

**Minutes of the Board Planning and Development Committee**  
Open Session - November 3, 2005

Mr. Zimmerman called the meeting to order at 9:25 a.m. Present were:

**Committee Members:**

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

**Other Board Members:**

Mr. Dan Tangherlini

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The minutes of the September 8, 2005, Planning and Development Committee meeting were accepted and approved as presented.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

**A. Railcar Capacity Analysis**

Mr. Jeff Pringle and Ms. Leona Agouridis briefed the Committee on Phase I results and requested a) Committee concurrence and forwarding to the Board for approval the Phase II testing of the three railcar configurations presented and b) forwarding to the Budget Committee request for approval to use the remaining balance of the original railcar enhancement program. The requested funding will cover additional DVR systems for eight 6000 Series railcars; the design, material, and labor to reconfigure the original sixteen 3000 Series railcars; and analysis of the Phase II data. The goals of the railcar interior reconfiguration are to improve passenger flow, increase capacity of the railcars, improve the ridership quality for the standing and sitting passengers, and improve accessibility for the disabled.

On March 3, 2005, the P & D Committee approved a two-phase project to test the effect of railcar configuration on capacity. Phase I baseline testing, which began in August 2005, collected and archived more than 250 hours of video data from 16 railcars on Red, Orange, and Green Lines in operation for 3 months; analyzed passenger flow and capacity from video data; obtained recommendations from the Elderly & Disabled (E & D) Committee; and formed a Customer Task Force to obtain recommendations.

Based on analysis of the video data, staff recommended removing obstacles (i.e., windscreens, floor-to-ceiling hand rails, and seats adjacent to doors) that block passenger movements, reconfiguring seating longitudinally, increasing hand rails, and testing 6000 Series railcars in Phase II. E & D Committee recommendations include maintaining priority seating as it is today; removing vertical floor-to-ceiling hand rails to allow easier ingress, egress, and movement inside the railcar; and compensating for the center pole removal with more hand rails. The Customer Task Force reviewed video data, visited a 6000 series railcar at Greenbelt, and used computer models to reconfigure the railcars. The Customer Task Force strongly supported dual overhead rails, more backseat-to-ceiling rails, maintaining

some type of priority seating, and removing vertical floor-to-ceiling hand rails. They also supported removal of 8 or 16 seats, some longitudinal seating, some folding seats, and leaning rests.

Mr. Zimmerman commented that the video footage has been turned into quantitative data and that passenger habits were captured on tape. Mr. Pringle commented that passenger patterns were similar across the rail lines.

Mr. Zimmerman thanked staff for working with customers on the task force and thanked customers for their input. He commented that he attended a few Customer Task Force meetings and went on the Greenbelt field trip. The group was very diverse and had differing viewpoints. It was comprised of people from all the jurisdictions, and they had different ridership usage/patterns.

Phase II implementation will require minimal services from diverse contractors available through the GSA schedule and will utilize three configurations that have varying degrees of change to the interior railcar configuration. Any improvements in railcar capacity, passenger flow, and reduced dwell time will be identified.

Mr. Smith questioned whether folding seats could be a safety hazard in terms of a person's hand(s) getting caught and mashed. Staff responded that a safety analysis will be done during the testing phase and COUN will review possible legal issues. Mr. Zimmerman pointed out that folding seats are not new; they currently exist on DC Circulator buses. Mr. Salpeas stated that BART has been using folding seats for almost 30 years, and staff will obtain data from BART regarding any legal actions. Staff will also provide the P & D Committee with maintenance data for folding seats.

Ms. Hudgins asked whether WMATA will be doing a special design for the folding seats. Mr. Salpeas stated that WMATA will be buying the folding seats through the GSA schedule and will not do a special design.

Mr. Smith questioned the location of the spring-type hand holds. Staff responded that the hand holds are easy to move and the locations will be reviewed.

Mr. Tangherlini raised the question of adding another single seat or a flip-down seat to create more of a bench-style seat near the door area. Staff responded that width requirements for the door pocket area is a consideration, but the idea of a single seat will be reviewed. Staff also stated that WMATA is attempting to use off-the-shelf equipment to keep the costs reasonable and that two joined seats are standard.

Ms. Hudgins commented that handrails at seat locations allow passengers more flexibility to read and do something during their commute and, therefore, are preferable to overhead rails. The greater flexibility has a positive impact on the decision to use Metrorail.

Next steps include installing digital video recording cameras on pilot railcars, reconfiguring interiors on the pilot railcars, collecting and archiving video data, obtaining customer input

again, revisiting the E & D Committee, and reporting Phase II test results and recommendations for optimum railcar reconfiguration to the P & D Committee in the Fall of 2006.

Mr. Kauffman reminded staff that part of this project is to review how customers get on and off railcars and how quickly they do so. Mr. Zimmerman stated that fleet management will likely be more complex in the future due to WMATA having more stations, more geographic coverage, and more run times than in the past. There may be 2 or more railcar configurations that make sense.

Mrs. Mack moved the motion. Mr. Kauffman seconded.

Mrs. Mack asked about the status of reviewing bus fleet seating particularly on crowded routes. Mr. Salpeas stated that buses will be reviewed as part of the work plan. Mrs. Mack directed that the bus fleet review be part of an early agenda, especially since there will be new buses in the future.

Mr. Deegan asked whether input had been obtained from the police, e.g., more people standing could result in more picked pockets. He also suggested removing more seats from the center cars and leaving more seats on cars at the ends of trains.

Mr. Tangherlini made an amendment to the motion. The amendment would direct staff to summarize Committee comments and suggestions and then report on how those issues were addressed as part of the next steps. There were no objections to the amendment, and the amendment was incorporated as part of the motion.

Mr. Zimmerman commented that investment in the rail car capacity study is a relatively small amount of money in comparison to the cost of rail cars.

The motion carried unanimously.

In response to a question raised by Mr. Kauffman, Mr. Salpeas commented that information will be provided at the December 2005 P & D Committee meeting on staff initiatives to address passenger flows on and around escalators and on platforms.

## **B. Alexandria Yard Funding Commitment**

Mr. James Haggins sought P & D Committee concurrence and Board of Director approval, as set forth in the Resolution, to:

- ▶ Authorize a WMATA Compact public hearing on the proposed expansion of the Alexandria Yard;
- ▶ Authorize issuance of a task order under the on-call engineering services contract to perform the environmental review, subject to receipt of funds from DRPT;
- ▶ Authorize the GMGR/CEO to release the Public Hearing Staff Report for public review, as soon as the Report is available;
- ▶ Forward to the Budget Committee a request for concurrence to authorize staff to establish a Reimbursable Project in the FY 2006 SAP for the Alexandria Yard

Expansion, to amend the FY 2006 SAP by \$200,000 for this project, and to negotiate and execute a reimbursable project agreement with DRPT.

Next steps include:

- ▶ Negotiation and execution of a reimbursable agreement with DRPT;
- ▶ Compact public hearing;
- ▶ Public hearing staff report and staff responses and recommendations;
- ▶ Board approval of public hearing staff report supplement and recommendations;
- ▶ Execution of the Alexandria Yard option, subject to funding availability.

Ms. Hudgins moved the motion. Mr. Solomon seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

*Mr. Smith asked whether lights at the Jackson Graham Building stay on at night and if so, why. Mr. Salpeas mentioned that he believes there was an energy study that previously looked at this issue. Messrs. Deegan and Smith requested a copy of the study. Staff provided information after the P & D Committee meeting.*

### **C. Technology Partnership**

Messrs. Edward Thomas and Donald McCanless briefed the Committee on the results of Technology Public-Private Partnership discussions with Technology Councils, Technology Firms, American Public Transportation Association, Federal Highway Administration, Local governments, and Transit Agencies.

At the June 2, 2005 P & D Committee Meeting, staff proposed a Public-Private Technology Partnership (P3) Program with the goals of improving customer service and system reliability and generating new streams of revenue for WMATA. Subsequent to the June 2005 P & D Committee Meeting, staff conducted research, reviewed new Federal Legislation, discovered benefits applicable to WMATA, and narrowed the proposed scope to an integrated customer communications system.

Examples of successful public-private partnerships include the District of Columbia Bus Shelter Program, New York City-Department of Transportation Public Furniture Program, MARTA Passenger Video Display System, and Virginia Tax Collection System. The common theme of these examples is that boundaries were specified (not the exact solution) in the Request for Proposal (RFP) which allowed vendors to suggest creative partnering approaches. These examples used a pre-qualification approach to the procurements. After vendors responded to the RFP, the agencies narrowed down the bidders and sent the next procurement materials to the shortlist of pre-qualified companies. This method was used to protect the shortlisted bidders' ideas from disclosure to the universe of vendors.

The FTA's Joint Partnership Program for the Deployment of Innovations of TEA21, Section 3015(a), allows transit agencies that are the recipients of federal transit funds to use a new procurement mechanism called "Other Transactions". This mechanism allows partnerships with the private sector in developing systems and sharing risks.

Staff proposed pilot testing an Integrated Customer Communications System and presented a schedule of deliverables resulting from a competitive procurement process.

Staff sought Committee concurrence and Board approval to initiate a competitive procurement process to solicit industry interest in one or more technology partnerships, to qualify a number of bidders that will develop and submit detailed proposals in response to a Request for Proposal (RFP), and to establish the best value among the bidders responding to the RFP. Staff will return to the Board for award of the contract.

Potential outcomes of an Integrated Customer Communication System would include timely, accurate, and intermodal customer information; integration with regional communication projects for enhanced incident management; generation of new revenue sources; and new funds applied to pay for additional customer conveniences.

Mr. Solomon asked how the RFI will be published. Mr. Thomas responded that the RFI will be sent to vendors in WMATA's procurement system, associations, local technology councils, etc. and posted on WMATA's website and through journal articles. The time between sending out the RFI and conducting a technology summit will be used to do more marketing/outreach as part of the communication plan.

Mr. Deegan asked about the WMATA radio system. Staff responded that the Motorola system generally works well above-ground, but Motorola is resolving issues with below-ground service. Staff anticipates that the Motorola issues will be resolved by spring next year when the new rail cars arrive. In response to Mr. Deegan's concern about the Verizon contract with WMATA, Mr. Thomas stated that the telecommunications community is being challenged to work together due to the National Incidence Management Systems Requirement from the Department of Homeland Security. Efforts are being undertaken with Verizon and other telecommunications companies to work out an arrangement to provide WMATA customers more cell-phone access in the subway and to provide managers with the ability to more effectively communicate with counterparts during incidents.

Mr. Zimmerman pointed out that there will be tradeoffs between improving service and generating revenue. The same actions do not always maximize both goals. Staff needs to consider the tradeoffs.

*Mr. Kauffman asked about the Parking Program Update listed on the December 2005 P & D Committee tentative agenda and spoke of the unintended side effects of SmartCards. If customers come into a WMATA parking lot and cannot find a space, they have to pay to leave. Tourists, despite signage, sometimes do not have SmartCards and have to back out of the exit lanes during the evening rush period. He directed staff to review having non-pay exit lanes when parking lots are packed, keeping the gates up for a certain amount of time, and ways of allowing customers to exit who do not have a SmartCard. Mr. Zimmerman stated that the staff does not need to wait until the December meeting to provide responses. The Committee would like information as soon as possible.*

Meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.