

**MINUTES  
SEPTEMBER 17, 2024  
GRTC BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
BOARD MEETING/RETREAT**

Members Present: Tyrone E. Nelson, Chair, Henrico County  
Andreas Addison, Vice Chair, City of Richmond  
Barbara K. Smith, Secretary, Chesterfield County  
Dave Anderson, Chesterfield County  
Todd Eure, Henrico County  
Jim Ingle, Chesterfield County  
Ellen Robertson, City of Richmond (Virtual)  
Lincoln Saunders, City of Richmond  
Dan Schmitt, County of Henrico

Others Present: Bonnie Ashley, General Counsel  
Sheryl Adams, Chief Executive Officer  
Adrienne Torres, Chief of Staff  
John Zinzarella, Chief Administrative Financial Officer  
Kevin Hernandez, Chief Operating Officer  
Joe Dillard, Director of Government and External Affairs  
Dexter Hurt, Director of Information Systems  
Cherika Ruffin, Interim Executive Director of RideFinders  
Ashley Mason, Employee Engagement Manager  
Scudder Wagg, Jarrett Walker + Associates  
Faith Walker, RVA Rapid Transit  
Stephanie Power, RVA Rapid Transit

**Routine Board Meeting Items**

I. **Call to Order & Introductions**

This meeting of the Board of Directors of the GRTC, Old Dominion Transit Management Company (ODTMC), and RideFinders was called to order on September 17, 2024, by Mr. Nelson at 8: 20AM. GRTC, 3rd Floor Conference Room, 301 East Belt Boulevard, Richmond, Virginia. Video and audio of the meeting will be streamed live online and recorded for later viewing at the following web address:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5I-UdKWmKk8>.

Ms. Robertson requested to participate remotely due to a family members illness that requires her care. Mr. Saunders motioned to approve remote participation. Mr. Ingle seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

II. **Public Comments**

The public notice, meeting agenda, and agenda attachments for this September 17, 2024 meeting of the Boards of GRTC, RideFinders, and Old Dominion Transit Management Company were posted at rideGRTC.com.

There were no public comments.

III. Board Meeting Minutes - August 29, 2024

Mr. Anderson motioned to approve the August 29, 2024 Board Meeting minutes. Mr. Saunders seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

IV. Consent Agenda

A. October Schedule Change Service Equity Analysis (Title VI)

B. Executive Director of RideFinders

Mr. Eure motioned to approve the Consent Agenda, Mr. Ingle seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

V. Information Item

A. Task Order Purchases

B. Recent & Upcoming Procurements

Mr. Nelson requested more detail on the information items. Ms. Adams responded that the first task order was under RK&K contract and issued a task order for the engineering and inspection services for the environmental and remediation for 325 E. Belt Boulevard in the amount \$323,540. The second task order was under Colonial Webb contract where plumbing services was performed \$313,240. Ms. Adams concluded with the Recent and Upcoming Procurements with making the Board aware that the Board Chairman has signed that is over \$50K but less than \$100K, which was for the business management research which is support services for Procurement for \$65,000.

**Board Retreat**

I. FY2024 Year in Review

Mr. Nelson requested a copy of the celebrations and accomplishments.

The GRTC Board watched a video of GRTC's 50th anniversary celebrations.

Ms. Torres provided an overview of the FY24 accomplishments including meeting goal to hire over 300 operators; brought service levels back to what we thought were strategically necessary; implemented all five microtransit pilot zones; started the next phase of North/South BRT and the BRT Western Extension, closed out first phase; did some shelter installations and put in another by the end of the year; began a kick-off of the study for Downtown Transfer Station; continued with zero fares and had our first funding partner of Sheltering Arms for our transit access partnership program; completed a new union contract in record time; set-up a contract for a new microtransit division establishing a MOU with the union; held successful rodeo and revamped our rider advisory committee; purchased 19 new buses with money from a FTA grant; awarded a grant to extend service in Chesterfield to Walmart Way/Chesterfield Town Center; increased service on the Route 19 to every 15 minutes; extended service to the Sheltering Arms in Goochland; ridership record of 10.5M riders; triennial annual review with the FTA with minimal findings; managed largest operating budget in GRTC's history with over 50M in grants for capital and operating; replaced HVAC system at GRTC; and Finance and HR departments were expanded and restructured.

The Board took a poll, describing FY24 in one word. Board Members reviewed GRTC staffs' descriptions of FY24.

The Board watched video of FY24 accomplishments and reviewed system ridership of FY24.

## II. FY2025 Projects and Plans

Ms. Torres provided an overview of the expansion planned for FY25 including Route 1 going to Virginia Center Commons in October; Route 7A/B 15-minute frequency increase; and two additional microtransit zones coming on-line.

Ms. Torres provided an overview of the projects for FY25 including demo and paving at 325 E. Belt Boulevard for fleet storage; BRT station modifications with completion expected Spring 2025; installation of 50 shelters Winter 2024; BRT Western Expansion NEPA/station locations/30% Design expected in nine months; and N/S BRT NEPA/station locations.

Ms. Torres highlighted the 10-Year Service Priorities identified in the Transit Strategic Plan including a Route 92 Parham Connector; N/S BRT Parham extension; airport express route; and a robust microtransit network.

Ms. Torres also reviewed the 10-Year Capital Priorities including BRT Replacement and Expansion with 20 articulated buses; addition of bus amenities up to 75%; 325 E. Belt Blvd Facility and TOD Development; N/S BRT; BRT Western Expansion; Western BRT Transfer Station/Park and Ride; Permanent Downtown Transfer Station; Northside Transfer Station/Maintenance Facility; and Southside Transfer Station.

Mr. Anderson inquired about amenities, above shelters. Ms. Torres responded at this point it is shelters and benches but that is something we continue to explore at the Downtown Transfer Station.

## III. FY2025 – FY2035 (Service priorities, major projects and funding discussion)

Mr. Wagg provided a presentation on expansion of service and funding in FY25. Mr. Wagg highlighted funding for limited expansion comparing what that expansion of service looks like with funding sources. Mr. Anderson clarified the costs go way up in 2026-2027. Mr. Wagg disclosed the funding gap that would occur over time with service expansion and inflation. Mr. Saunders inquired how inflation was being treated. Mr. Wagg responded yes. Local share forecasted out on an approximate 3% basis. Costs are forecasted on about a 3% – 4% basis based on state guidelines. Mr. Saunders stated that it does not look like local contributions are changing any from 2026 forward. Mr. Wagg said they are not growing dramatically because they are starting from a fairly small base and the other revenues are just a larger slice. Mr. Ingle asked if we could expand what you have from the government. Mr. Wagg responded potentially, but it is hard to predict the federal government because the formulas for federal government are weighted on how much population there is in urban areas. Mr. Saunders re-stated that local contributions would not increase as we did expansion. Mr. Addison asked how other jurisdictions are handling this expansion planning. What is required to think forward to adjust this gap or collaborate as a region. Mr. Wagg replied other regions are looking at expansion in investment to help continue expand services. Mr. Saunders stated we can go back and ask for the tools that we did not ask the CVTA like rideshare, taxation, etc. Mr. Eure inquired about the capital side, assuming that for major expansion to achieve that, that's tapping into the other 35% CVTA regional or that match? Mr. Wagg replied that we have made no assumptions about where you get the capital funding for those major projects, at this moment, we do not know. Mr. Addison

responded how infrastructure funding supports this just beyond operating buses. Mr. Wagg stated the purpose of this sort of scenario is long-term operation of the system, not so much on the capital investment. In terms of what the General Assembly is willing to do, long term and adjusting the funding, he is not sure. Mr. Addison inquired if GRTC could think about if the General Assembly would be supportive of this in terms of infrastructure and street maintenance. Mr. Wagg replied that's a bigger conversation with the TPO, the localities, with the state. Ms. Smith asked if with the TRIP funding you could do it twice, like the agency and the MPO. Ms. Torres replied it is either the TPO or CVTA so technically yes, we could do it but do not know if you could keep pushing that down the line. Mr. Addison added that he gets the question all the time about fare free, I would hate to get about four to five years and bringing back fares is seen as making up the difference, that is something that we need to think about, regards to people free flowing around the region, we need to think about other ways that is not being jeopardized just because of money.

#### Slide – Policy Questions

The Board took a poll to determine if the CVTA dollars should be used to support all services. Seven Board members voted yes, one voted no. Mr. Eure asked for clarification that we are talking about the dedicated 15%? Mr. Wagg responded, yes, we are talking about the dedicated 15% going to GRTC.

#### *Slide – What should be the minimum reserve amount of CVTA funding?*

Mr. Saunders asked why is this question specifically related to CVTA funding and not the overall reserve? Ms. Adams replied that we have a policy that the Board adopted. Mr. Schmitt asked if this was for what? Ms. Adams replied 25% of the budget. Mr. Schmitt asked of annual? Ms. Adams replied yes. Mr. Saunders inquired if this would be in condition of that 25%, there should be an addition to that reserve just of CVTA funds. Mr. Saunders asked if we are spending last year's CVTAs collections this fiscal year? Mr. Nelson stated we can pull some members together from this Board, and talk about some of it, make a little sub-committee.

#### *Slide - How to Fill the Gap Alternatives?*

The Board discussed how to fill the funding gap. Mr. Addison stated, so this would be breaking it up by the gap. The gap is \$17.5M in a couple of years. Mr. Wagg stated given the numbers, the pie does not change dramatically, shifts a bit but not a complete change. Mr. Addison stated connecting us with economic development is such an important piece because that's where first floor retail thrives is around strategic bus stops and connections between bus routes and that's what I think we need to also elevate in terms of what we do as well. Mr. Eure inquired about assumptions, for example express service. Mr. Wagg replied, the pie chart is taking a route and splitting it geographically, the length of the line. Express routes are not going to change the map a lot. Ms. Robertson asked how much impact does expansion have on the gap? Mr. Wagg responded that expansion grows the gap, but the gap grows after 2027 without expansion.

#### *Slide - Cost of Additional Services?*

The Board discussed applying the cost of expanded service to jurisdictions where service runs, if effectively ask to take on some or all of the costs of the new thing and keep the costs of what we are doing now based on CVTA, federal funding.

### *Slide - Operating Cost and Contributions*

The Board reviewed slides that represented the total operating of service in each jurisdiction in 2025 plus those expanded services. The Board discussed the possibility of some of the jurisdictions trying to back out the money they are contributing via the CVTA money. The Board discussed an alternative where CVTA money could be a regional pot spread across all the jurisdictions.

### *Slide – Should local jurisdictions contribute to fill the gap?*

The Board took a poll, thinking if a jurisdiction should contribute based on a set percentage of service amount; contribution based on some percentage of some of the expanded service; other idea for contribution; or no, jurisdictions should not contribute. Board discussed poll results. The majority of Board members agreed that yes, contribute a set percentage by service amount.

### *Slide – Rank Major Capital Projects*

The Board took a poll ranking the projects outlined in the TSP by priority including the N/S BRT; BRT Western Expansion; TOD Development of 325 E. Belt Boulevard; Downtown Transfer Station TOD; and Henrico Transfer Station/Park and Ride. Ranking the Board determined first was N/S BRT; second was Downtown Transfer Station TOD; third was BRT Western expansion; fourth was Henrico Transfer Station/Park and Ride; and fifth was TOD Development of 325 E. Belt Boulevard.

### **Open Discussion**

Mr. Schmitt requested that GRTC continue to plan and strategize as we have been doing but with financial feasibility. Fare replacement should be advertising and sponsorship. Identify low performing or low value routes. Maximize the value to our regional constituents. Continue to strengthen the reserve, put the money away. Prioritize goals, what is financially feasible. Mr. Addison added there needs to be conversation around economic development, growth. Mr. Saunders mentioned Northern Virginia has a tax on rideshare, we did not ask the General Assembly for that taxation mix for the CVTA should analyze it, get a sense of what kind of revenue it would create, how that aligns with our map and start if the elected officials around the region would support broadly. Recommendation to research and see if this is something we want to pursue seriously. How much money is rideshare creating?

Mr. Nelson inquired about plans for bus safety. Is the idea to focus on areas we have seen issues? Do new shelters have capacity for cameras? Mr. Addison stated in the City need to think about street light coverage, 14ft lighting, Smart City lighting. Does our bus shelter focus on easy movability of bus stops? Mr. Schmitt requested one of the key priorities for the new security and safety position to budget for heat map of issues. Put emphasis on camera capture and monitoring, and immediate dispatch of law enforcement instead of an armed security force. Signage should be overt. The standard package for a bus stop is a bench, shelter, trash can and two solar lights. Mr. Nelson requested to look at this from a budget perspective next time, beefing up security dollars.

Mr. Anderson suggested having people, organizations sponsor bus stops/shelters, to help fill the funding gap.

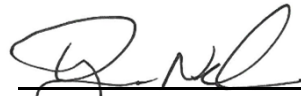
Mr. Addison asked about adding trashcans and recycling bins around stops.

Ms. Robertson asked if we finalized the N/S BRT route. Ms. Torres said the downtown section has not been finalized but the other portions have been finalized.

IV. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:40AM.

APPROVED:



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Tyrone E. Nelson, Chair  
GRTC Board of Directors

October 22, 2024

Date