



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Virginia Passenger Rail Authority

DJ Stadler
Executive Director

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Tiffany Robinson
Chairperson

MINUTES

Meeting of the Board of the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority

Tuesday, November 19, 2024 · 10:30 am

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 November 19, 2024, at 919 East Main Street, Richmond, VA 23219.

MEMBERS PRESENT IN-PERSON

Tiffany Robinson, Chairperson, Sandy Bushue, Neal Crawford, Rich Dalton, John Delandro, Patricia Doersch, Thelma Drake, Darien Flowers, D.J. Jordan, Charles Payne, John Watkins

John Delandro joined in person at 10:44 a.m.

Charles Payne joined in person at 10:38 a.m.

Beth Rhinehart left the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

John Watkins left the meeting at 3:03 p.m.

Charles Payne left the meeting at 3:13 p.m.

MEMBERS PARTICIPATING ELECTRONICALLY

Beth Rhinehart, (see the attached approval form noting the reason for remote participation and the location from which she participated)

MEMBERS ABSENT

Victor Cardwell

Bruno Maestri

Cynthia Moses-Nedd

VIRGINIA PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY STAFF

DJ Stadtler, Michael McLaughlin, Steve Pittard, Joan Verbonitz, Michael Westermann, John Kostyniuk, Slade Greenway, Lamar Bates, Gerica Goodman, Matt Jett, Geoff Pelletier, Cosmin Udrea, Kim Coleman, Charles Nelson, Shannon Perry, JessiKa Eglin, Courtney Baytop, Jonathan Capek, and Mary Estelle Douglas.

GUESTS/OTHERS PRESENT

Michael Sargent, Deputy Secretary of Transportation

Emily Stock, Department of Rail and Public Transportation

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Chairperson Robinson presided and called the meeting to order at 10:32 a.m. Mary Estelle Douglas called Roll and confirmed an in-person quorum was physically present.

BOARD CHAIR WELCOME

Presented by: Tiffany Robinson, Board Chairperson

Tiffany Robinson welcomed everyone and asked the newest Board members, Darien Flowers and Neal Crawford, to introduce themselves. As Tiffany Robinson was also new, she introduced herself.

PUBLIC COMMENT

VPRA did not receive any public comments.

MOTION TO APPROVE PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made by Thelma Drake and seconded by John Watkins to approve the Board meeting minutes from August 27, 2024. The motion was carried, with the vote in favor cast by Sandy Bushue, Neal Crawford, Patricia Doersch, Thelma Drake, Darien Flowers, D.J. Jordan, Charles Payne, Beth Rhinehart, and John Watkins.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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

DJ Stadtler presented the Executive Director's report to brief the Board. He reviewed recent VPRA updates and weekend service updates for October/November and shared Virginia and comparable state-supported service ridership. Patricia Doersch asked what the sweet spot was for revenue and ridership and if we were looking into researching/studying to find the sweet spot. DJ Stadtler responded. Tiffany Robinson asked if the cost recovery goal has stayed the same. DJ Stadtler responded.

Sandy Bushue noted a concern about the number of FTEs that VPRA currently has. She asked how many consultants we have to supplement FTEs. DJ Stadtler said VPRA will provide a list of the number of FTEs and the consultants on board.

DJ Stadtler reviewed the Fed-State Partnership Grant Agreement.

A motion was made by Charles Payne and seconded by John Watkins to approve the Fed-State Partnership Grant Agreement. The motion carried, with the vote in favor cast by Sandy Bushue, Neal Crawford, John Delandro, Patricia Doersch, Thelma Drake, Darien Flowers, D.J. Jordan, Charles Payne, and John Watkins.

DJ Stadtler reviewed the proposed VPRA Bylaw changes.

Sandy Bushue noted concerns with bylaw Sec. 4.1.

A motion was made by Charles Payne and seconded by Patricia Doersch to approve the VPRA Bylaw changes. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried, with the vote in favor cast by Neal Crawford, John Delandro, Patricia Doersch, Thelma Drake, Darien Flowers, D.J. Jordan, Charles Payne, and John Watkins. Sandy Bushue voted nay.

MOTION FOR CLOSED SESSION

King and Commonwealth Agreement

Thelma Drake made the following motion:

"I move that the Board convene in a Closed Session pursuant to Va. Code Sec. 2.2-3711(A)(29) for the discussion of the execution of a VPRA contract under negotiation, which is:

- (1) *a project coordination and funding agreement between VPRA and the VRE commissions for the replacement of the railroad bridges at King Street and Commonwealth Avenue, each in Alexandria, Virginia;*

involving the expenditure of public funds, and discussion of the terms or scope of such contract, where Discussion in an open session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of VPRA.

The motion was seconded by Charles Payne to move into a closed session. The motion was carried unanimously, with the vote in favor cast by Sandy Bushue, Neal Crawford, John Delandro, Patricia Doersch, Thelma Drake, Darien Flowers, D.J. Jordan, Charlie Payne, and John Watkins.

RECONVENE IN AN OPEN SESSION

The chairperson reconvened the open session meeting. Upon reconvening the meeting, Tiffany Robinson 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 with the statement. Those indicating agreement were Sandy Bushue, Neal Crawford, John Delandro, Patricia Doersch, Thelma Drake, Darien Flowers, D.J. Jordan, Charlie Payne, and John Watkins.

A motion was made by Charles Payne and seconded by John Delandro to approve the King and Commonwealth VRE Agreement. The motion was carried unanimously, with the vote in favor cast by Sandy Bushue, Neal Crawford, John Delandro, Patricia Doersch, Thelma Drake, Darien Flowers, D.J. Jordan, Charlie Payne, and John Watkins.

FY24 Financial Statement Audit Results

Presented by: PBMares, LLP

Results from the recent VPRA audit were presented. The audit was clean, and no adjustments were needed.

VPRA Financial Statements

Presented by: Steve Pittard, Virginia Passenger Rail Authority

Steve Pittard reviewed the work done by PBMares, LLP, included an IT Risk Assessment. FY24 Annual Financial Report was issued on September 30th for the first time since VPRA's inception.

FY26 Budget Look Ahead

Presented by: Shannon Perry, Virginia Passenger Rail Authority

Shannon Perry reviewed the financial planning objectives, sources, and uses of output and how they are tied to the FY25 Financial Plan. She reviewed the Management Reserve FY25 Q1. Darien Flowers asked for an explanation of the methodology for changes to the management reserve. Shannon Perry responded.

A motion was made by Patty Doersch and seconded by Thelma Drake to approve the Quarterly Management Reserve. The motion was carried unanimously, with the vote in favor cast by Sandy Bushue, Neal Crawford, John Delandro, Patricia Doersch, Thelma Drake, Darien Flowers, D.J. Jordan, Charlie Payne, and John Watkins.

SWaM / DBE Update

Presented by: John Kostyniuk, Virginia Passenger Rail Authority

John Kostyniuk reviewed the rules governing VPRA procurement procedures. Charles Payne asked how our 11.5% goal compared to VDOT's goal. John Kostyniuk responded. D.J. Jordan asked for additional information on what kind of outreach VPRA does with SWaM companies. John Kostyniuk responded.

A motion was made by D.J. Jordan and seconded by Charles Payne to approve the SWaM and DBE goal. The motion was carried unanimously, with the vote in favor cast by Sandy Bushue, Neal Crawford, John Delandro, Patricia Doersch, Thelma Drake, Darien Flowers, D.J. Jordan, Charlie Payne, and John Watkins.

Long Bridge North and South Packages Briefing

Presented by: Mike McLaughlin, Shirlene Cleveland, and Fyiad Constantine, Virginia Passenger Rail Authority

A briefing was provided regarding the current status of Long Bridge North and Long Bridge South packages.

MOTION FOR CLOSED SESSION

Long Bridge North and South Packages Briefing

Following the presentation, Thelma Drake made the following motion:

"I move that the Board convene in a Closed Session pursuant to Va. Code Sec. 2.2-3711(A)(29) for the discussion of the execution of two VPRA contracts (or amendments thereto) under negotiation, which are:

- (i) a design-build agreement for the construction of the Long Bridge South package; and*
- (ii) a construction phase amendment to the progressive-design-build agreement for the construction of the Long Bridge North package;*

in each case, involving the expenditure of public funds, and discussion of the terms or scope of such contracts (or amendments thereto), where discussion in an open session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of VPRA.

The motion was seconded by Patricia Doersch to move into a closed session. The motion was carried unanimously, with the vote in favor cast by Sandy Bushue, Neal Crawford, John

Delandro, Patricia Doersch, Thelma Drake, Darien Flowers, D.J. Jordan, Charlie Payne, and John Watkins.

RECONVENE IN AN OPEN SESSION

The chairperson reconvened the open session meeting. Upon reconvening the meeting, Tiffany Robinson 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 with the statement. Those indicating agreement were Sandy Bushue, Neal Crawford, Patricia Doersch, Thelma Drake, Darien Flowers, D.J. Jordan, Charlie Payne, and John Watkins.

ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY

Presented by: *Terry Rephann, Ph.D., Regional Economist with Weldon Cooper Center, University of Virginia*

Dr. Terry Rephann reviewed the economic impact study completed by him and a colleague, João Ferreira, Ph. D. Their findings note that passenger rail has a positive impact on the community and travel. Transforming Rail in Virginia will stimulate the Virginia economy through capital investments and operational enhancements. Charles Payne asked what types of jobs were included in the estimates for the number of jobs created. Dr. Terry Rephann responded.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY PREVIEW

Presented by: *Gerica Goodman, Virginia Passenger Rail Authority*

Gerica Goodman shared tentative key dates of the 2025 General Assembly Session. VPRA does not have any legislative proposals.

SERVICE PERFORMANCE UPDATE

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

Jeremy Latimer reviewed service performance and the customer experience on Virginia trains. Rich Dalton commented on the delays in data analysis efforts and the service performance committee. Charles Payne asked if service delays are having an impact on ridership and Jeremy Latimer responded. Charles Payne asked if we are educating riders on improvements that are coming in the future with projects and new trainsets. DJ Stadtler and Rich Dalton responded. Darien Flowers asked what ways board members can help evaluate service on the trains. DJ Stadtler responded, and board members will be given access to a rider survey via an app designed for this response.

ADJOURNMENT

Tiffany Robinson, Chairperson, adjourned the meeting at 3:17 p.m. All presentations to the Board and meeting videos can be found at <http://vpra.virginia.gov/about/Board-meetings> and on the VPRA YouTube site.

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