

Minutes of the Board Planning and Development Committee

Open Session - September 8, 2005

Mr. Zimmerman called the meeting to order at 9:20 a.m. Present were:

Committee Members:

Mr. Christopher Zimmerman (Chairman)
Mr. Marcell Solomon (Vice Chairman)
Mr. Charles Deegan
Mr. Jim Graham
Ms. Catherine Hudgins
Mr. Dana Kauffman
Mr. Gordon Linton
Mrs. Gladys W. Mack
Mr. Robert Smith

Other Board Members:

Mr. Dan Tangherlini

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes of the July 7, 2005, Planning and Development Committee meeting were accepted and approved as presented.

INFORMATION ITEM:

Status Report Metrobus Capital Improvement Program FY06-11

Messrs. Robert Golden, David Couch, Edward Thomas and James Hughes briefed the Planning and Development Committee on the Metrobus Capital Improvement Program, an \$830M near-term investment to achieve the full potential of the public's Metrobus system. This is a comprehensive, multi-year program of projects ranging from new buses for replacement and growth, to customer information features, to new and upgraded facilities.

Mr. Golden briefed the Committee on the Bus Fleet Improvements program to purchase buses to reduce the average fleet age to no more than 7.5 years.

The Clean Fleet Program involves the addition of environmental emission devices on 74 Cummins Buses and 282 Detroit Diesel Buses. The Cummins Buses are complete. There is a slight delay in the Detroit Diesel Buses due to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) concern on soot filters. Mr. Christopher Zimmerman and Mr. Gordon Linton sought clarification on the EPA's involvement regarding soot filters and Cummins and Detroit Diesel engines. Mr. Golden stated that the Ingerhart soot filters were prematurely clogging and had a short life cycle. The Staff recognized the problem and notified Detroit Diesel. Other transit agencies receiving delivery of buses with the same soot filters were experiencing similar problems. The EPA got involved and determined this is not a localized problem. The EPA suggested that Staff not install the soot filters on the Detroit Diesel Buses until completion of their investigation which included the soot filter installation, software reprogramming, engine performance,

acceleration profile, etc. The Detroit Diesel engines with soot filters were removed from the market and are no longer offered on transit buses. The program will be completed in December 2005.

The U.S. EPA has agreed to a recall plan suggested by Detroit Diesel Corporation (DDC) to address poor reliability of soot filters installed on their latest 2.5g Series 50 engines. As a result of this agreement, WMATA will receive new soot filters for its repowered fleet. The recall action has begun. To address reliability on the retrofit fleet, DDC introduced several improvements. The retrofit fleet reliability has improved. As reliability improved, WMATA was able to proceed with the installation of soot filters on 1994 Flexible buses. Eight Flexible buses have been retrofitted.

Messrs. Linton and Zimmerman expressed interest in how reduction in age of the fleet will affect mean distance between failures, maintenance and operational costs and the total impact on the budget. Mr. Golden stated that the introduction of new buses into the fleet will reduce unscheduled bus maintenance costs and improve fleetwide reliability. As new buses are introduced, they are generally covered under a two-year warranty which includes the costs for any repairs outside of regular maintenance. As new buses are introduced into the fleet, older less reliable buses will be retired or placed in the reserve fleet. This is expected to improve fleetwide reliability. The new buses are more technically complex to maintain. Mr. White stated that cost is a small part of the variables that go into the cost of the system, of which 75% is labor, 10% is fuel and the remainder maintenance costs. When the fleet normalizes, there will be improvement and reduced maintenance costs. Mr. Dan Tangherlini, with the belief that the younger fleet would reduce maintenance cost, suggested that WMATA look at how this may relate to the many vacancies in the maintenance shop with the view that there should be an inverse relationship between a younger fleet and the need to fill maintenance shop vacancies.

Mrs. Gladys Mack and Mr. Zimmerman asked about the delivery of the 28 Hybrid-electric buses and when will they be on the street. The Board was cautioned that before buses are put on the streets, there be some required lead time. Mr. Golden stated that 28 Hybrid-electric buses will be on the street by Winter 2005, with the remaining 22 buses on the street by Spring 2006.

Mr. Charles Deegan requested clarification on the implementation of the MARS System for tracking maintenance of buses. Mr. Golden stated that bus maintenance tracking will be entered in both the MARS and MMM Systems during the transition period. Mr. White stated that at the next Administration Committee Meeting an update on the Information Technology Renewal Program (ITRP) will be provided.

Mr. Couch briefed the Committee on the Bus Maintenance Facilities program to keep bus facilities in good operating condition and capable of maintaining the expanded fleet. The Staff prepared a list of recommended facility improvements, resulting from the APTA Peer Review, which included painting, lighting systems, and Heating and Ventilation Systems (HVAC). Staff is looking into enhancing facilities by providing guard booths and closed circuit televisions to promote safety and security efforts.

In light of the APTA Peer Review recommendations for \$36M in unfunded priorities, Mr.

Zimmerman questioned if it is suggested that some of the previous prioritizations be revisited and/or funding be found elsewhere. Mr. Richard White stated that when issues are revisited, reprogramming decisions will be made, if appropriate. Mr. White stated that another option that will be presented for review is a scrubbing of older projects. If there is a surplus of unspent monies, an assessment of unspent monies will be presented to the Board in December 2005. Mr. Smith asked if it is suggested that the Staff reopen the question of project funding under the Metro Matters Program. Mr. White stated that reference is made to the Infrastructure Renewal Program under the Metro Matters Program.

Mr. Robert Smith requested that Staff review the submission process of quarterly financial reports to evaluate the funding and progress of work under the Metro Matters Funding Agreement. Mr. Thomas stated that at least one quarterly financial report was presented to the Jurisdictional Coordinating Committee (JCC) and these issues will be discussed at the next meeting. Mrs. Mack suggested that WMATA provide a financial report and presentation to the Budget Committee quarterly.

Messrs. Tangherlini and Zimmerman sought clarification on sizes and locations of garages, and requested further review and a cross reference between potential new facilities to the identified \$36M unfunded improvement. Mr. White stated that the Board will be presented with an updated assessment of garage options.

Mr. Linton questioned if the workforce was engaged in the development of the APTA Peer Review list for bus maintenance facilities. Mr. Couch stated that Staff met with Division Superintendents and Managers, but did not have roundtable discussions with the mechanics. Mr. Linton stated that the workforce needs to know that their concerns are being addressed. Mr. White stated that Fall tours will be scheduled to interact with the employees to solicit their input, cross check with listed recommendations and make any modifications prior to presenting final recommendations to the Board in December 2005. Mr. Zimmerman and Mr. Deegan suggested that Board members visit the Bus Maintenance Facilities unannounced.

Mr. Couch briefed the Committee on the Bus Onboard Systems program to upgrade and integrate all onboard systems (Automatic Vehicle Locator, radio, Trapeze, etc.). The integration of the onboard systems will provide a foundation for an integrated information system, and manage and control the bus system. The integration of these projects will require 3 to 4 years to complete a full comprehensive realtime passenger information system.

Mr. Dana Kauffman referenced the crisis in New Orleans and the communication problems experienced. He requested that at a future Operations Committee Meeting a review of how the 1473 bus fleet can be deployed to move people and communications between local transit agencies can be improved.

Mr. Kauffman questioned why we need Automatic Passenger Counters (APC) if the fareboxes count customers. Mr. White stated that the fareboxes only tell where customers get on. The APC provides all movement, on and off the buses. Mr. Tangherlini supported the necessity of the Automatic Passenger Counters.

Mr. Zimmerman questioned whether the proposed Real Time Passenger Information System is 100% systemwide; if not, what is the limiting factor. Mr. Couch stated that the limiting factor is the number of routes that can be put into the system. The System is at 300 routes at a cost of \$6-\$10K per route.

Mr. Zimmerman sought clarification on the software upgrade for the fare system related to integration with other bus systems and the ability to use SmarTrip. Mr. White stated that Next Fare 4 and other priorities that need to be accomplished will be presented in a couple of months.

Mr. Tangherlini asked if WMATA had developed system standards for onboard systems so various transit systems can integrate, and Mr. Linton questioned how the proposed system standards fit into the Regional Mobility Plan. Mr. Thomas stated that WMATA has developed a "Physical and Logical Architecture for Bus Systems". The Bus Systems Architecture provides the user requirements, functional requirements, and industry adopted standards to ensure the integration of onboard systems. WMATA Staff is currently preparing Policy Instructions to formally adopt the bus system architecture as a basis for future development and acquisition of buses and related systems.

The Board then briefly discussed concerns about Cubic's market power and its ability to leverage its relationship with WMATA to require WMATA's continued patronage.

Mr. Thomas briefed the Committee on the Bus Stop Improvements Program for improvements in priority corridors and at transit centers that are of vital importance as part of a coordinated regional bus strategy to improve service reliability, customer safety and convenience, access for all customers, and the quality of bus service information.

Mr. Zimmerman questioned premium branding and why it makes sense to spend funds on this.

Mr. Tangherlini inquired as to why we would spend funds on the Comprehensive Bus Stop Improvement Program with advertisements. It should be considered a revenue center and offset costs. Mr. Zimmerman opined that the next iteration of this presentation address Mr. Tangherlini's comments concerning revenue centers versus cost centers.

Mr. Hughes briefed the Committee on the Bus SmarTrip Fareboxes Ridership Reporting. The new fareboxes have been installed as of August 2004. Software modifications and communication updates were completed by late Fall 2004. The revenue testing and verification are complete. The new fareboxes provide more reliable ridership data. The new fareboxes ridership data is being used for all reporting as of July 2004.

ACTION ITEMS:

A. Establish Opening Date for White Flint Parking Garage

Mr. Dan Korzým sought concurrence of the Planning and Development Committee for approval from the Board of Directors to establish the opening date for White Flint Parking Structure as

October 8, 2005. The official Ribbon Cutting Ceremony will be held on October 12, 2005. Mr. Smith moved approval. Mr. Kauffman seconded. Motion carried.

B. Bus Systems Integration

Mr. Beck Pak sought concurrence of the Planning and Development Committee to forward to the Board of Directors for programmatic approval to initiate and award procurement actions necessary to integrate various bus systems and to develop an interim real-time customer information system.

Mr. Jim Graham expressed concerns with the Bus Systems Integration process and reminded everyone of the problems experienced with the Rail Systems Integration. In addition, Mr. Graham questioned the cost, number of signs, location of the display signs and the plan for expansion for the rest of the system.

Mr. Smith suggested that if the goal is to increase ridership, WMATA should investigate whether this initiative increases ridership prior to expanding the program. Mrs. Mack commented that while increased ridership may result, the initiative represents good customer service. Mr. Linton suggested that we make use of the empirical data that is available on what prompts riders to take the bus.

Mrs. Mack moved approval. Mr. Kauffman seconded. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 11:55 A.M.