



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

## *Virginia Passenger Rail Authority*

DJ Stadtler  
Executive Director

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Jennifer DeBruhl  
Chairperson

### **MINUTES**

#### **Meeting of the Board of the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority**

Thursday, May 25, 2023 · 10:30 am

Truist Place · 919 East Main Street · Richmond, Virginia 23219

The Virginia Passenger Rail Authority Board held a regular, in-person meeting (with certain members participating remotely) on May 25, 2023, at Truist Place, 919 East Main Street, Richmond, VA 23219.

#### **MEMBERS PRESENT IN-PERSON**

Jennifer DeBruhl (Chair), Sharon Bulova, John Delandro, Thelma Drake, Jay Fisette, Cynthia Moses-Nedd, Charles Payne, James Spore

Mr. Delandro arrived at 10:50 a.m.

#### **MEMBERS PARTICIPATING ELECTRONICALLY**

Victor Cardwell and Bruno Maestri (see the attached approval forms noting the reasons for remote participation, and the location from which each participated)

#### **MEMBERS ABSENT**

Rich Dalton, Patricia Doersch, Wick Moorman, John Watkins, Rod Hall<sup>1</sup>

#### **VIRGINIA PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY STAFF**

DJ Stadtler, Michael McLaughlin, Steve Pittard, Joan Panik, Michael Westermann, Jeremy Latimer, Shannon Perry, Selma Nuhanovic, Shirlene Cleveland, Mark Augustine, Matt Jett, Jason Cheeks

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<sup>1</sup> While Mr. Hall was able to listen remotely for portions of the meeting, he was unable to request remote participation *in advance of the meeting* as required by Va. Code § 2.2-3708.3(B). Accordingly, for the purposes of these minutes, Mr. Hall is noted as absent.

## **GUESTS/OTHERS PRESENT**

Rob Case, Hampton Roads Planning

## **CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

Chairperson DeBruhl presided and called the meeting to order at 10:33 a.m. Ms. Douglas called roll and confirmed an in-person quorum was physically present.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no public comments presented or received.

## **BOARD CHAIR WELCOME**

*Presented by: Jennifer DeBruhl, Board Chairperson*

Ms. DeBruhl welcomed all in attendance in person and virtually.

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## **MOTION TO APPROVE PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES**

A motion was made by Charles Payne and seconded by Sharon Bulova to approve the previous board meeting minutes from January 24, 2023. The motion was carried unanimously, with the vote in favor cast by Sharon Bulova, Thelma Drake, Jay Fiset, Cynthia Moses-Nedd, Charles Payne, and James Spore.

A motion was made by Charles Payne and seconded by Sharon Bulova to approve the previous board meeting minutes from January 24, 2023. The motion was carried unanimously, with the vote in favor cast by Sharon Bulova, Thelma Drake, Jay Fiset, Cynthia Moses-Nedd, Charles Payne, and James Spore.

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## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

*Presented by: DJ Stadtler, Executive Director, Virginia Passenger Rail Authority*

Mr. Stadtler presented the Executive Director's report to brief the board about administrative updates, Amtrak performance data, capital project updates, and financial updates for the previous month.

VPRA's digital advertising was directly related to a higher number of ticket sales during the month of May. VPRA celebrated its second year and has completed a culture survey with employees. A lease was signed for the new office space in Northern Virginia which will be ready to be occupied before the end of the 2023 calendar year.

Annual Incentive Plan goals are on track to be completed by their respective dates.

Ridership has increased and Mrs. Bulova noted this was good news.

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## **NEW RIVER VALLEY UPDATE**

*Presented by DJ Stadtler, Virginia Passenger Rail Authority and Mike McLaughlin, Virginia Passenger Rail Authority*

Data was presented on the rail improvements needed for the NRV extension. Information was presented on the challenges VPRA is facing regarding getting to the mall in Christiansburg. Mr. Fisetto noted the large impact the addition of this line will have on future development in New River Valley. Mr. Cardwell agreed this would enhance future development opportunities. Mr. Spore noted concerns about the Merrimac Tunnel. Chair DeBruhl added that DRPT and VPRA are working collaboratively to find solutions as we move forward with New River Valley.

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## **FY24 BUDGET**

*Presented by: Steve Pittard, Virginia Passenger Rail Authority and Shannon Perry, Virginia Passenger Rail Authority*

The FY24 budget was reviewed. Mr. Pittard noted that VPRA methodology and funding priorities were to ensure VPRA had appropriate numbers with which to make decisions. Board Management reserve was discussed and Mr. Fisetto asked for more clarification regarding this reserve.

It was determined that a Finance and Audit Committee meeting would be held to review clarification regarding the new management reserve reflected in the FY24 budget, prior to the next Board meeting on August 30, 2023. A motion was made by Jay Fisetto and seconded by Cynthia Moses-Nedd to further develop the principles governing the management reserve. The motion was carried unanimously, with the vote in favor cast by Sharon Bulova, Victor Cardwell, John Delandro, Thelma Drake, Jay Fisetto, Cynthia Moses-Nedd, Charles Payne, and James Spore.

A motion was made by Charles Payne and seconded by James Spore to approve the FY24 Budget. The motion was carried unanimously, with the vote in favor cast by Sharon Bulova, Victor Cardwell, John Delandro, Thelma Drake, Jay Fisetto, Cynthia Moses-Nedd, Charles Payne, and James Spore.

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## **MOTION FOR CLOSED SESSION**

Following the presentations, Sharon Bulova made the following motion:

*"I move that the Board convene in a Closed Session pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A)(8) of the Code of Virginia, for the purpose of consulting with legal counsel on specific legal matters related to VPRA legal liability for incidents occurring on its property, and that the VPRA executive team (including an executive assistant) attend the Closed Session."*

1. *A Board member must SECOND the motion, and a ROLL CALL VOTE shall be taken on the motion.*
- *If a majority votes in favor of the motion, the Chair announces that the Board is moving into Closed Session.*
  - *Only those matters directly related to the motion can be discussed in Closed Session. Nothing else can be discussed at that time.*

The motion was seconded by Jay Fisetto and carried unanimously with the vote in favor by Sharon Bulova, Victor Cardwell, John Delandro, Thelma Drake, Jay Fisetto, and Cynthia Moses-Nedd, Charles Payne, and Jim Spore.

The Board moved into closed session at 1:00 p.m. on May 25, 2023.

### **RECONVENE IN AN OPEN SESSION**

The chairperson reconvened the open session meeting at 1:50 p.m. on May 25, 2023. Upon reconvening the meeting, the vice-chairperson made the following statement:

*"We are now going to take a roll call vote, and I ask that each member indicate their agreement with the following:*

*To the best of my knowledge, during the Closed Meeting, the only matters heard, discussed, or considered were those matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, and only those public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the Closed Meeting was convened."*

The roll was then called, with all members indicating their agreement to the statement. Those indicating agreement were Sharon Bulova, Victor Cardwell, John Delandro, Thelma Drake, Jay Fisette, Cynthia Moses-Nedd, Charles Payne, and James Spore.

### **LONG BRIDGE PROJECT PRESENTATION**

*Presented by: Shirlene Cleveland, Virginia Passenger Rail Authority*

Shirlene Cleveland shared about progress on Long Bridge and reviewed North and South package updates. She then reviewed four different project delivery methods and noted that the North package would be Progressive Design Build.

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### **SERVICE PERFORMANCE UPDATE**

*Presented by: Jeremy Latimer, Virginia Passenger Rail Authority*

Jeremy Latimer shared year over year comparisons of On Time Performance (OTP) of passenger trains. The Federal Standard is Customer OTP.

VPRA is creating a draft work tracking sheet and is planning to send advance notification of work being done so customers can plan accordingly. VPRA is working on new lines of communication with CSX, Amtrak, and VRE with a feedback look for VPRA.

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### **ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Debruhl, the Chairperson, adjourned the meeting at 2:45 p.m. All presentations to the Board and meeting video can be found at <http://vpra.virginia.gov/about/board-meetings> and on the [VPRA YouTube site](#).

## VPRA BOARD MEMBER REQUEST TO CHAIRPERSON FOR REMOTE PARTICIPATION

I, Bruno Maestri hereby notify the chairperson of my intent to, and do hereby  
(Name)

request to, participate remotely from Washington, DC using electronic communication  
(Remote Location)  
means during the public meeting of VPRA scheduled on  
(VPRA Board, or name of VPRA committee)  
May 25, 2023 for the following reason:  
(Date)

- I have a temporary or permanent disability or other medical condition that prevents my physical attendance; or
- a medical condition of a member of my family requires me to provide care that prevents my physical attendance; or
- my principal residence is more than 60 miles from the meeting location; or
- I am unable to attend the meeting due to a personal matter, which is  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Identify with specificity the nature of the personal matter)

This request is (for the chairperson to select):

- APPROVED 
- DENIED

This form constitutes the record of notice, request, and approval or disapproval required for remote participation pursuant to Va. Code § 2.2-3708.3, and shall be recorded in the minutes of the corresponding VPRA public body.

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<sup>1</sup> Remote participation based on a "personal matter" may not exceed the greater between two times and 25% of meetings, in each case, during a specific calendar year with respect to a specific public body. Meetings of the full VPRA Board and meetings of each committee will be measured independently.

## VPRA BOARD MEMBER REQUEST TO CHAIRPERSON FOR REMOTE PARTICIPATION

I, \_\_\_\_\_ hereby notify the chairperson of my intent to, and do hereby  
(Name)

request to, participate remotely from \_\_\_\_\_ using electronic communication  
(Remote Location)

means during the public meeting of \_\_\_\_\_ scheduled on  
(VPRA Board, or name of VPRA committee)

\_\_\_\_\_ for the following reason:  
(Date)

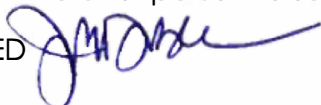
- I have a temporary or permanent disability or other medical condition that prevents my physical attendance; or
- a medical condition of a member of my family requires me to provide care that prevents my physical attendance; or
- my principal residence is more than 60 miles from the meeting location; or
- I am unable to attend the meeting due to a personal matter, which is

\_\_\_\_\_.<sup>1</sup>  
(Identify with specificity the nature of the personal matter)

This request is (for the chairperson to select):

APPROVED

DENIED



This form constitutes the record of notice, request, and approval or disapproval required for remote participation pursuant to Va. Code § 2.2-3708.3, and shall be recorded in the minutes of the corresponding VPRA public body.

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