

**PUBLIC TRANSIT ADVISORY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING
VTrans Davis Building
Montpelier, Vermont
June 15, 2017**

ATTENDEES: Barbara Donovan, VTrans
Dave Pelletier, VTrans
Jackie LeBlanc, VTrans
Zoe Neadeland, VTrans
Mark Sousa, GMT
Jim Moulton, ACTR/STSI
Randy Schoonmaker, SEVT, VPTA
Jamie Feehan, VPTA
Peter Johnke, VCIL
Lee Cattaneo, COVE
Katharine Otto, SWCRPC
Michael Harrington, VDOL
Mike Tuller, Marble Valley Regional Transit
Daniel Currier, CVRPC
Eleni Churchill, CCRPC
Rita Seto, TRORC
Robert Moore, LCPC
Erica Roper, WCRPC
Mollie Burke, Legislature
John Sharrow, Mt. Transit
Bethany Whitaker, VEIC

1. CALL TO ORDER and INTRODUCTIONS

Barbara Donovan called the meeting to order at 1 PM. Introductions were done.

2. MEMBERSHIP/REAPPOINTMENTS

Barbara Donovan reported there is no news on re/appointments to PTAC.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

March 16, 2017

MOTION by Jim Moulton, SECOND by John Sharrow, to approve the minutes of 3/16/17 as written. VOTING: unanimous; motion carried.

4. VTRANS LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Dave Pelletier gave an overview of the process to update the state long range transportation plan to 2040. Federal Highway requires the state to have a long range plan in place. The last plan was done in 2009. Many changes and trends have occurred since then. There will be meetings with stakeholders and Transportation Advisory Committees (TACs) on the update. PTAC will also participate. Draft priorities and polices are expected at the end of the calendar year followed by further meetings with stakeholders

and TACs to produce the final draft plan for comment and adoption in spring 2018. Forward comments on the plan to Dave Pelletier. The full report is available on the VTrans website under “planning/long-range plan”.

Barb Donovan asked how the long range plan has been used in the past. Dave Pelletier said the plan drives the strategic plan with concrete policy goals and objectives in support of the vision for the transportation system. The long range plan will confirm the state is on the right track and meeting stated goals and objectives. Climate change, resiliency issues (repairing infrastructure, emergency response), and technological changes (vehicle autonomy technology) will have more emphasis in the long range plan. The plan will be realistic, based on a feet-on-the-ground look forward to ensure the state is making the best investments, modifications, and expansions.

Peter Johnke commented vehicle crashes are increasing and the trend is getting worse, not better. Dave Pelletier said this will tie into the plan under highway safety. Other agencies involved are Natural Resources, Human Services, Economic Development, Public Safety, Public Services, VLCT, VPTA, and Vermont Chambers.

Mike Harrington, Department of Labor, said getting people to regional labor centers to receive services and work force development need to be addressed. Jim Moulton added people still in the workforce need to be able to get to their jobs. A quarter of the workforce in the state is over 65 years old. Dave Pelletier said the plan will consider the demographic change and flat growth in population in the state as well as the decrease in fuel consumption which results in less tax revenue generated.

5. REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCIES

Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission

Dan Currier reported CVRPC continues work on the Next Generation Plan (looking at service across five counties to help identify where resources should be focused), holding stakeholder meetings on services, doing vehicle, bike, and pedestrian counts on roadways to better understand movement in the region, and working on storm water planning in the region.

Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Planning Commission

Rita Seto reported TRORC has been helping Advance Transit and Stagecoach Vermont with studies on signage, signal priority, maps, how to improve service routes, and bus stops. TRORC also has been administering home buyouts and community development block grants for disaster recovery projects.

Mark Sousa, GMT, mentioned with regard to signal priority the annunciator signals in Chittenden County had to be shut off because the traffic lights were being reset each time the system was used.

Windham Country Regional Planning Commission

Erica Roper reported Windham County is looking at existing user and potential user needs and getting the best service for the area. A study of the northern routes was done. Windham County is also looking at electric bikes and bike share.

Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission

Katharine Otto reported the mobility study by SWCRPC is complete. The program dovetails with “Rides to Wellness”. Traffic counts at park and ride lots are being done to determine transit use and carpooling. The data are available.

Lamoille County Planning Commission

Rob Moore report LCPC is working on a comprehensive study with GMT to find a balance between commuters, employment, and labor needs versus shopping, socializing, and medical access. Getting people to the ski resorts is also a priority. Stowe is predicting the number of ski visitors will double next year which is an opportunity for public and private transit. LCPC is also working with RCT (Mary Grant) on a five year cycle, annual planning update to synchronize and find efficiencies and collaborative opportunities to make the services offered more robust. LCPC is working on water quality and erosion issues. In the village of Jeffersonville the rail trail bridge will be removed and replaced with a different historic bridge. Two expanded culverts have been installed under Route 15. Ongoing work by LCPC includes traffic counts. Data are available.

Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission

Eleni Churchill reported CCRPC is working on the Next Generation program and providing data to the consultant. Also, the metropolitan transportation plan is being updated. Different models and scenarios are being run. CCRPC is doing many different scoping projects, one of which is the bridge replacement between Winooski and Burlington.

Marble Valley Regional Transit District

Mike Tuller reported the expanded route service has been well received, especially at Castleton. Marble Valley is interviewing for a new director with the retirement of Minga Dana. The expansion of the creek path in Rutland (river greenway system) is being done with connection to the transit system.

John Sharrow mentioned potentially increasing ridership in rural areas by locating bus stops in more secure areas like the local general store, for example, rather than where some of the bus shelters are located.

6. VTRANS PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GUIDE

Jackie LeBlanc, VTrans Outreach, reviewed the public participation guide titled “Engaging the Public”. The full publication includes outreach tools that can be used to communicate route changes and staying in touch with communities. The equity impact maps and worksheet can be used to better serve various populations. There are also tools for dealing with different meetings and dealing with the media as well as other best

practices for transit outreach. All the information is posted on the VTrans website under “publication-outreach”.

Eleni Churchill said CCRPC has shifted public outreach to be tailored to the different groups that are impacted.

7. TRANSIT PROVIDER UPDATES

The following transit updates were given:

- Jim Moulton announced ACTR and Stagecoach have merged into “Tri-Valley Transit” serving the Champlain Valley, Connecticut River Valley, and the White River Valley. There are many efficiencies with fuel, staffing, bus procurement, best practices, and service.
- VTrans is giving transit providers funding for free rides on “Dump the Pump Day”.
- The World Cup will once again be held at Killington. Transit service will be needed.
- Transit providers are attending the CTAA meeting in Detroit for training and certification.
- Bids are going out for a fueling station at the transit facility in Rockingham. The 10,000 s.f. addition will go out to bid in January 2018 for construction in the 2018 season.
- The municipal park and ride is now open in Rockingham. Snowplow drivers provided input on the design of the lot.
- Vail Resorts has purchased the Stowe ski operation. GMT is holding discussions with Vail on transit service to the resort. GMT has hired a former Vail employee to manage the transit service on the mountain. Vail is the model to follow for public transit serving the mountain.

8. VTRANS UPDATES

The following VTrans updates were given:

- The Rides to Wellness project has started. Employees in the medical centers will be mobility managers for non-emergency health care appointments. A revolving loan program will be set up.
- GMT has ordered \$4 million worth of vehicles. The state has \$7 million in vehicles to be purchased for use across the state.
- Bethany Whitaker reported the LoNo grant is for six battery electric buses. Four of the buses will go to GMT and two will go to Advance Transit. Green Mountain Power and Burlington Electric are helping to fund the buses. Costs are minimal for the up-fit of the buses. GMT will handle their up-fit internally. The grant will be awarded in September.
- Two bids have been received for the Bennington intercity through bus service. The goal is to have the service in place by August.
- A detailed presentation on the mobility on demand (MOD) grant will be provided at the September PTAC meeting.

- The PTAC budget was passed by the House and Senate. Other legislation includes distribution of funds (cash flow), change in definition of “bus” to 100 miles, and checking the record for criminal history.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

Next Meeting(s) – Locations to be announced

- September 21, 2017
- December 21, 2017
- March 15, 2018
- June 21, 2018

Agenda items:

Department of Labor presentation on apprenticeships

MOD grant

Planning Issues

Budget

Legislation

10. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Mark Sousa, SECOND by John Sharrow, to adjourn the meeting.

VOTING: unanimous; motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 PM.

RScty: MRiordan