

**RICHMOND REGIONAL
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

**MINUTES OF MEETING
May 5, 2016**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Steve A. Elswick, **Vice Chairman** Chesterfield County
Parker C. Agelasto City of Richmond
Manuel Alvarez, Jr. Goochland County
Robert H. Cary Secretary of Transportation Designee: VDOT
Angela L. Gray RTMA
Kathy C. Graziano City of Richmond
David Green GRTC Transit System
Wayne Hazzard (Alternate) Hanover County
Edward L. Henson, III Town of Ashland
James M. Holland Chesterfield County
Angela Kelly-Wiecek Hanover County
Robert P. Morris (Nonvoting) CTAC
Larry J. Nordvig Powhatan County
Patricia S. O'Bannon Henrico County
Ivan Rucker (Nonvoting) FHWA
Frank J. Thornton Henrico County
C. Thomas Tiller, Jr. New Kent County
Von Tisdale (Nonvoting) RideFinders
Christopher Winslow Chesterfield County

MEMBERS ABSENT

W. Canova Peterson, IV, **Chairman** Hanover County
Jonathan Baliles City of Richmond
Nick Britton (Nonvoting) DRPT
Cliff Burnette (Nonvoting) VDA
Thomas Fletcher (Nonvoting) CTAC
Susan F. Lascolette Goochland County
Ryan Long (Nonvoting) FTA
Floyd H. Miles, Sr. Charles City County
Brian Montgomery (Nonvoting) EDAC
Michelle R. Mosby City of Richmond
John Rutledge CRAC

ALTERNATE MEMBERS PRESENT, NOT VOTING

Carson L. Tucker (Alternate) Powhatan County

CALL TO ORDER

In the absence of the TPO Chairman, TPO Vice Chairman Steve Elswick called the May 5, 2016 meeting of the Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) to order at approximately 9:30 a.m. in the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission board room.

CERTIFICATION OF MEETING QUORUM

TPO Secretary Barbara S. Nelson reported that a quorum was present.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

At the request of the Chairman, Wayne T. Hazzard led the TPO in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

I. ADMINISTRATION

A. Approval of TPO Agenda

On motion by Manuel Alvarez, Jr., seconded by Kathy C. Graziano, the TPO unanimously voted to approve the April 7, 2016 TPO meeting agenda as presented.

B. Minutes of the April 7, 2016 TPO Meeting

On motion by Patricia S. O'Bannon, seconded by Christopher Winslow, the TPO unanimously approved the minutes of the April 7, 2016 TPO meeting as presented.

C. Open Public Comment Period

Richard C. Edmunds, spoke regarding Deepwater Terminal Road near the Port of Richmond, which he said is neglected. He said the TPO has allocated \$14.46 million to fix up Commerce Road, which he said is a Taj Mahal in a trucking area. He said if you are a truck heading north on Commerce Road, you cannot make a left turn because of the center island and sidewalks. He said for the two miles of Commerce Road extension, there is not a single building. Mr. Edmunds said he has owned property there for 50 years and there is no need for a sidewalk on Commerce Road. He said it was reported that business is up at the Port is up, but there are containers that are impossible to get under I-95 with a 21-foot under-clearance at Goode Creek going to waste because the road [Deepwater Terminal Rd.] gives out. He said the Port has the new crane which is helping, and it looks to him that to help the area get more business, somebody ought to look into repairing Deepwater Terminal Road. He said he owns property on both sides of Commerce Road in that improvement area and he's not going to be able to get tenants if they have to go four miles to avoid a bridge which needs some repair. But if you extend Deepwater Terminal Road, it would only be about two hundred yards out of the way. Chairman Elswick thanks Mr. Edmunds for his comments.

There were no additional requests to address the TPO and Chairman Elswick closed the public comment period of the meeting.

D. TPO Chairman's Report

Report of the Nominating Committee and Election of FY 2017 TPO Officers:

Chairman Elswick called on Manuel Alvarez and Frank Thornton to report for the FY 17 TPO Officers Nominating Committee and Mr. Alvarez reported that the Committee would place in nomination Steve A. Elswick from Chesterfield for FY 17 Chairman and Kathy C. Graziano from the City of Richmond for FY 17 TPO Vice Chairman. On motion of Christopher Winslow, seconded by James M. Holland, the TPO unanimously voted the slate of officers presented by the FY 17 TPO Officers Nominating Committee electing Steve A. Elswick as FY 17 TPO Chairman and Kathy C. Graziano as FY 17 Vice Chairman to serve from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017.

E. TPO Secretary's Report

1. CTB Public Hearing, April 21: Update

Barbara Nelson reported on the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) public hearing held on April 21 at the VDOT Richmond District Office in Colonial

Heights. Mr. Peterson representing the TPO provided comments on the TPO position on the House Bill 2 project selection process and Ms. Nelson provided comments as staff. She reported that the CTB had taken action on April 20 to move a slate of projects forward and as part of that resolution they indicated they would be considering revisions to the House Bill 2 process for selecting projects with the report due back to the CTB by September. Ms. Nelson said she requested on behalf of the TPO that this occur sooner in the process because in order to compete in the submission of applications, the TPO needs to know and understand fully what the rules of engagement are. Ms. Nelson noted that the resolution is included in the minutes and a copy of the resolution that was submitted to the CTB was also distributed to the TPO.

2. March TPO Financial and Work Status Report

Barbara Nelson reported that in the March 2016 Financial Report is included in agenda tab 3 and she said work efforts continue to be work on the long-range plan, selection of RSTP and CMAQ projects which are before the TPO for action today, and other work tasks.

II. NEW BUSINESS

A. FY 2017 – FY 2022 RSTP and CMAQ Project Review, Selection and Funds Allocation

Sarah Rhodes, TPO staff, noted the 2016 RSTP (Regional Surface Transportation Program) and CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality) booklet, an enclosure with agenda package, as well as material included under agenda tab four. Ms. Rhodes reviewed the resolution noting that it includes approval of the tables in the agenda package which list the projects, funding and other pertinent information. Ms. Rhodes reviewed the competitive application process followed for the selection of projects, evaluating existing projects, consideration of applications for additional funds for existing projects and applications for new projects. She reviewed projected allocations of RSTP and CMAQ funds over the next six years noting a 17.6 percent increase for RSTP funds and an overall decrease of about 5.1 percent for CMAQ funds, and she reviewed historical allocations for each program since 1992. Ms. Rhodes reviewed existing projects that received additional funding and new RSTP and CMAQ projects over the next six years. She said the funding allocation recommendation, as approved by the TPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) at its April 19 meeting, would allocate approximately \$160 million over six years to 43 transportation projects.

On motion of Kathy C. Graziano, seconded by Frank J. Thornton, the Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RRTPO) unanimously approved the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) authorizes the allocation of Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds in fiscal years 2017 through 2022 as shown in the tables “*FY 2017 – 2022 Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) Allocations*” and “*FY 2017 – 2022 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program (CMAQ) Allocations*” for Commonwealth Transportation Board review, consideration, and inclusion in the upcoming Six-Year Improvement Program.

B. Fiscal Year 2017 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Barbara Nelson noted information included under agenda package tab five and the FY 17 UPWP document agenda enclosure. Ms. Nelson noted the brief overview of the TPO work program and funding provided at the April TPO meeting and said she is asking approval of the FY 17 UPWP beginning July 1, 2016 and ending July 30, 2017. She said the document addresses federal and state planning regulations and programming requirements that make the region eligible to receive federal funds for highways and transit investments. Ms. Nelson said a significant amount of TPO funding comes from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) through PL planning funds and additional funding comes from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in the form of Section 5303 funds. There is an additional funding source included in this year's budget which includes Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) funds that were awarded to the TPO through a competitive selection process to support development of the regional travel demand modeling efforts that are underway. She said all of these federal funds are matched by state and local funds with a total budget of approximately \$1.8 million including a carryover of FY 16 PL funds to FY 17 approved by the TPO last month.

The FY 17 work program is organized with four core areas of effort. Program management is the underlying foundation with focus on transportation planning, technology and applications, and financial programs. Federal efforts have shifted emphasis from financing and advancing projects in the region to transportation planning. The work program has three core areas of planning priorities: addressing the federal certification review comments, implementation of the FAST Act and other USDOT priorities, and completion of existing work tasks and initiation of new planning efforts. The October 2014 letter for the September 2013 federal certification review included a number of commendations, one corrective action addressed by updating the Public Participation Plan, and recommendations that the TPO incorporate into its work program to be more fully aligned with federal priorities. As the TPO prepares for its next federal certification review in the fall of 2017, many of the work program tasks will help ensure that the TPO is fully compliant with all of the recommendations included in the last review. In addition to being fully compliant with the FAST Act as guidance is rolled out, two additional USDOT priorities relate to Ladders of Opportunity and incorporation of Models of Regional Cooperation in TPO planning efforts. Ms. Nelson discussed existing work tasks that will continue into FY 17 and reviewed new initiatives included in the work program.

Ms. Nelson said the FY 17 work program has been reviewed by the TPO Technical Advisory Committee and recommended for board approval and she responded to questions and comments with the following major points brought forward:

- Staff will follow up on recommendations from the *Needs and Gaps Assessment for the Transportation Disadvantaged* to explore whether there could be a regional central coordinating entity to support those across the region who are transportation disadvantaged.
- FHWA advised the TPO that in order for the Public Participation Plan (PPP) to be fully compliant in satisfying the corrective action from the September 2013 federal review, the amendment processes for the long-range plan and the Transportation

Improvement Program needed to be incorporated into the PPP, even though documentation of these processes existed elsewhere.

- FHWA requested that the TPO be certain it is reaching out to limited English proficiency (LEP) communities and exercising due diligence in evaluating the impact of projects recommended in the long-range planning process on elderly, disability and low-income populations.
- The regional travel demand model will serve as a critical tool for region-wide evaluation and new staff, Catie Bray, will focus on equity analysis addressing federal Title VI requirements and ensuring that TPO transportation planning efforts are meeting the needs of all persons in the region.
- Citizen participation is best achieved by going out to the citizens rather asking them to come to you and a suggestion was made to work with Senior Connections and their cafes to reach seniors.
- The East Coast Greenway is envisioned as an urban Appalachian Trail connecting cities and towns from Calais, Maine to Key West, Florida being designated in 2000 as a national trail, is included in the Virginia Outdoor Plan as a trail of statewide significance and is included in the region's long-range plan as a regional trail.
- The East Coast Greenway enters the region in Hanover County, goes through the Town of Ashland, Henrico County, and the City of Richmond and exits the region through Chesterfield County.
- Larry Nordvig noted that some taxpayers view pedestrian and bicycle trails as adult recreation and have resistance to paying for these facilities and he asked that the East Coast Greenway be handled with diplomacy and that members be kept in the loop as this project develops.

On motion of Kathy C. Graziano, seconded by Edward L. Henson, III, the Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RRTPO) unanimously approved the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) adopts the FY 2017 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

C. House Bill 2 (HB2): High Priority, District Grant and State of Good Repair

Barbara Nelson ceded her time on this agenda item to Rob Cary to provide the update on House Bill 2.

III. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. VDOT Richmond District Update

Rob Cary, Richmond District Engineer, reported that the CTB members, the Virginia Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Transportation and others attended the April 21 public hearing where there was a lot of good input. Mr. Cary thanked TPO representatives and participants. He said what is being recommended for the Richmond District is removing about \$10 million from what was the I-95/I-64 Overlap Roadway Lighting project and placing some of that money on the I-64 widening from I-295 to Bottoms Bridge, a \$60 million project that was added to the CTB funding recommendation. Additionally, the I-95 Broad Street Exit was fully funded with District Grant funds. The \$60 million for the I-295 to Bottoms Bridge project came from savings on an interchange in Warrenton, removal of the roadway lighting project, and unallocated high priority project funds. Mr. Cary said the CTB will have to consider the Secretary's recommendation when they adopt the Six-Year

Plan in June, but he anticipates the I-64 widening project being approved. In response to questions, Mr. Cary said the I-64 widening project would be about five miles with one lane in each direction added in the median. He said Hampton Roads has about 15 miles under construction on I-64 widening which will leave about a 30-mile gap between these two projects to eventually be connected.

When asked if the I-64 widening project jumped over other projects on the list to be funded, Mr. Cary deferred to Mark Riblett who responded that this project was an HB 2 step four addition and depending on how the project scored in the first three steps, there were a number of different funding scenarios that had different projects funded, so you could make the case that it scored well in step four, but maybe not as well as it would have in steps two or three. Mr. Cary said he believes the Secretary's office is trying to exercise discretion in discerning whether they will get greater benefit from addressing the serious congestion on that segment of I-64 than from the roadway lighting project.

Concern was expressed that deviation from the ranking takes the process back to an arbitrary, less transparent funding method. Mr. Cary said the Secretary's office has always said that there are the scores, but then the CTB will decide what they want to do. He said as you look across the state, most of the projects funded are straight down the scoring list and the discretions come in at the fringe. He also noted that this is the first round of the HB 2 funding process and the Secretary has always been very clear that the process wasn't perfect, but that it is being reviewed for revisions and tweaks in the next round. Mr. Cary said there were some projects that received points only from what they did not do – they did no harm to the environment – but they didn't actually do anything for congestion or safety, and that will be changed and he noted other changes that are being considered. Mr. Cary also pointed out that the difference in the previous process and the HB 2 process is that all the data is there and available for each project so that even if you disagree, the project scoring is quantifiable.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Upcoming TPO Policy Board Meetings and Future Meeting Topics

Chairman Elswick noted that tab six contains a list of future agenda items and he suggested that TPO members contact Barbara Nelson to add a topic. Also, Chairman Elswick announced that the August 4 meeting has been cancelled.

B. Next Meeting: June 2, 2016

Chairman Elswick noted the next TPO meeting will be held June 2, 2016.

Frank Thornton noted that the question came up having to do with reaching federal priorities having to do with community outreach and he reminded the TPO that there had been an ad hoc committee on increasing public awareness and accessibility of the TPO. He suggested that now that the TPO may be poised to take some action on that it may be judicious for the TPO to take a few minutes at a future meeting to discuss how they could do better with transparency in the sense of making sure that the decisions that are discussed include public input. He said most of the public is at work when the TPO meets and in the 20 years that he has been involved with the TPO, he doesn't recall an evening meeting where the public could be there. He said the TPO needs to think about the public a little more and consider what their ideas are and maybe with the new technology, there could be solutions to include the public. Chairman Elswick

said the TPO needs to accommodate the public and he asked Ms. Nelson to add that to future meeting topics. Jim Holland mentioned reaching out to regional advocate groups for seniors, individuals with disabilities, Hispanics and others to do the outreach and communication to inform them regarding TPO business versus these populations having to come to the TPO meetings.

Ms. Nelson said one thing staff can do, especially with new staff on board, is make sure to highlight the outreach efforts that are being made in reporting each month to the TPO. Angela Kelly-Wiecek said she loves the idea of thinking about how do we reach out to people and she said if they're going to give up one of their evenings, they want to know what's in it for them, what it is they're going to hear. She said generally you get people engaged when they understand how it impacts them and that's not something you can do with a couple of tweets. She said when you speak to them about specific projects or specific outcomes from a TPO meeting, then it has more meaning. She suggested having someone look at this and craft a comprehensive strategy for consistent messaging and schedules helping people become familiar with the TPO is where you'll get meaningful engagement and exchanges. She suggested the TPO think comprehensively about this matter before changing meeting times and locations. Mr. Nordvig said he believes citizen communication should be issue-centric about issues that either affect people financially or their quality of life. Mr. Cary said technology could be an answer to making meetings and information available and he noted that all of the CTB meetings are streamed and put online so that people can view the meetings in their own time frame.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Elswick adjourned the meeting at 10:40 a.m.

BSN/sr