

GRTC Transit Advisory Group.

5:30-7:30, Thursday, Apr 20, 2017

Main Street Station

Minutes

In Attendance.

Samuel Davies, Kayla Diggs Brody, Paul Jez, Danny Plaugher, Jessica Reveley, Nicholas Smith, Mike Wilson

Tim Barham, Monica Carter, Adrienne Chargois, Isaac Wright

Michael Zeevi

Call to Order

*The meeting was called to order at 5:46 PM.*

Public Comment

*The chair called for public comment. There was no public comment.*

Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Davies, seconded by Ms. Reveley, **moved:**

*That the agenda be adopted.*

This motion was approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes for October 20, 2016 and January 19, 2017

Mr. Jez, seconded by Ms. Davies, **moved:**

*That the minutes of the October 20, 2016 and January 19, 2017 be adopted.*

This motion was approved unanimously.

Update from GRTC IT Department

Mr. Barham explained that there is a new IT director but that he could not make it this evening. Mr. Barham read some notes from the IT department. GRTC's app does not have live data from the previous day, both for bus location and traffic. The information in the app is estimated data based on the previous day. He added that when the operator logs into the bus before starting a trip, that location is known by GRTC's central office, but that that data doesn't get to the app.

Mr. Wright said that the operator logs on 99.9% of the time, but can do it manually if there's an error.

Mr. Davies noted that the issue he, the Group and members of the public had were that people would look at the app and think the bus data was live, and then make plans to be at the stop in time for that, but then the bus isn't there. He said that was frustrating. Ms. Reveley echoed that concern.

Mr. Jez asked when the data could just be put online.

Mr. Barham said that is the question they are trying to answer, and they will pass it on as soon as possible.

Mr. Smith said that most transit systems put GTFS data online for anyone to make an app.

Mr. Barham read further from the long note. He said that the GTFS data and API is not put online to ensure the accuracy and security of the data. GRTC only gives data to Google or for limited educational purposes.

Mr. Davies said he thought this was a very conservative policy that made it difficult for any other app or website to add in GRTC data.

Mr. Smith showed an app that he uses, TransitApp, that has hundreds of cities all over the world including about a dozen in Virginia such as small cities like Charlottesville and Blacksburg, but not Richmond because GRTC does not publish its GTFS data online. The data is public in pdf format, but Mr. Smith said it would be nice for the underlying data to be public.

Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Reveley, **moved**:

*That GRTC put its GTFS data, both scheduled and live, online as soon as feasibly possible without any conditions or waivers for any developer to use to create better apps and websites.*

This motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Chargois talked about new software they have called CleverWorks which will allow them to do some more things.

Mr. Wilson said he has taken to showing up 10 minutes early as he was between time points and was unsure when the bus would be coming.

Ms. Reveley brought up the point she made last meeting about how certain pdfs, such as for disability applications and schedules, did not always load. Mr. Davies and Mr. Smith added that in the last few weeks there were some issues accessing certain pages. Ms. Chargois said there was an upgrade in previous weeks that was causing intermittent downtime, but hopefully it will be better going forward.

#### Suggestions from TAG that have been adopted by GRTC

Mr. Barham distributed a flyer with changes that had been made based on TAG suggestion

#### Bus Operator Conduct

Mr. Wilson brought up that sometimes drivers were having long personal conversations with passengers while driving, and that it might be a safety concern vis a vis distracted driving. Mr. Barham said there is a procedure guide for operators and that there can be a presentation on that from a trainer.

Mr. Wilson brought up how occasionally drivers will stop for food. Mr. Davies mentioned he saw operators stop for restroom use. Mr. Barham said there is allocation for that in recovery time. Mr. Wright said operators are encouraged to stop outbound so as not to affect transfers.

Mr. Barham said there are certain businesses that are approved for stopping because some businesses don't allow drivers to stop. Mr. Davies asked if the public could have a list of the businesses that are positively supporting transit operators.

Mr. Wilson had a number of stories of specific customer service issues, such as stops mid-route for nearly 20 minutes, or stops for lottery tickets. Ms. Reveley asked how this could be addressed. Mr. Barham suggested calling customer service, with as much information as possible (bus route, bus number, time).

#### Bus stop signs

Ms. Chargois said starting in June, the remaining bus stop signs, 1067 north of the river, would be changed. With the Richmond Transit Network Plan, 300 will be removed, 211 stops will be added and 1300 will remain.

Mr. Wilson said the new bus stop signs were great quality, but was likely expensive. Ms. Chargois said install is about \$30 per sign, and total cost is something like \$1.2 million. Mr. Wilson thought that putting in signs on streets where buses were being removed with the Richmond Transit Network Plan. Ms. Chargois said that the signs will still be useful for current users.

Mr. Smith asked about the stop on 2nd Street at Spring St, and that many people were asking for river access at Brown's Island Way. Ms. Chargois said that as of an hour before the meeting, that change has been made.

Mr. Wilson asked about Crutchfield, and Ms. Chargois said a route in the RTNP has already been moved to Crutchfield.

#### Incorporating public comments into the "Your New GRTC Transit System"

Ms. Chargois distributed the new transit map. She noted the new route numbers were in place, and that the 7 would become the 8 when it short-turned at the Interstate. The 79 (the old Patterson 2) will likely be rerouted to Willow Lawn in consultation with Henrico, which Todd Eure is leading. Ms. Reveley asked how the Henrico members could help, and Ms. Chargois said that would become apparently shortly.

Mr. Smith asked about the 14, which was moved from Bellevue to Westwood. He noted that the bus from Westminster Canterbury, the current 24, usually has no or one rider from that first stop, and businesses on Bellevue and MacArthur were looking forward to direct access from downtown and other areas.

Ms. Diggs Brody asked about how the changes from public meetings were incorporated, and how many in the 5th district were not incorporated. Ms. Chargois said that when changes could be made in the same cycle time of a route they were done, but when they could not fit they generally weren't, like for the 78 (which is interlined with the 87), except the 5, which will cost more money, but that extra funding may be made available.

Mr. Davies, seconded by Mr. Plaugher, **moved**:

*The TAG encourages Chesterfield County to increase funding for transit in Chesterfield County, both fixed route and the 64x, and that a letter be sent to Chesterfield County to that effect.*

Ms. Reveley abstained, while all others voted in favor.

Mr. Plaugher, seconded by Ms. Diggs Brody, **moved**:

*That all remaining items be tabled.*

The motion passed unanimously.

In order to take part in the tour of Main Street Station:

Mr. Davies, seconded by Mr. Plaugher, **moved**:

*That the Committee be adjourned.*

This motion was approved unanimously.

The Committee adjourned at 6:47.

The next meeting is Jul 20.