

**Minutes**  
**Board Planning, Development and Real Estate Committee**  
**March 8, 2007**  
**9 a.m.**

The meeting was called to order at 9:35 a.m. Present were:

**Committee Members**

Mr. Christopher Zimmerman (Chair)  
Mr. Charles Deegan  
Mr. Dana Kauffman  
Mr. Jim Graham  
Mrs. Catherine Hudgins  
Mr. Emeka Moneme  
Mr. Marcell Solomon  
Mr. Gordon Linton  
Mr. Anthony Giancola

**Approval of Agenda**

The Agenda was approved.

**Approval of Minutes**

The minutes from the February 15, 2007 meeting were approved as submitted.

**Action Item**

**A. Approval of Rehabilitation Project for Metro Center Bearing**

Staff sought to obtain approval from the Planning, Development and Real Estate Committee to initiate and award a competitive \$1.3 M contract for structural rehabilitation of the Red Line platforms at Metro Center Station.

Mr. Catoe stated that the two weekends (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and President's Day) chosen were due to a decrease in ridership on those particular weekends. WMATA will be working with businesses in the jurisdictions so that the public is notified of the transit plans in order to minimize the impact for the customers.

Mr. Zimmerman asked if the work needed to be scheduled sooner and if the time between now and when the project begins is used as preparation. Mr. Catoe answered that the work was not critical and could wait until then and that WMATA needs time to get the planning

correct and bid for the project.

Mr. Zimmerman asked if August could be considered the starting point for the project. Mr. Couch stated the key to completing the task is to do the work over a three-day weekend. WMATA intends to single track the trains on both ends of the Blue/Orange Line. On the Red Line there will be a switch from side-to-side on different weekends. If the work was conducted on a two-day weekend, it would take four weekends to complete the project. A three-day weekend was selected to provide minimal disturbance to the customers.

A motion to approve was made by Mr. Kauffman. Mr. Deegan seconded the motion and it was approved by the Committee.

## **Information Items**

### **A. NextBus Initial Service Update and New Routes**

Staff sought to brief the Committee on the current status of the Bus Customer Information System (CIS) initial service results and the plan for further implementation of NextBus system.

Mr. Linton stated the presentation was very impressive and asked how WMATA will determine NextBus prioritization for the next test group of routes. Mr. Pak stated that the twenty-four test routes were selected on the basis of high priority corridor and ridership but Staff is open for suggestions on which routes should be next.

Mr. Linton stated he is concerned with WMATA's objective and wanted to know if WMATA is trying to cover the highly traveled routes. He wants to receive objective data that will provide the best service for a large portion of WMATA's riders at the earliest point in the process. Mr. Catoe responded that WMATA will select the routes based on the highest ridership.

Mr. Linton also inquired if NextBus would be able to track WMATA's bus on-time performance in order to get a better sense of bus scheduling. Mr. Pak responded that the information is available with the Orbital Computer Aided Dispatch (ORBCAD) system currently being used. In April 2006, WMATA was able to reconstitute the system data to begin providing on-time performance for WMATA's buses. Mr. Catoe further stated that WMATA is fully aware that many of the routes are not on-time due to either lack of supervision, scheduling or not having the necessary resources. Mr. Catoe added that WMATA is currently working on a proposal that will redeploy resources to effect improvements in service.

Mr. Linton and Mr. Zimmerman stated that part of the problem is that WMATA's old bus schedules have not been adjusted to reflect today's needs.

Mr. Giancola asked what is the typical cost of installation at one of the sites and what are the long-term costs for maintenance. Mr. Pak stated that the installation base system cost \$2M. Installation of the 14,200 round bus stop signs will cost about \$400K. Installing the electronic

signs cost about \$3K to \$4K and the electrical provision for the signs can be very costly. Mr. Pak stated that WMATA's plan is to develop a policy for electronic signs implementation based on ridership and usage.

Mr. Gaincola also inquired about the staffing required for the NextBus maintenance. Mr. Pak stated the service that WMATA is receiving from NextBus is called Application Service Provider and will require minimal WMATA staff. If WMATA has any changes, the NextBus will also incorporate those changes. Mr. Pak cautioned that WMATA may still need staffing to manage the contract and provide internal data for the NextBus system. Mr. Catoe mentioned that the number of electric signs will determine maintenance cost and that the maintenance cost was not included in the initial \$2M cost. He added this is an area where WMATA will need to seek funding and bring back a positioning strategy that includes how many additional signs will be needed.

Mr. Giancola stated he is supportive of the pilot. He requested additional follow-up on the costs and maintenance.

Mr. Requa stated that the overall interest was to try to reach as many people as possible. By being able to identify a bus stop and call it in on a cell phone for information would be the most cost effective way to reach customers. WMATA would like to carefully consider signage location and bus shelters throughout the system.

Mr. Zimmerman asked if WMATA intends to include all 327 routes in the system. Mr. Requa replied yes and that the process should be complete by the end of this calendar year.

Mr. Zimmerman stated that he agrees with Mr. Linton that an objective criteria should be used for selecting the next routes. Mr. Zimmerman also stated that having a system like NextBus assists people in figuring out when the next transit is coming and will allow WMATA to become more reliable for customers especially during off peak hours.

Mr. Moneme asked if the NextBus system is open to incorporate other jurisdiction transits such as Ride-On, the DC Circulator or the Fairfax Connector. Mr. Pak replied that the system was designed for regional bus communities in mind. The jurisdictions would simply use the same regional bus stop ID system and could share WMATA's NextBus system capabilities if they choose to use the same back-end system from NextBus. Mr. Catoe responded that WMATA will pursue jurisdictional integration of the NextBus system.

## **B. Briefing on Proposed Tyson's Tunnel Option (Representatives from the American Society of Civil Engineers and Tyson's Business Group)**

Representatives from the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) and Tyson's Business Group provided a briefing to the Committee on the proposed tunnel through Tyson's Corner as part of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Extension.

Mr. Corey Hill representing the Virginia Department of Rail and Transportation (DRPT), stated that the Commonwealth of Virginia has made its decision with respect to the alignment for this project which includes a short tunnel and aerial sections in Tysons Corner. The DRPT is working with WMATA and the rest of the project partners to advance the project through the FTA process and into final design. Mr. Hill stated that although DRPT did receive a copy of the Tyson's tunnel proposal, it will not reconsider the decision on the alignment.

Mr. Kauffman asked if building the tunnel would avoid long-term maintenance and replacement cost compared to the aerial option. Mr. Bob O'Neil of the ASCE Panel answered in the affirmative.

Mr. Graham asked if there was a witness list. Mr. Zimmerman stated that Staff were working on it and stated in the future Staff will provide the witness list before the meeting.

Mr. Zimmerman commented that the Tyson's extension is the only significant construction issue being contemplated right now and WMATA is not heavily involved and has been invited out of the construction phase of the project.

Mr. Kauffman noted that there are some direct and indirect reasons why WMATA needs to focus on this project. WMATA needs to understand whose interests are being considered and whose interests are being conflicted. Yes, capital dollars are coming from Virginia but over time, WMATA will have to maintain the structure and long-term capital replacement of the three miles. Joint-development projects could be considered but Fairfax County favors parking lots. Indirectly, Metropolitan Washington Airport Authority (MWAA) put out a bid for project management consulting services and WMATA submitted a proposal; however, WMATA's proposal was rejected because WMATA was perceived as having a conflict of interest. Now WMATA will no longer be constructing any projects. There was concern raised by the Carter-Burgess Review Team stating that the proposed tunnel plans were not compatible with WMATA standards. Mr. Kauffman stated that WMATA reviewed the proposed tunnel plans and found the plans to be generally compatible with WMATA's standards. Mr. Kauffman stressed that this project needs to be conducted properly. Mr. Kauffman also added that many of the Board member's questions raised in the January Resolution 2007-04 have not been answered.

Mrs. Hudgins stated it was Fairfax County, not the State, that asked for an independent review of the tunnel concept and this request led to the State asking the ASCE to undertake a review. The capital cost will drive the outcome of the project. Mrs. Hudgins stated that the biggest problem with pursuing the tunnel is that the higher cost may not be on the FTA cost-effectiveness criteria. Mrs. Hudgins asked that an independent analysis of the federal process be provided because the federal process is not clear.

Mr. Graham stated that he is the Chairman of the Finance Committee and is not comfortable that the Committee members believe that WMATA does not have any leverage in the tunnel extension. He pointed out that the Finance Committee has an upcoming action item

scheduled to vote on the extension operating cost. At the request of the Commonwealth, the resolution for operating cost has been postponed for two months. Mr. Graham also stated that he has read all of the resolutions associated with the extension that have been passed by WMATA's Board.

Mr. Linton, Mrs. Hudgins and Mr. Zimmerman expressed concern about the federal process and agreed that the aerial decision needs to be re-examined in Richmond and that regardless of the short-term gain there is a need to find the best long term solution for the region.

Mr. Zimmerman asked Mr. Hill from DRPT to what degree the Commonwealth looked at life-cycle costs in estimating and evaluating the economics that would account for cost and maintenance. Mr. Zimmerman also inquired about the effect on the value of the land around the extension and what the return would be on the investment in regard to the aerial versus the tunnel approach. Mr. Hill stated that with respect to the life-cycle cost, there were discussions about that with the ASCE panel review. He stated the Commonwealth understands the concerns about capital versus operating and maintenance cost. The Commonwealth does provide funding through the Operating Funding Assistance Program which goes to the Authority's operating and maintenance cost. Mr. Hill noted that the Commonwealth has an incentive not to dramatically increase those costs. He stated that the Commonwealth clearly has a lot of work to do on communicating the issues and on pinpointing the constraints in the process. Mr. Hill commented that the extension decision was not considered overnight; it has been reviewed for 13 years and the Authority served as the lead technical representative to the state for the preparation of the environmental impact statement which was a four year process.

Mr. Graham asked who will own the extension after it is built. Mr. Hill replied that WMATA will be the ultimate owner and operator of the project. Mr. Graham asked where the understanding is manifested. Mr. Hill responded that it is manifested in several ways; there are a number of interagency agreements that are being established outlining how the hand over will occur between MWAA and the Authority. Mr. Pant further explained that since the completion of the environment documentation, the Board has adopted several resolutions and the latest one has eight conditions that must be met before the extension is taken into the system. In the January Resolution 2007-04, provisions were made stating the only time the Board would take an action would be in approving the financial plan. Approval of that plan is now scheduled for May.

Mr. Graham asked what is the impact on the project if the Board does not approve the extension financial plan. Mr. Pant replied that it will affect the filing of the federal Full Funding Grant Application (FFGA) and approval of the request for the project to go into final design. Mr. Graham stressed that the WMATA Board has a key role in the extension project.

Mr. Catoe indicated that WMATA would be more involved in the process since we will be the owners of the project. As an agency, we have not been leading the process but based on the Board members comments that will change.

Mr. Kauffman made a motion to have an independent analysis of the federal review process to include the ability to move the tunnel option forward without generating a full environmental review to preserve a lock on the federal contribution.

Mrs. Hudgins seconded the motion.

Mr. Solomon asked if the Board is trying to complete the analysis before the second Thursday in May. The Board members replied yes. Mr. Solomon also inquired what would happen if the action item is delayed beyond May.

Mr. Catoe stated that he does not believe that the region will lose the federal dollars but the process has been driven by the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Commonwealth has requested the delay. The Commonwealth is currently in negotiations with the firm that is scheduled to build the system and should the two reach a cost agreement, it may compromise the process that WMATA would want to take.

Mr. Catoe stated that he will have to get back to the Board about where the Commonwealth of Virginia is in the process and if WMATA can delay financial vote beyond May to ensure WMATA can get the federal analysis completed.

Mrs. Hudgins commented that WMATA is simply seeking an analysis that will generate the best explanation possible. Although there is little control that WMATA can play in terms of the Commonwealth's definition of how they will build projects at this time, WMATA should not change its role in creating extensions in the region.

Mr. Graham stated that a decision should not be presumed.

Mr. Kauffman noted that he does not wish to inject delay, only to provide certainty in a two month or less analysis.

The motion was passed.

Mr. Graham made a separate motion for the General Manager to provide the Board with an analysis of the advances and disadvantages of the two major proposals that are under consideration for the Dulles extension as it relates to WMATA's responsibility to operate and own the system.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Solomon.

Mr. Graham stated he would like to have the materials in time for the April Finance Committee meeting.

Mr. Catoe stated that Staff will work on every component but, if necessary to meet the April due date, he requested Board authorization for additional support outside of WMATA. The

Committee agreed within reason.

Mr. Linton emphasized the need to ensure that any new analysis performed would have data comparable to what was provided on prior projects.

Mrs. Hudgins requested that when Mr. Graham's analysis is brought forth that the most recent extensions New York Ave and Largo be referenced as comparison.

The motion was passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.