Virginia Railway Express Operations Board Meeting have been recorded to the best of my ability.

*Rhonda Gilchrest*

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Rhonda Gilchrest