

**TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
January 11, 2022**

The Transportation Advisory Committee met on January 11, 2022 at 12:00 pm in the Mass Transit Training Facility. The following were present:

Attendees:

Anna Kautzman	Marc Adelman, Transportation Services Director
Judy Keesee	Eric Wright, Div. Director of Transportation Services
John Moody	Brenda Astin, MT Senior Account Clerk
Tyrell Payne	Steven Hennessee, State Project Mgr., participated
Ralph Price	in the meeting via Zoom
	Lib Rood, Senior Transportation Planner, KFH
	Group, Inc. participated in the meeting via Zoom

The Transportation Committee meeting, held on January 11, 2022, was called to order at 12:03 pm by Chairperson, John Moody.

Public Comment

No public comments were received.

Approval of Minutes

Ralph Price moved that the minutes of the December 8, 2021, Transportation Committee meeting be approved as presented. Judy Keesee seconded the motion, all members were in favor and the motion passed.

Transit Development Plan Update - Draft survey review

Marc Adelman provided copies of the draft surveys for the Committee's review that will be distributed as part of the Transit Development Plan Update. Lib Rood, of the KFH Group participated remotely during the meeting via Zoom to discuss the surveys and receive input from the Committee members regarding the study. Three different surveys were provided for review that involved fixed route service, demand response service and one for the general public. The consultant firm discussed options for outside services staff to assist with distributing surveys at the Transfer Center or ride buses to disseminate surveys. Ms. Rood said another option to obtain passenger input could involve distributing postcards with QR codes so the passengers would be able to take the survey at their leisure.

Marc Adelman suggested utilizing additional outside services staff to assist with surveying demand response passengers and include one staff person at the Transfer Center as passengers arrive after disembarking from the fixed route buses. Discussion continued.

Transit Development Plan Update - Draft survey review (Continued)

The questions identified for the different surveys were discussed. Anna Kautzman suggested to provide additional space in the survey form in case someone is dissatisfied about a service issue so they can share relevant information if desired. It is anticipated that the surveys will be provided to passengers and the public within the next few months.

FY2023 operational budget highlights

Marc Adelman said that recently the FY2023 operating budget was submitted to the city's budget office for review. Highlights of the operations budget were discussed with the Committee. As discussed previously, it is anticipated that the city's local match is likely to increase significantly next fiscal year due to the loss of the increased federal operating aid that was received over the past two years due to the pandemic. The bullet items listed below will negatively impact the transit system's operating deficit next fiscal year.

- Salary and Wages - increase of \$100,000 due to FY22 wage adjustments
- Outside Services – increase of \$27,000 due to the merging of temp service fees for cleaning buses
- Uniforms – increase of \$5,500 for driver's pants @ \$25 per pair
- Fuel Charges – increase of \$119,000 due to current fuel prices compared to FY22 prices
- Cash Fares – decrease from \$342,000 to \$300,000 due to the pandemic and reduced fixed route and senior ridership (cash fares realized in FY2019 - \$355,916)

Recommended revision to original FY2023 Program of Capital Projects

After the December 8, 2021, Transportation Advisory Committee meeting the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation identified that the FY22 grant request for seven (7) automated voice announcement units for fixed route buses was approved for funding by the Commonwealth Transportation Board. As a result, only two voice announcement systems will need to be purchased during FY2023 to support fixed route operations. An updated draft program of capital projects for FY23 is identified on the following page that includes funding estimates for automated voice announce units, vehicles, bus stop signage, building renovations and replacement of the existing automated scheduling software system. This information was reviewed with the Transportation Advisory Committee during the meeting.

A multi-year grant request will be submitted to the state to cover the cost of replacing the transit system's automated scheduling software system and license fees for a four-year period. Five companies submitted proposals for the project and provided quotes for the first year that ranged in price from \$66,000 to \$250,000. A recommendation to identify the selected vendor is expected later this month. ***After discussion, a motion was made by Ralph Price and seconded by Judy Keese to approve the revisions to the FY2023 Program of Capital Projects as discussed.***

Recommended revision to original FY2023 Program of Capital Projects (*Continued*)

CAPITAL ITEM	TOTAL COST	FEDERAL	STATE	LOCAL
38 PASSENGER BUSES (2)	\$400,000	\$320,000	\$64,000	\$16,000
BUS STOP SIGN REPLACEMENT (350)	\$21,000	\$16,800	\$3,360	\$840
RENOVATE TRANSFER CENTER	\$98,000	\$78,400	\$15,680	\$3,920
14 PASSENGER BUSES (3)	\$334,234	\$266,587	\$53,317	\$13,329
AUTOMATED VOICE ANNOUNCEMENT UNITS (2)	\$11,671	\$9,337	\$1,867	\$467
MINIVAN	\$34,000	\$27,200	\$5,440	\$1,360
TOTAL	\$949,846	\$759,877	\$151,975	\$37,994
REPLACE AUTOMATED SCHEDULING SYSTEM AND COVER SERVICE COST FOR FOUR (4) YEARS	\$379,288	\$200,000	\$40,000	\$10,000

Automated Scheduling Software Procurement Update

Marc Adelman provided background information concerning staff's interest to replace the current automated scheduling software system. He also updated members concerning the status of the review process to select a new software company. Other issues concerning the receipt of software proposals were discussed with the Committee as identified below.

- The transit system's current automated scheduling software company did not submit a proposal.
- A review committee was formed to evaluate proposals.
- Review committee members include mass transit staff and Information Technology staff.
- Reference checks were completed by sending surveys to other transit systems identified in proposals.
- Product demonstrations are planned for January 18, 2022.
- The review committee will determine prior to January 31, 2022, whether to approve a company to replace the existing system or reissue the Request for Proposals

Marc Adelman reviewed the additional modules and capabilities that transit staff would like provided with the new software system.

Prospective Capital Projects for future consideration

Marc Adelman reviewed some other capital projects for future consideration. One project involves modifications to the Hardees/Riverside Drive bus stop location to construct a bus pullout area and install a shelter. This project was recommended by the Virginia Department of Transportation. Marc Adelman commented that private sector support is needed to install shelters adjacent to private property. Discussion continued.

Update on customer payment options for future possible implementation

Marc Adelman reviewed information with Committee members concerning possible future customer payment options. He added that he would like to include a question in the Transit Development Plan Update survey to ask about preferred options. Currently, the transit system sells bus tokens to passengers as a payment option, which are available at a 10% discount. However, there are concerns that tokens may not be available for purchase in the future. Currently, token wrappers can no longer be acquired to create token rolls and as a result, tokens are placed in very small Ziplock plastic bags. Other potential customer payment options discussed include the following,

- Install hardware (mobile data terminals) in buses
- Use of downloadable app and smart phone to pay for bus fares
- Electronic fare cards that can be loaded by passengers for pre-paid trips
- Web portal for reservation-based passengers to go online and pay for trips/no electronic fare card needed. This option is also identified in the RFP to replace automated scheduling software system.
- Survey passengers to access preferred payment options for passengers

The meeting was adjourned at 1:13 pm.