

POTOMAC AND RAPPAHANNOCK  
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION (PRTC)

OFFICIAL COMMISSION MEETING

MINUTES

DATE: July 7, 2011  
TIME: 7:00 p.m.  
LOCATION: PRTC Transit Center  
14700 Potomac Mills Road, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Woodbridge, VA 22192-6811

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1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Jenkins called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., with a quorum present.

2. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT

*Richard Anderson	Virginia House of Delegates
*John Jenkins, Chairman	Prince William County
*Jerry Logan, Secretary	Spotsylvania County
*Michael May, Immediate Past Chairman	Prince William County
*Jackson Miller	Virginia House of Delegates
*Paul Milde, Treasurer	Stafford County
*Toddy Puller	Virginia Senate**
*Gary Skinner	Spotsylvania County
*Susan Stimpson	Stafford County
*Jonathan Way, Vice Chairman	City of Manassas
*Bob Wilson	Virginia Department of Rail & Public Transportation

MEMBERS ABSENT

Maureen Caddigan	Prince William County
Wally Covington	Prince William County
Fred Howe	City of Fredericksburg
Frank Jones	City of Manassas Park
Marty Nohe	Prince William County
Frank Principi	Prince William County

ALTERNATES PRESENT

*Ateeb Ahmad	Prince William County
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*Matthew Kelly	City of Fredericksburg
*Lorraine Lasch	Prince William County
*Suhass Naddoni	City of Manassas Park

ALTERNATES ABSENT

David Awbrey	Virginia Department of Rail & Public Transportation
Hilda Barg	Prince William County
Hap Connors	Spotsylvania County
Harry Crisp	Stafford County
Mark Dudenhefer	Stafford County
Brad Ellis	City of Fredericksburg
Hal Parrish	City of Manassas
Benjamin Pitts	Spotsylvania County
Sorine Preli	Prince William County
Corey Stewart	Prince William County
John Stirrup	Prince William County
William Wren	City of Manassas Park

\*Voting Member

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

STAFF AND GENERAL PUBLIC

Nick Alexandrow	PRTC Transit Project Manager
Gina Altis	PRTC Executive Assistant
Monica Backmon	PWC Regional Transportation Planner
Doris Chism	PRTC Dir., Customer Service & Dispatch
Rob Dickerson	PRTC Legal Counsel
Joyce Embrey	PRTC Dir., Finance & Administration
Althea Evans	PRTC Dir., Marketing & Communications
Alfred Harf	PRTC Executive Director
Angela Horan	PRTC Legal Counsel
Robb Howell	FIRST TRANSIT General Manager
Ryan Jones	PRTC Special Projects Coordinator
Eric Lee	FIRST TRANSIT Safety & Training Manager
Bob Leibbrandt	PWC Budget & Analysis
Steve MacIsaac	VRE Legal Counsel
Eric Marx	PRTC Dir., Planning & Operations
Betsy Massie	PRTC Dir., Grants & Project Management
Kate Morosoff	Legislative Assistant (Senator Puller)
Paul Pitchke	FIRST TRANSIT AGM-Operations
Cynthia Porter-Johnson	PRTC Transportation Project Manager
Jeff Saxe	Kimley-Horn & Associates, Inc.
Chuck Steigerwald	PRTC Mgr., Planning & Quality Assurance
Ed Wright	Wright Realty, Inc.
Dale Zehner	VRE Chief Executive Officer



OmniLink service increased slightly in June and the year-to-date is marginally higher compared to the prior year.

Concluding, Mr. Howell noted that PRTC buses participated in the annual Fourth of July parade (organized by Chairman Jenkins) in Dale City.

Vice Chairman Way asked if any problems have occurred with the recent route and bus stop location changes. Mr. Howell stated that OmniRide passengers are generally well-versed in the DC area and have been able to find the new locations quickly. Only one complaint was received this past month with regard to the route changes. Detours and ongoing conflicts with the “slug” lines are the principal challenges at present.

At this time, Chairman Jenkins amended the Agenda by adding Item 6-B and called on the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation’s (VDRPT) representative Mr. Wilson to speak. Mr. Wilson thanked the Commission and stated that he is pleased to represent VDRPT on the PRTC Board and is looking forward to a long, productive tenure.

Continuing, Mr. Wilson referenced an action item (Item 12-B.5) on the meeting agenda – a requested authorization to apply for a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) “State of Good Repair (SOGR)” discretionary grant. He indicated that VDRPT will provide a letter of support to the Commission for the subject grant application expressing VDRPT’s belief that it’s a very deserving initiative. He went on to say that VDRPT will be asking the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) on July 20<sup>th</sup> to authorize a “letter of no prejudice” for this and other Commonwealth-originating discretionary grant applications to help satisfy matching requirements.

On a final note, Mr. Wilson noted that discussions have taken place with VDRPT Director Thelma Drake and Secretary of Transportation Sean Connaughton about VRE’s request for funding to complete the parking facilities at the Brooke and Leeland VRE Stations. VDRPT is seeking supplemental funding (\$640,000), perhaps as a companion to the I-95 HOV/HOT Lanes project. There is strong support within the Secretariat to assist with the request. VDRPT will keep the Commission apprised as developments occur.

On behalf of the Commission, Chairman Jenkins expressed appreciation to Mr. Wilson and noted that PRTC Executive Director Al Harf will provide additional details about the FTA discretionary grant later in the Agenda.

7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RES 11-07-01                      Minutes of June 2, 2011.  
[PRTC]

Commissioner Kelly moved, with a second by Vice Chairman Way, to approve the Minutes, as presented. There was no discussion on the motion. (KELLY\WAY; WITH MAJORITY VOTE, NADDONI\STIMPSON ABSTAINED)





RES 11-07-08            D.     CSXT Amended and Restated Operating/Access Agreement.  
[VRE]

Mr. Zehner stated that a final contract has been negotiated with CSXT and the VRE Operations Board has approved and recommends that both Commissions (NVTC\PRTC) to do likewise. He explained that the major stumbling block in negotiating a final contract was overcome when CSXT ceased its demand that VRE acquire additional insurance above the \$250 million liability plan that currently exists in the contract. At this time, VRE Legal Counsel Steve MacIsaac provided a brief overview to the Commission about the major points/changes to the contract.

Commissioner Milde moved, with a second by Commissioner Lasch, to authorize the execution of an Amended and Restated Operating/Access Agreement with CSXT.

Secretary Logan and Commissioner Naddoni asked what the financial impact will be with regard to the train mile cost and the “actual” train mile cost, respectively. Mr. Zehner replied \$687,000 more per year (train mile cost) and \$18.10 with a 4% escalation per year (actual train mile cost). There was no further discussion on the motion. (MILDE\LASCH, UNANIMOUS)

11. CHAIRMAN'S TIME

A. Appointment of Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) Representatives to the PRTC.

Chairman Jenkins announced the appointment of Messrs. Bob Wilson and David Awbrey as the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation’s (VDRPT) “member” and “alternate” representatives, respectively, to the PRTC.

Chairman Jenkins also introduced and welcomed PRTC’s new Transportation Project Manager Cynthia Porter-Johnson.

12. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S TIME

A. Executive Director’s Report

Mr. Harf reported that both the Senate and House versions of the reauthorization will soon become public. The House Transportation & Infrastructure (T&I) held a reauthorization bill webinar-telephone conference call this morning with T&I Committee Chairman John Mica and all of the subcommittee chairs, unveiling an outline of the House proposal (dubbed “New Directions”). Mr. Harf said New Directions is a six-year bill that confines funding to what the existing Federal gas tax can support. The recent expired six-year bill provided \$286 billion for roads and public transportation, while New Directions is expected to amount to \$230 million. Comparing New Directions and SAFETEA-LU, Mr. Harf observed that the House proposal reduces highway and transit funding by about 17% and

50%, respectively. Mr. Harf concluded his description of New Directions by noting the “streamlining” and “public-private” provisions in the bill, that Mr. Mica said would more than offset the dollar reduction in terms of purchasing power.

Continuing, Mr. Harf reported that the Senate bill is not yet public, but indications are that it will call for a continuation of existing funding levels by relying on a general fund supplement to the motor fuels tax. Reportedly it will be a two-year bill, with the political aim of getting beyond the next election so the question of how to properly endow a full-fledged six-year bill can be taken up in a less politically charged environment. Mr. Harf punctuated how different the two bills are in terms of dollars and duration. That said, he also noted the commonalities -- program consolidation, streamlining provisions, and increased tolling latitude.

Elsewhere on the federal front, Mr. Harf reported that the Obama Administration issued several Federal Register notices on June 24<sup>th</sup>, inviting transit providers nationally to apply for bus and bus facilities program discretionary funds. He explained that the money is available because the Congress chose not to earmark any of the bus/bus facilities discretionary funds in FY 2011, giving the Obama Administration latitude to award it as the Administration sees fit. Applications are due by July 29. PRTC management has been in communication with VDRPT about a “letter of no prejudice” to help PRTC to meet the match requirements.

On the state side, Mr. Harf reported that this past month the CTB approved the six-year program, and went on to say that the approved program “cures” all of the concerns that the Commission expressed about the “draft” program.

Moving to another subject, Mr. Harf reported that PRTC recently underwent a once every three year “Triennial Review” exercise in which the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and its hired outside contractor examine if the grantee is program compliant. It is a massive review involving materials that have to be assembled and furnished to the Triennial reviewers before-the-fact, followed by three days of review on-site. At the end of the review process, the reviewers issue a “draft” report. In anticipation of the possibility that the draft report may have some factual inaccuracies, grantees have seven days to respond to the draft report, correct inaccuracies, and furnish any additional information that might cause the Triennial reviewers to reach a different conclusion. The Commission has been provided a copy of the draft report findings. Mr. Harf noted that the Triennial reviewers look at 24 areas and made findings in “four” of the 24, signifying a need for either further follow up or corrective action. At this time, Mr. Harf briefed the Commission on the Triennial reviewers’ draft findings, noting that some are being contested while others are not.

Finally, Mr. Harf noted the Obama Administration announced in June the decision to release oil from the nation’s strategic petroleum reserve. As a result, prices dropped for a short period of time and PRTC purchased additional “futures” contracts as far out as February 2012.

B. Action Items:

RES 11-07-09            1.      Overcrowding Relief Plan.  
[PRTC]

Mr. Harf briefly recounted the acute overcrowding present on the OmniRide bus service, and indicated that management is recommending a plan for partial relief that does not require any additional local subsidies. It envisions 14 more revenue hours of daily service being added on an internally-financed basis, and the continued use of four buses that were to be retired upon the arrival of replacements but wouldn't be if the plan is adopted. Mr. Harf said the proposed plan will alleviate most of the morning overcrowding and about 40% of the afternoon overcrowding.

Commissioner Miller moved, with a second by Commissioner Puller, to authorize the Executive Director to implement the proposed overcrowding relief plan. There was no discussion on the motion. (MILLER/PULLER, UNANIMOUS)

RES 11-07-10            2.      FY 2013 Budget Guidelines.  
[PRTC]

Mr. Harf explained that the proposed guidelines call for no service expansion and a fare increase, consistent with the Commission's guidelines on fare increases being entertained every other year. He noted that the specifics of the "fare increase" proposal would be fashioned in the course of the budget development process, and went on to say that though there's no service expansion explicitly in the guidelines, it calls for PRTC to revisit the issue toward the end of the year before the budget is finalized for presentation to the Commission because there's so much uncertainty at present (e.g. the fate of the \$230/month commuter benefit).

Commissioner Lasch moved, with a second by Commissioner Skinner, to adopt the FY 2013 budget guidelines, as presented.

Vice Chairman Way questioned the advisability of guideline Item #4 -- "Quest for additional funding sources" -- observing that it seems to amount to wishful thinking. He went on to suggest that management assume there will be no additional local, state, and federal funding sources. Mr. Harf replied that PRTC proposes to reserve judgment about what the Federal and State funding levels are and use its best efforts to maximize them so that when it comes time for PRTC to fashion the budget at the end of the calendar year and present it to the Commission in December, estimates are presented for both federal and state funds based on conditions prevailing at that time. At the present time, the fate of the Federal transportation authorization bill is uncertain and the McDonnell Administration's plan for seeking additional transportation funding in the upcoming session of the General Assembly is uncertain, so PRTC thinks it would be a mistake to simply presuppose "flatlining" on both the Federal and State sides. Instead, management believes the Commission's interests would be better served by reserving judgment on what those funding levels will be and by using its best efforts to try to maximize them.

Mr. Harf went on to say that when it comes time to present the budget to the Commission in December 2011, it will be based on pragmatic estimates of federal and state funds, knowing what the outcome is on the federal side and what the McDonnell Administration will propose in the upcoming General Assembly session.

With regard to Item #10, Vice Chairman Way asked for further clarification since First Transit is obligated to ensure that the fleet and facility are in a state-of-good-repair at the end of the contract, Mr. Way questioned why management is proposing a PRTC budget allowance for such repairs. Mr. Harf replied that all of First Transit's fixed and rolling stock maintenance efforts have been above reproach (as the periodic reports management furnishes to the Commission have shown), and went on to say the intent is not to insinuate that First Transit is falling short or is expected to do so. Clarifying the intent of the entry, Mr. Harf explained that a "condition assessment" is conducted as the existing contract nears its end, in order to identify things that First Transit needs to remedy in accordance with the contract obligations. The same assessment is likely to identify repairs that PRTC will want to see done to ensure the facility is in a complete state of good repair that are outside the scope of First Transit's responsibility, which would be sensible to do during the transition period. The condition assessment and remedial work will take place in FY 2013.

Vice Chairman Way then asked if PRTC is proposing to initiate Item #11 – "advent of a retiree health program" as part of the budget. Mr. Harf replied "yes," and noted that such a program will be presented to the Commission at which time the Commission will have the prerogative to either accept or reject this particular provision. He further noted that the Commission previously sanctioned the idea of a PRTC retiree health program, but due to budget constraints it was deferred.

Commissioner Skinner asked what the fare increase was in FY 2010. Mr. Harf answered about 15%. Commissioner Skinner also asked if PRTC believes a drop in ridership will occur if Congress does not extend the \$230.00/month commuter benefit beyond the calendar year and what the expected drop will amount to. Mr. Harf replied that a drop can be expected, and went on to say that management has initiated fare market research to estimate the magnitude.

Secretary Logan asked if the fare increase will apply to VRE. Mr. Harf replied that VRE's FY 2013 budget guidelines also envision a fare increase, but that the magnitude of the PRTC and VRE increases would be separately established. Mr. Harf went on to say that VRE's budget guidelines envision a 4% fare increase in FY 2013. There was no further discussion on the motion. (LASCH\SKINNER; WITH MAJORITY VOTE, ANDERSON\MILLER NAY)

RES 11-07-11            3.        Ticketing Fare Changes – Public Review Authorization.  
[PRTC]

Mr. Harf explained that PRTC is seeking approval to invite public review of what amounts to a modest fare increase by elimination of the "free transfer" between the PRTC Transit

Center and Potomac Mills Mall. He went on to say that this particular free transfer was retained when PRTC was forced to relocate all of the bus transfer activity to the Transit Center from Potomac Mills Mall a number of years ago. Management proposes to limit the free transfer privilege to only those people who have “pass” products, fashioning this as a way of encouraging passengers to purchase “daily” or “weekly” passes rather than paying with cash. Pass products speed boarding times and lessen the need for cash handling/counting. The Commission is being asked to authorize a public review process. Management will return to the Commission in September with a final recommendation for the Commission’s consideration.

Commissioner Milde moved, with a second by Commissioner Puller, to authorize the Executive Director to invite public comment regarding a proposed fare policy change that would eliminate the free transfer between the PRTC Transit Center and Potomac Mills Mall for certain types of fare payers and return to the Commission with a recommended course of action following the public review process. There was no discussion on the motion. (MILDE\PULLER, UNANIMOUS)

RES 11-07-12            4.        Annual Bus Schedule Production.  
[PRTC]

Mr. Harf noted that the Commission is being asked to authorize PRTC to print bus schedules and displays that appear in the bus shelters.

Commissioner Lasch moved, with a second by Commissioner Kelly, to authorize management to incur costs associated with printed schedule and bus stop information display production (by its on-call contractor SmartMaps, Inc.) of as much as \$450,000 during the fiscal year 2012. There was no discussion on the motion. (LASCH\KELLY, UNANIMOUS)

RES 11-07-13            5.        Apply for a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) “State of  
[PRTC]                    Good Repair” (SOGR) Discretionary Grant.

Mr. Harf noted that the Commission is being asked to approve an Obama Administration discretionary grant solicitation. PRTC will apply for the grant with the aid of the VDRPT.

Commissioner Lasch moved, with a second by Commissioner Naddoni, to authorize the PRTC Executive Director to apply for a SOGR grant for continued funding of PRTC’s ongoing OmniRide bus mid-life overhaul campaign, subject to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) approving either an off-cycle grant or a LONP before July 29, 2011.

Commissioner Stimpson asked if this is stimulus money and if there is a 20% match requirement. Mr. Harf explained that it is not stimulus money, but FY 2011 federal discretionary money that the Congress has not earmarked. It does require a 20% match. There was no further discussion on the motion. (LASCH\NADDONI, UNANIMOUS)

RES 11-07-14            6.        Convene into Closed Meeting.  
[PRTC]

Commissioner Skinner moved, with a second by Commissioner Kelly, to convene into Closed Meeting at 8:25 p.m. for discussion pertaining to consultation with counsel and staff regarding potential acquisition of real estate for a public purpose where public discussion would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of PRTC, and related legal advice from counsel pursuant to Section 2.2-3711.A.3 (potential acquisition of property for a public purpose) and Section 2.2-3711.A.7 (legal) VA Code Ann. There was no discussion on the motion. (SKINNER\KELLY, UNANIMOUS)

RES 11-07-15            7.        Certification of Closed Meeting.  
[PRTC]

Commissioner Milde moved, with a second by Commissioner Puller, to certify Closed Meeting at 8:50 p.m. There was no discussion on the motion. (MILDE\PULLER, UNANIMOUS)

[PRTC]                    8.        Action Items Reported Out of Closed.

There were no action items to report out of Closed Meeting.

[Commissioner Puller departed at 8:55 p.m. and was absent for the vote on Item 12-B.9]

RES 11-07-16            9.        Endorsement of PRTC's Project Submitted for Consideration  
[PRTC]                    by the NVTA for Additional Federal CMAQ Funds

With regard to a late breaking development, Mr. Harf explained that VDOT is inviting transit providers and local governments to seek a piece of unprogrammed CMAQ and RSTP money in the six-year program. PRTC is vying for \$1 million of this unprogrammed money to supplement the western maintenance facility funds.

Commissioner Naddoni moved, with a second by Vice Chairman Way, to endorse the proposed project for regional consideration by the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) for additional Federal CMAQ funds.

Commissioner Lasch asked if there's a limit of how much a transit provider can ask for. Mr. Harf noted that there's \$13 million in CMAQ money available to the Northern Virginia region all told, and that management believes a \$1 million quest by PRTC is a practical limit. There was no further discussion on the motion. (NADDONI\WAY; WITH MAJORITY VOTE, PULLER ABSENT\WILSON ABSTAINED)

C.        Information Items:

1.        Our Nation's Congestion Capital We're #1! There were no comments.

2. U.S. Energy Information Administration – What Drives Crude Oil Prices? There were no comments.
3. PRTC Service Performance Reports. There were no comments.
4. PRTC Budget-to-Actual Comparison. There were no comments.
5. Communications:
  - a. Related to Funding. There were no comments.
  - b. Related to Jurisdiction. There were no comments.
  - c. General Interest. There were no comments.

13. OTHER BUSINESS/COMMISSIONERS' TIME

Chairman Jenkins reminded everyone that the PRTC Board will take a “recess” in August and the September 1<sup>st</sup> PRTC Board Meeting has been moved to Thursday, September 8, 7:00 p.m. at the PRTC Transit Center.

14. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chairman Jenkins adjourned the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, September 8, 2011, 7:00 p.m.

LOCATION: PRTC Transit Center  
14700 Potomac Mills Road, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Woodbridge, VA 22192-6811  
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