

**HAMPTON ROADS TRANSPORTATION ACCOUNTABILITY COMMISSION
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Tuesday, September 2, 2014

2:35 PM

The Regional Board Room, 723 Woodlake Drive, Chesapeake, Virginia

Summary Minutes of September 2, 2014

The inaugural meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee of the Hampton Roads Transportation Accountability Commission (HRTAC) was called to order at 2:35 p.m. in the Regional Board Room, 723 Woodlake Drive, Chesapeake, Virginia, with the following in attendance:

TAC Voting Members in Attendance:

Mr. Lynn Allsbrook, Deputy Director of Public Works and City Engineer, Hampton

Mr. Clyde Clark, Senior Vice President, BB&T

Mr. Neal Crawford, Chair, President, Monarch Bank

Ms. Helen Dragas, Vice-Chair, President and Chief Executive Officer, Dragas Companies

Mr. Joe Frank – Attorney and Former Mayor of Newport News

Mr. Jim Long – Chief Engineer, Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel

Ms. Jody Wagner – Former Secretary of Finance and Treasurer, Commonwealth of Virginia

Technical Advisory Committee Members Absent:

Mr. James Koch, Economist and Past President of Old Dominion University

Mr. Harry Lester, Former President, Eastern Virginia Medical School

Other Participants:

The Honorable Alan P. Krasnoff, HRTAC Chair and Mayor of City of Chesapeake

Ms. Grindly Johnson, Deputy Secretary of Transportation, Commonwealth of Virginia

Mr. James Utterback, District Administrator, VDOT Hampton Roads District

Ms. Camelia Ravanbakht, HRTPO Interim Executive Director

Ms. Jan Proctor, City Attorney, City of Chesapeake

Ms. Dolores Moore, City Clerk, City of Chesapeake

Ms. Beth Arnold, Virginia Department of Transportation

Ms. Dawn Odom, Planning and Investment Manager, VDOT Hampton Roads District

Others in Attendance:

Brian Chenault, Community Outreach Planner, HRTPO staff

Mike Long, General Service Manager, HRPDC/HRTPO staff

Chris Vaigneur, Assistant General Services Manager, HRPDC/HRTPO staff

Michael S. Kimbrel, Principal Transportation Engineer, HRTPO staff

Kathlene Grauberger, Senior Administrative Assistant, HRPDC/HRTPO staff

Chairman Crawford called the meeting to order and addressed the purpose of the Committee, which was to recommend the funding strategies to build a program of projects identified by the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) and the Hampton Roads Transportation Accountability Commission (HRTAC).

Chairman Crawford initiated a roundtable of introductions by the Technical Advisory Committee Members present. Each member introduced themselves and provided some background information about themselves. In addition to the members, others at the table provided introductions.

Chairman Crawford turned the meeting over to HRTAC Chairman, Mayor Alan Krasnoff of Chesapeake, who thanked all for being at the meeting and accepting a role on the Committee. Mayor Krasnoff spoke to the importance and urgency of the work of the Committee, noting that each day of delay in moving transportation projects forward cost the citizens of the Hampton Roads Region \$711,780 per day based on a 3% annual rate of inflation. Mayor Krasnoff emphasized that the Committee Members would be given a vision to get the work done, and every city represented was there to help the Committee. He noted that when oil prices increased, roads got more expensive to build. One mile of road, one lane, (not an interstate lane), cost \$7 million to construct.

Mayor Krasnoff charged the Committee to have short term goals set by December, or sooner, so that the nine projects the Committee was charged to deal with could move forward in some fashion. He advised those present that Hampton Roads receives about 30% of the available transportation funds collected in the Commonwealth, which was between \$350 million and \$450 million annually; of those funds, the area may see \$100 million. One year delaying progress on transportation projects meant a loss of approximately \$260 million in buying power; he noted that it was expensive to do nothing on transportation.

Mayor Krasnoff stated that with creative and innovative financing, projects could get done. He cited Chesapeake's Dominion Boulevard Bridge and Road Widening project as an example, noting that the project was projected to cost \$100 million in 1998 and had increased in cost to roughly \$400 million when begun in 2012. The City was told that the project could not be done without creative and innovative financing, which required the General Assembly creating the Virginia Transportation Infrastructure Bank to provide a tool to get the Dominion Boulevard project and financing underway.

Video simulation of the Dominion Boulevard project was shown to those present.

Mayor Krasnoff noted that the Committee would be a beacon of light to get the project work done, and that by Christmas or sooner, he wanted to see the vision of moving the projects forward in place in the Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP), even in different phases if necessary. After that, discussion on financing could take place in 2015.

Mayor Krasnoff asked Dr. Camelia Ravanbakht, Interim HRTPO Executive Director to provide an overview of the project selection process used to determine the Hampton Roads Transportation Fund (HRTF) candidate projects.

Dr. Ravanbakht provided an overview of how the nine projects were selected by the HRTPO. The HRTF was established in 2013 with regional funding for Hampton Roads projects being held in Richmond. Prior to the creation of the HRTAC in 2014 by the General Assembly, the HRTPO was empowered to use the funds and had created a list of projects on which to do so. The guiding principles for developing the candidate projects were reviewed, and included being part of the HRTPO Board approved 2034 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP); supported by HRTPO resolutions; eligible per House Bill 2313 legislation; and meeting a regional project cost threshold of \$100 million. Once all proposed projects were screened using the guiding principles, nine candidate projects were selected. Those projects included: I-64 Peninsula Widening (Jefferson Avenue to Route 199 West – Six-lane option) which had three segments and the I-64 Interchange Improvement at Ft. Eustis Boulevard; the Third Crossing which included several segments; I-64 Southside Widening (including the High Rise Bridge); I-64/I-264 Interchange (including the Witchduck Road Interchange); and US Route-460/58/13 Connector (from the Suffolk Bypass to I-664, including interchanges at the SPSA Facility and at the Hampton Roads Executive Airport). The summary pages for all the projects were discussed.

Deputy Secretary of Transportation Grindly Johnson interjected that the dollar figures on the project slides were estimates from the previous year and were no longer accurate.

Committee member Joe Frank inquired about the State's position on the Route 460 project (Route 58 Bypass to Petersburg). Dr. Ravanbakht advised that the project was currently on hold. Ms. Johnson added that the project would be permitted but it was currently unclear what type of permit would be sought. Mr. Frank asked if there was any prohibition in the regulations on tolling of existing projects prior to completion of construction. Mayor Krasnoff stated that it was his understanding that the Governor was not supportive of tolling existing roads. Ms. Johnson added that tolling of new capacity was acceptable but there would also need to be a free alternative to the tolled facility.

Mr. Frank noted that hundreds of millions of dollars could be saved through tolling of existing roads during construction which would also minimize the amount of borrowing on projects. Mayor Krasnoff responded that the current projects would be constructed and the financing of the projects would be done and that was the goal for the Committee. Mayor Krasnoff advised that Chesapeake learned what to do correctly on transportation projects: not to toll until all lanes are completed and to retain ownership of the road. He emphasized that the goal of the Committee was to get the financing in place for the selected nine projects; the Committee had an opportunity to decide how to allocate funding for the projects by looking at cash funding, leveraging the money, setting money aside and determining how to pay for the roads.

Dr. Ravanbakht introduced Ms. Dawn Odom, Planning and Investment Manager for the Hampton Roads District of the Virginia Department of Transportation. Ms. Odom provided an Overview of the Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP), the State's Improvement Program that outlines planned spending for transportation capital projects over a six-year period. The SYIP is produced on an annual basis and the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) allocates funding for the first fiscal year of the SYIP. The SYIP does not include state funded highway maintenance and operations, and follows a fiscal year cycle of July 1 to June 30.

Ms. Odom noted that the SYIP was primarily funded by state and federal revenues and spoke about the sources of those revenues. She provided an overview of the percentages of funding by the CTB formula under Title 33 of the Code of Virginia, as well as how the remaining construction funds are allocated, including funding not handled by the CTB. A review of the timing for the SYIP process was addressed, as well as the application of programming funds to projects, the sources of SYIP projects and a summary and status of the Hampton Roads 2015-2020 SYIP projects.

Deputy Secretary of Transportation Grindly Johnson asked if the Patriot's Crossing (Hampton Roads Third Crossing) was already included in the SYIP, and taking into consideration House Bill 2, if Patriot's Crossing did not meet the criteria, would the preliminary engineering funding come out of the SYIP. Ms. Odom responded that the funding would remain in place because it was federally earmarked and the prioritization process excluded some funding types.

Committee Member Jody Wagner inquired about the annual cost of roadway maintenance and operations in the region. Ms. Odom advised that approximately \$200 million was the figure for VDOT maintained roads in the Hampton Roads Region and did not include VDOT maintenance provided to localities in the region.

Mayor Krasnoff brought the discussion back to the nine projects and the current status of those projects in the SYIP. He noted in the I-64 Peninsula Widening project (a total of 18 miles), that Phase 1 from Jefferson Avenue (exit 255) to Route 238/Mile Marker 248 (exit 247), was fully funded and already being worked on. Phase 1 was 5.5 miles of the total project. Phase 2 of the project, from Route 238/Mile Marker 248 (exit 247) to Route 199 east of Williamsburg (exit 242), could move forward as the environmental work had been completed. While the Record of Decision (ROD) had not yet been issued for Phase 2, the Committee could still move forward with the project.

Mayor Krasnoff noted that the I-64 Southside Widening project, which included the High Rise Bridge, was currently in the Environmental Assessment phase with the Bowers Hill Interchange also being reviewed. A public hearing would be held in the fall. Funding must be in place in order to get the ROD. That was another opportunity for the Committee to move projects forward.

The I-64/I-264 Interchange project already had procurement underway and would take about three years to build, with design underway. When design was completed the right-of-way would have to be purchased for construction to begin and it could be done through the Committee.

The next project reviewed by Mayor Krasnoff was the Third Crossing which is in three parts including I-664, Patriot's Crossing and Craney Island. The project currently needed to go into a supplemental Environmental Impact Statement review (EIS) which was important and which the Committee could get going

Mayor Krasnoff reiterated that the goal was to at least get to Segment 2 of the I-64 Peninsula Widening which would go a long way to relieving traffic congestion.

Mr. Frank inquired if the interchange at Fort Eustis Boulevard was included in the current Peninsula project as that was a large part of the traffic issue in that area. VDOT District Administrator Utterback advised that the interchange was not included. Committee Member Allsbrook stated that there was a safety issue at that location requiring redesign. Mayor Krasnoff stated that he was giving the Committee a short-term vision and they could go beyond that if they chose to do so. He asked the Committee to get things started; regardless of where they started, just get things moving along. He reminded the Committee that there were only nine projects.

Mayor Krasnoff thanked Deputy Secretary of Transportation Grindly Johnson for all her assistance over the past six weeks and recognized that she had been instrumental in getting the Hampton Roads Transportation Accountability Commission as far along as it was in a short period of time.

Mayor Krasnoff shared his phone number with the Committee Members and asked them to contact Chairman Crawford with their inquiries before contacting him. He reminded the Committee of the need to have all the projects moving in the SYIP. He advised Chairman Crawford that the meeting could be recessed to another day rather than adjourned, if the Committee chose to do that.

Mayor Krasnoff turned the meeting over to Chesapeake City Attorney Jan Proctor who gave the members present a handout on the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and provided an overview of the information contained in the material, as well as requirements for public meetings, closed sessions, and public records.

Mayor Krasnoff advised the Committee that they had an excellent opportunity to compete for federal funds such as the Federal Highway Administration's Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) program and the U.S. Department of Transportation's Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant program (from which \$85 million dollars was used for the Dominion Boulevard project in Chesapeake. He stated that when there was real momentum, the money would show up.

Mayor Krasnoff thanked everyone for agreeing to participate on the Committee and thanked Chairman Crawford for allowing him to take-up so much time during the meeting.

Chairman Crawford thanked the Mayor for his enthusiasm. Mr. Crawford suggested that the Committee recess until arrangements could be made for municipal finance people to provide some guidance and advice to the Committee on what options were available to them.

Vice Chairman Dragas moved and it was properly seconded that the meeting would recess until Monday, September 8th at 2:30 p.m. in the Regional Building. All members present voted to approve the recess to the recommended date, time and location. There was no opposition.

Chairman Crawford thanked all present and recessed the meeting at 3:40 p.m.