

**MINUTES
AUGUST 17, 2021
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
GRTC TRANSIT SYSTEM**

Members Present: Benjamin P. Campbell, Chair
Gary Armstrong, Vice Chair
Eldridge Coles, Secretary/Treasurer
George P. Braxton
Ian Millikan
Daniel K. Smith

Others: Bonnie Ashley, General Counsel
Julie Timm, Chief Executive Officer
Sheryl Adams, Chief of Staff
Adrienne Torres, Chief Development Officer
John Zinzarella, Chief Financial and Administrative Officer
Tim Barham, Chief of Transit Operations
Tony Byrd, Director of Maintenance
Anthony Carter, Director of Risk Management
Emily DelRoss, Director of Scheduling and Planning
Carrie Rose Pace, Director of Communications
Rob Taggart, Director of Information Technology
Tonya Thompson, Director of Procurement
Raquel Aguirre, Bus Stop and Amenities Program Manager
Antionette Haynes, Procurement Services Administrator
Faith Walker, RVA Rapid Transit

The meeting of the Board of Directors of the GRTC Transit System, Old Dominion Transit Management Company (ODTMC), and RideFinders was called to order at 8AM, August 17, 2021, by the Chair, Mr. Campbell. To protect the safety of meeting attendees, this meeting was conducted through electronic communication means pursuant to and in compliance with City of Richmond Ordinance No. 2020-093, adopted April 9, 2020. This meeting was open to participation through electronic communication means by the public and closed to in-person participation by the public. Necessary GRTC Administrative Staff and presenters assembled electronically for this meeting, and all GRTC Board of Directors participated by videoconference via RingCentral. A quorum was present.

Public Comments - For the benefit of all attendees, Ms. Carrie Rose Pace explained how to participate in public comment at Board Meetings.

Video and audio of Board Meetings are streamed live online and recorded for later viewing at GRTC's YouTube channel at youtube.com/user/ridegrtc. Board Meeting notices, agendas and packets are available at GRTC's website ridegrtc.com by clicking on Stats & Reports in the top navigation bar and selecting the first option in the drop-down menu, Board Reports. Citizens are welcome to provide their comments in writing in advance to carrie.rosepace@ridegrtc.com. The person responsible for receiving comments in writing is Carrie Rose Pace, Director of Communications. All written comments received via email prior to 5:00 p.m. on the day preceding a meeting will be provided to all members of the Board the night before the meeting

and will be included in the minutes of the meeting. During the Public Comments portion of the agenda, Carrie Rose Pace will read all comments received by the submission deadline, following the two-minute speaking time limit normally observed in Board Meetings.

Public Comments - There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes – Mr. Smith motioned to approve the July 20, 2021, Board meeting minutes, Mr. Armstrong seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Development and Engagement Report – Adrienne Torres, CDO

Ms. Timm requested that the agenda be adjusted to move the Action Item “Resolution of Support for Multi-Year Zero Fare Grant Application” under the Financial and Administrative Report to Action Item under the Development and Engagement Report. Mr. Braxton motioned to grant the CEO’s request, Mr. Smith seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

GRTC Bus Shelter Program – Raquel Aguirre

GRTC currently operates at 1,650 bus stops, of which 5% have shelters, 20% have benches, and 49% are ADA compliant. In 2019, GRTC collaborated with the public, City of Richmond and Henrico and Chesterfield Counties to identify a new shelter style that would be uniform across the system, and that would complement the modern style of the Pulse stations. GRTC has identified over 150 shelter locations across the system that have been prioritized for a shelter, or shelter replacement. These shelters have reached the priority list through frequency of use of the bus stop, activity center adjacency, public comment, and jurisdictional investment.

Over the next five years, GRTC staff proposes to establish a goal to increase the number of stops with a shelter to 15% and the number of stops with a bench to 35%. This will increase the percent of total stops with either a shelter or bench from 25% to 50%. The goal includes improving the landing pad infrastructure at 51% of bus stops, so that 100% of bus stops have a flat, stable area for riders to wait for the bus. The preliminary total five year estimated cost for this goal may reach or exceed \$20,000,000 with most of the expected expense centered on upgrading sites for ADA accessibility.

Reaching these goals will depend on successful application of grants and collaboration with City, County, and State partners on engineering/permit approvals for use of public right of way and partnerships with private property owners. GRTC will continue to work with regional partners, and research and apply for grant opportunities to accomplish this aggressive 5-year goal and improve the infrastructure across the system.

RVA Rapid Transit Better Bus Stop Program – Faith Walker

RVA Rapid Transit has partnered with GRTC to establish the Better Bus Stops Program. The Better Bus Stops Program seeks to improve bus stops throughout the Richmond region through litter clean-up and opportunities to sponsor trash cans, benches, and shelters. Program participants agree to pick up litter around designated transit stops. RVA Rapid Transit will

present each stop adopter with supplies needed to clean the stops. The program currently has more than 20 participants.

RVA Rapid Transit has additionally received a grant from Bon Secours and part of the grant is geared toward (1) tending to the 14 bus stops in the East End where Bon Secours just donated the shelters, combined with (2) piloting a workforce development initiative to do that service. The work entails weekly litter pick up and periodic cleaning of the shelter glass. This litter pick up pilot will run for a year (August 2021 through July 2022).

Resolution of Support for Multi-Year Zero Fare Grant Application – Julie Timm

In November 2019, GRTC staff presented to the Board discussion items related to GRTC's fare program that included a discussion of policy decisions needed to advance an "account-based" fare system versus the "cash/pass-based" system currently in place.

In March 2020, GRTC Board approved the use of state and federal relief dollars to implement system-wide zero fares related to pandemic health and safety precautions. Concurrent with GRTC staff's assessment of fare collection systems, the COVID pandemic and the zero-fare operations induced a significant shift in our understanding of the use of the transit system by essential and low-wage workers and their pre-pandemic payment of fares.

In September 2020, GRTC staff returned to the Board with a more detailed discussion comparing the costs and benefits of the existing fare system, a proposed account-based fare system, and a possible permanent extension of zero-fare system currently in place under the COVID pandemic

Based on ongoing assessment of use and need of zero fare services, in June 2021, GRTC Board adopted the FY2022 budget that included the continued use of federal pandemic relief dollars to continue zero fare operations throughout the entire fiscal year.

GRTC staff updated the Board on the ongoing analysis of fare collection revenues and expenses as well as findings from zero-fare operations to date. Anticipated costs and benefits associated of account-based fare systems and staff compared this to zero fare costs and benefits as the basis to recommend further study of system-wide fare system changes.

Currently, DRPT has opened a grant application for the Transit Ridership Incentive Program (TRIP), Zero Fare and Low-Income Projects. On July 26, 2021, Richmond City Council unanimously adopted a resolution in support of an application by GRTC for a TRIP, Zero Fare Study with 8 of 9 council members listed as co-patrons of the item. GRTC discussed the proposed elements of the proposed GRTC TRIP application under development to include additional concurrent study by GRTC of alternative fare collection systems.

Staff requested that the GRTC Board of Directors adopt the Resolution of Support for GRTC's grant application for funding support under DRPT TRIP Zero Fare program which will include a multi-year study of GRTC fare programs including social and economic impacts of zero fare operations. Mr. Braxton motioned to grant staff's request, Mr. Armstrong seconded, and the Board began discussions. Mr. Braxton stated that he was in support of the Resolution. He stated that public transportation should be supported as an essential service and that GRTC should move forward with this program to give our partners an opportunity to support the program and see how we can make this a reality for RVA. Mr. Armstrong stated that he agrees

with Mr. Braxton; however, he would like to make sure as part of this process that Chesterfield understands the costs and benefits of the zero fare program and how it could impact each jurisdiction. He would like to make sure that this program is presented to our partners, in particular Chesterfield, to make sure they understand what the Board is voting to advance. Mr. Millikan had questions on the presentation because the full analysis of impacts of zero fares has not been completed; however, he also wanted to make sure we take advantage of an opportunity to compete the analyses through this grant application. Ms. Timm confirmed that the Resolution was written specifically with these points in consideration. As written the Resolution would express Board Support for GRTC to apply for state funding should one or more local funding partner support through a matching financial commitment. Mr. Campbell stated that the Resolution is very clear that this does not go forward without a local partner or partners pledging to supplement the state funding. Mr. Smith stated that he must depart the meeting, but he supports the motion. Mr. Armstrong asked that Ms. Timm give a presentation to Chesterfield after this vote so that they understand. The resolution acknowledges that we cannot make the application without the funding of a local partner. Mr. Campbell stated the motion has been moved and seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously with the exception of Mr. Smith who had to leave the meeting prior to the vote.

Operations and Maintenance Report – Sheryl Adams, COO

Operating Performance – Tim Barham

- The on-time performance for fixed route for July is 65%.
- Absenteeism rate is up to 18.73% for July, due to long-term illnesses and a rise in workers' comp cases.
- Lost trips doubled from June and were 2,402 for July, and operated to 95.54% of scheduled trips, which is attributed to manpower shortages.
- Customer Complaints: 39 Valid complaints; most are late buses or the bus did not show.
- On-time performance for specialized transportation was 88.86%, a slight decrease.
- Specialized transportation had an increase in complaints due primarily to late service. There were seven commendations.
- Currently, we have 260 full-time Operators and 19 part-time Operators. Three Operators graduated on July 30 and eight started August 9.
- Currently, 299 employees have been fully vaccinated which is approximately 65% of the total employees.

Ridership Performance – Emily DelRoss

Total fixed route ridership for the month of July is 686,645, which is up 6% from June and 10% from July 2020. We are approaching our pre-COVID ridership numbers for total fixed route. Local fixed route ridership for July is 546,269, compared to June we are up 5% and comparing it to July 2020 we are up 7%. We are within 1/2% of our pre-COVID ridership numbers.

Safety Performance – Tony Carter

- There were 28 external events during the month of July compared to 27 in June.
- There were 18 non-preventable events during the month of July compared to 13 in June.

- There were 10 preventable events for the month of July compared to 14 in June.
- There were zero passenger incidents with Specialized Transportation in July.
- There were five traffic incidents with Specialized Transportation in July and those five were preventable.

Maintenance Performance – Tony Byrd

GRTC has a goal of an average of 5,200 vehicle miles or greater between maintenance road calls. For the month of July there were 4,651 miles between road calls compared to June which was 4,288. There is an average of 7,177 miles between road calls during the past 12 months. Our completed vehicle preventive maintenance (PM) for the month of July was at 63% which is low compared to our goal of 80%. The percentage of completed PM is continuing to drop each month due to a mechanic shortage; however, we are using overtime to minimize the impact. We are also looking at outside vendors and local partners to support repairs, but we found that they are having the same issues with hiring and retaining mechanics. We also reached out to other transit agencies and found that this is an industry-wide issue. While manpower is low and PMs are delayed, it has not impacted our service to date. We may soon see a backlog of repairs causing a shortage of buses available for scheduled service.

GRTC continues to clean and disinfect the entire fleet daily. We will be starting our bus stop power washing in house which reserves approximately five positions.

Financial and Administrative Report – John Zinzarella, CFO

June Financial Report and Preliminary Year End – John Zinzarella

Source of Funds – This item details GRTC self-generated funds and optional subsidies (local, state, and federal). Revenues are unfavorable versus budget by \$2.02M or 3.35% because of timing of spending and submission of expenses for federal reimbursement versus budget assumptions \$4.69M. There are favorable operating contributions from the State and higher than anticipated advertising revenue.

Operating Expenses are favorable versus budget by \$2.59M or 4.29% because of:

- Favorable labor expenses of \$807K because of favorable headcount versus budget in transportation and equipment and facility maintenance groups and higher than budgeted vacancy factor in the general and administrative groups.
- Favorable purchased transportation service of \$2.50M because of less demand for services due to COVID.
- Favorable purchased services of \$1.95M because of zero fares (fare collection and security) and timing of building maintenance versus budget calendarization.
- Offset by unfavorable \$1.30M in materials and supplies due to higher cleaning and sanitizing expenses due to COVID. These expenses are covered by funds received from the CARES Act.

Recent and Upcoming Procurements – Tonya Thompson

There was one procurement that was a change order for portable restroom services that required the Board Chair's approval between Board meetings. Staff is still having a hard time locating restroom facilities for our Operators and identified the need for facilities in Richmond's northside and staff is adding a restroom. These services will be provided through December 2021 for an additional cost of \$4,950. This change order will bring the total value to \$105,090.

One new project was added to the upcoming procurement list. The floors in the Maintenance Department tend to accumulate a lot of water due to condensation when it is very humid which creates potentially unsafe conditions. Staff has piloted various approaches to resolve the issue. We are in the planning stage of this procurement and have marked \$100,000 for this project. Funding for this project is included in the Board approved FY22 budget, and staff will be bringing a recommendation for contract approval to the Board this winter.

Update on DBE Policy and Goals – Antionette Haynes

Antionette Haynes provided a brief overview of GRTC's Supplier Diversity Program to update the Board of Directors of GRTC and local business community on GRTC's efforts to include small and diverse businesses in our procurement process. GRTC's Supplier Diversity Program includes two small business initiatives which is our state program of the Commonwealth of Virginia which is our small, women, and minority (SWaM) program and our Disadvantage Business Enterprise (DBE) program the federal USDOT program.

GRTC's SWaM Program highlights the following: supports certified small, women, and minority businesses with an emphasis on the local business community; establishes the internal program that was not developed in response to regulatory or mandatory requirements but as an effort to support programs that enhance economic development within our community; documents program goals annually based on previous year spend; and tracks and reports performance monthly.

GRTC's DBE Program highlights the following: supports certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprises with an emphasis on state and local transportation projects funded with federal dollars; requires by federal mandate that GRTC establish an overall DBE goal every three years (current goal is 8%); states goals as a percentage of federal funds GRTC expects to expend; outlines federal regulations that require GRTC meets the maximum portion of our DBE goal through race neutral means; and schedules GRTC required reporting for DBE participation semi-annually on June 1 and December 1 of each fiscal year.

GRTC's internal processes to ensure SWaM and DBE participation include online vendor registration, website posting for upcoming projects, use of the requisition process for all goods and services to allow time to review for small business participation, and early identification of diverse suppliers during the planning phase of each project.

401a/457 Plan Policy Changes Updates – John Zinzarella

At the April 2021 Board of Directors meeting, the Board of Directors authorized the GRTC Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer of the GRTC Transit System to make amendments and take appropriate action necessary to maintain the qualification of the Plans and the

exemption of the applicable Trusts under sections 401(a) and 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, and to make such additional amendments as such officers deem necessary or desirable, all without further approval of the Board of Directors except as to any matter that counsel for GRTC and such officers deem to constitute a substantive and material change in the provisions of the Plans approved above or that will have a substantial impact of the cost of funding or administering the Plans.

Staff reported back that both the 401a and 457 plans have been updated, executed and all required regulatory filings have been submitted to maintain the qualification of the Plans.

GRTC Executive Management proposed the following changes to provisions within the 401a and 457 plans: 1) revise the vesting period for both the 401a and 457b plans from the current three (3) year period to a period of one (1) year and 2) at the implementation of the 457b plan for non-bargaining unit employees in 2002, employees were given the option to either switch to the new 457b plan or remain in the existing Old Dominion Transit Employee and Retirement Allowance Plan (Defined Benefit Plan). In addition, any member of the bargaining unit who transitioned into a non-bargaining unit position within GRTC was also give the opportunity to remain in the Defined Benefit Plan. Currently, there are sixteen (16) non bargaining unit employees who are active participants in the Defined Benefit Plan and their contributions are still at 4% and GRTC contributes 18% on their behalf, unlike the collective bargaining unit employees who contribute 9% and GRTC contributes 13% on their behalf. For this population of 16 employees, GRTC wants to amend their contribution levels to be consistent with that of the bargaining unit employees. In fairness, GRTC will allow these 16 employees to re-opt to either remain in the Defined Benefit Plan and start making the higher contributions or freeze their existing vested benefit in the Defined Benefit Plan and enroll in the 457b Plan whereas GRTC would match up to 6% of their pretax contributions. However, if the employee opts to remain in the Defined Benefit Plan, not only will their contribution rate increase to the level that is defined in the Collective Bargaining Unit Agreement, but they will also be ineligible to participate in the 401a Plan. GRTC will provide the employee's thirty (30) days to make their election.

Staff requested that the Board of Directors authorize the GRTC Chief Executive Officer to amend both the 401a and 457b plan's vesting schedule from three (3) year to one (1) year timeframe and further authorizes the GRTC Chief Executive Officer to amend the eligibility definition of the 401a plan to exclude active participants in the Old Dominion Transit Employee and Retirement Allowance Plan and to adjust the contribution amounts of any non-bargaining unit employees who are actively participating in the Old Dominion Transit Employee and Retirement Allowance Plan to match the contribution amounts outlined in the current Collective Bargaining Unit Contract, following a thirty (30) day period to opt out of the plan and become a participant in the 457b Plan. Mr. Armstrong motioned to grant staff's request, Mr. Millikan seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Chief Executive Officer's Report – Julie Timm

- COVID Activities – Many components of our “new normal” are being delayed for the next several months. For riders, we will maintain rear door boarding for all passengers except those needing operator assistance. We will ask the public to minimize or eliminate non-essential trips, we will maintain our policy against joy riding, and masks will likely be required past the September 13 FTA deadline. For employees, the change will be that we will continue to offer that one-day vaccination pay to encourage employees to receive the

vaccine. We are seriously considering a possible vaccine mandate for employees. For the Board, we are under the City's State of Emergency, and we are allowed to continue virtual Board meetings until that State of Emergency lapses in December.

- Annual Financial Audit – GRTC is in the process of completing our annual financial audit for FY21. Generally accepted auditing standards require the external auditors to communicate and share information with our Board of Directors. In prior years, Brown Edwards has done this by email to the Treasurer of the GRTC Board and of the RideFinders Board. Generally accepted best practices suggest that these letters be emailed to all Board members. Therefore, GRTC will email copies of each letter to every Board member following today's meeting. In the letters, Brown Edwards outlines three required items 1) your responsibility under the US generally auditing standards and government auditing standards, 2) the Plan Scope and timing of the audit and notes of the engagement partner, and 3) a standard inquiry concerning any knowledge you may have regarding possible fraud.

Chairperson Report – Ben Campbell

Mr. Campbell requested all employees of GRTC get vaccinated. Thousands of dollars have been spent to make sure employees are safe during COVID, and everyone has a personal responsibility for vaccinations. With vaccine mandates going on all over the country, and we do not wish to impose a similar mandate at GRTC. This is a very serious problem, and we need all staff to take the steps to protect yourselves.

Other Business

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:42 am.

APPROVED:



Benjamin P. Campbell, Chair

September 21, 2021
Date