

MINUTES
JULY 18, 2023
GRTC BOARD OF DIRECTORS
BOARD MEETING/RETREAT

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

Others Present: Bonnie Ashley, General Counsel
Sheryl Adams, Chief Executive Officer
Adrienne Torres, Chief of Staff
John Zinzarella, Chief Financial and Administrative Officer
Joe Dillard, Director of Equitable Innovation & Legislative Policy
Dexter Hurt, Director of Information Systems
Von Tisdale, Executive Director RideFinders
Henry Benton, Communications Specialist
Ashley Mason, Manager of Organizational Advancement
Janice Witt, Executive Assistant
Faith Walker, RVA Rapid Transit

1. Call to Order & Introductions

This Meeting/Retreat of the Board of Directors and the GRTC Transit System, Old Dominion Transit Management Company (ODTMC), and RideFinders was called to order on July 18, 2023, by Chairman Nelson, at 9:00AM. The meeting was held at Bon Secours Training Camp, 2401 West Leigh Street, Richmond, Virginia. Video and audio of the meeting will be streamed live online and recorded for later viewing at the following web address: <https://youtube.com/live/VnAJXfOdJ2k?feature=share>.

2. Public Comments

The public notice, meeting agenda, and agenda attachments for this July 18, 2023, standing meeting of the Boards of GRTC, RideFinders, and Old Dominion Transit Management Company were posted at rideGRTC.com. Per the meeting notice, all written comments received via email by Henry Bento prior to 5:00PM on the day preceding a meeting were provided to all members of the Board the night before the meeting, are read during the Public Comment Period of the meeting by staff following the two-minute speaking limit and will be included in the minutes of the meeting.

3. Approval of June 20, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes – Tyrone Nelson

Mr. Schmitt motioned to approve the June 20, 2023 Board Meeting minutes, Mr. Addison seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Consent Agenda

- a. Services for Installation, Removal, Repair of Vehicles Decals
- b. ADA Paratransit Client Certification Services
- c. Tire Lease Services Contract
- d. Annual Liability Insurance Premium Contract

Ms. Robertson motioned to approve the Consent Agenda, Mr. Addison seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

5. Staff Report/May 2023 Financial Review – John Zinzarella

6. Board Retreat Opening Remarks – Sheryl Adams and Tyrone Nelson

- a. 50th Anniversary - Ms. Adams stated that this is the year for celebration, GRTC is celebrating 50 years! GRTC was purchased on April 12, 1973; originally it was Virginia Transit Company and then it became a public agency which was purchased by the City of Richmond in 1973. In 1989, Chesterfield purchased 50% of Greater Richmond Transit Company from the City of Richmond. In 2000, Greater Richmond Transit Company became known as GRTC Transit System. GRTC moved into the new facility on East Belt Boulevard in 2010. GRTC received CNG vehicles in 2012 and in 2018 the Pulse Line started and Henrico expanded their service. In 2020, GRTC expanded the Board. In 2023, GRTC has a lot planned; for example, wrap a bus with GRTC history, change channel cards inside the bus with GRTC's history, transit museum, social media campaign (which has started), purchasing GRTC swag specifically for the 50th Anniversary, change email signatures to use new logo recognizing 50 years, yearbook with past and present employees, family event (carnival), and a gala.

To kickoff GRTC's 50th Anniversary on July 1 GRTC put out a video, 50 Years of Moving the Richmond Region. As was mentioned earlier, Greater Richmond Transit Company became GRTC Transit System in 2000. In 2023, we would like to be known as GRTC. We feel that GRTC Transit System is redudtant because GRTC stands for Greater Richmond Transit Company. We would like to have a new brand with GRTC and a new tag line, "Connecting the Richmond Region."

7. Workshop Overview

- a. Exercise – Three questions were asked of the Board.
 1. What does public transportation mean to you as a member of a transit agency's governing Board?

Here are some of the responses from the Board: visitors, residence, business owners, workers, being able to connect to places in our region, being able to get from home to retail, airport, physician, an amenity, work, school, that is what public transportation should mean to the residents, to have an opportunity to get around and those with transportation having another way to get around, competitiveness with other regions which is an important part of being seen as vibrant in metropolitan areas, public, be available to people in the region, transportation, multi-modal, giving options to people who drive, striving to serve the entire region, would like it to be a choice for those that might not necessarily need it but that it is a first-class experience that they would want, commitment from local government to move people around, having tools available and let people know they can take transportation.

2. Having been on the GRTC Board for roughly a year, what is something you learned about GRTC that is beneficial to the region?

Responses: on-time performance in depth and communication of on-time performance, would like to see GRTC get to the point that the buses communicated exactly what time they would be arriving, micro-transit and people should know more about these other opportunities, public comments and having success stories out there regarding GRTC from choice riders or riders that do not have a choice, learning what is needed and what is required to run a transit company, surveying the public and being able to get customer service ratings that this company has been successful in getting, different types of riders, roads, multi-faceted operation, having elected officials on the Board and having influence to move GRTC forward quickly and advocate for GRTC with Council and Supervisors, being able to work together as a regional Board.

3. What are you hoping to get out of today?

Responses: Shared vision, create choice riders, marketing GRTC as the best transportation source that the region has to offer, innovative, aspirational, and ideas

8. Structure and Strategy

a. Brand - Ms. Torres highlighted the difference in tag lines and stated the old tag line was "Getting Ready to Connect" and the criticism was why are you always getting ready and never successful in connecting; therefore, we wanted to change it to read to mean we are "Connecting the Richmond Region."

b. Mission, Vision, and Core Values - The Executive Leadership Team met with GRTC staff and had an interactive communication of changing GRTC's Mission Statement, Vision, and Core Values.

- Today the Executive Team is proposing the following mission statement: *Connecting people to opportunities by providing safe, sustainable, and equitable transit.*

After discussions, the Board suggested adding efficiency, leaving sustainable, and considering changing transit back to transportation.

- The Proposed Vision Statement is *"Become the region's first-choice, well-integrated transportation options that transforms economic development, access to jobs, healthcare, and education for the betterment of our community."*

The Board mentioned that this seems that it is not inclusive of people from out of area, adding recreation after education, too long, be the first choice, want to ride regardless of circumstances, transit can connect you to wherever you want to go, remove economic development it is not necessary, be the first choice. The Board requested that staff review their suggestions, rewrite, and bring back to the Board members.

- The Proposed Core Values are Safety, Respect, Teamwork, Reliability, Integrity.

The Board made no changes.

c. Objectives and Initiatives - Ms. Torres listed the following objectives:

For employees: improve retention and recruitment; improve quality of life; improve employee experience; encourage intellectual curiosity; improve communications; cultivate diversity, equity, and inclusion; improve professional development.

For Processes: improve efficiency; improve sustainability; enhance safety; enhance internal quality control; improve state of good repair.

For Finances: manage strong cashflow position; maintain strategic planning focus; expand revenue sources; maintain fiscal stewardship.

For Riders: improve public image; improve quality of life; improve rider experience; improve communication.

When the Executive Leadership Team met with staff, a SWOT Analysis was also done and a list of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats were compiled from staff input.

- d. Organizational Chart - Ms. Torres reviewed the organizational chart with the Board, which included Board Committees, vacancies, and restructuring of GRTC's Human Resources Department.
- e. GRTC Modes of Service - GRTC's services are local, BRT, Express, Rideshare, Paratransit, Microtransit (coming soon), carpool and vanpool.

9. Riders

- a. Origin and Destination - Ms. Torres reviewed the ridership activity for the local routes, BRT, and Specialized Transportation. An origin/destination survey was completed and the analysis has not been completed; however, she shared a quick comparison from 2019 to 2023 for the following: reason for trip, household income, race/ethnicity and zero fare.

10. GRTC Performance

Ms. Torres reviewed fixed route, local route, BRT, express route, ridership for fiscal years 2018 through 2023 and reviewed the on-time performance (OTP) for the same period. The productivity total cost per passenger was reviewed for the routes.

11. Growth and Expansion

a. Service Expansion

Vision: Become the region's first-choice well-integrated transportation option that transforms economic development, access to jobs, healthcare, and education for the betterment of our community.

Goal: Improve overall quality of life for riders in the region.

A good transit system provides transit freedom and transit freedom is to go where you want to go and go when you want to go. Transit freedom is provided by reliability, accessibility, frequency, and a connected network that is multimodal.

Ms. Torres asked the Board to rank the following goals of growth and expansion.

- Extending/adding routes to reach more destinations.
- Improving frequencies to allow for more reliable connections.
- Improving connection hubs to improve ease of access.
- Improving infrastructure (sidewalks/bus stops) to improve accessibility.

After Board discussions, they all agreed that all of these are equally important for growth and expansion.

A list was provided of expansion priorities for the Regional Public Transportation Plan, which included the jurisdiction, route enhancement, description, fiscal year, funding source, and the estimated planning cost.

b. Capital Projects

Temporary Downtown Transfer Station – It will have 12 bus bays in a sawtooth configuration and Operator restrooms with Operator access only. Originally it was scheduled to open in May and there were delays, shelters are scheduled to arrive in August and we are hoping to open mid-August.

Articulated Buses and Pulse Station Modifications – GRTC secured grants from VDRPT SMARTSCALE to purchase 60' articulated buses to carry greater loads. All 26 Pulse stations will need minor modifications to accommodate these longer vehicles.

North-South BRT Line – Various regional studies have identified a need for a North-South BRT line to connect to and complement the existing Pulse. The Study will be complete by the end of the summer. Stakeholder Advisory and Technical Advisory meetings are scheduled and then we will roll into the next Phase Study which is Environmental Engineering.

Addition of Malvern Pulse Station – Funding has been awarded to add Malvern BRT Station with engineering beginning in FY2025. This will add a dedicated lane and an additional station on Broad Street near Malvern Avenue. This is funded through the SMARTSCALE grant application applied for by the City of Richmond through the Richmond Region Transportation Planning Organization (RRTPO).

Western Pulse Extension – The 2017 Greater RVA Transit Vision Plan (TVP) identified an extension of the Pulse to Short Pump as a logical extension to pursue based on ridership projections and the transit-supported characteristics of the corridor. GRTC worked with PlanRVA to identify a logical first segment to extend service westward along Broad Street. The results of the study identified Parham as the next end of the line. Phase 2 Study is scheduled to kick off in FY2024.

Microtransit – GRTC will be launching Link, on-demand Microtransit in the Fall of 2023. A phased implementation of a total of five pilot zones are planned to be in place by June 2024. The five zones are Washington Park/Azalea Avenue, Ashland, North Chesterfield West, Powhatan, and Sandston/New Kent. GRTC has been awarded funding through DRPT TRIP Regional Significance for three zones and DRPT MERIT Demonstration funds for two zones.

Fleet Storage Facility – GRTC Facilities Master Plan has been underway since May. The Plan has focused on the current needs of the facility, and the future needs based on the planned growth related to vehicle and service expansion. GRTC is currently working on a remediation plan and demo plan. GRTC Plans to expand the parking footprint once the building is removed. GRTC Plans to move forward with engineering and construction for a structure on the property incorporated into the storage facility needs. Conceptual designs from the facilities master plan will include options for expanded administrative space, as well as a Southside Neighborhood Transfer Center.

Shelters and Benches – Essential Transit Infrastructure is intended to provide comfort, convenience, accessibility, safety, and dignity to riders. In 2022, GRTC committed to a goal of having a bench or shelter at 75% of its bus stops within five years as part of the ETI Plan. GRTC has been awarded over \$5M to get this project underway in FY2024 and will be applying for additional grants and coordinating with jurisdictions. The estimated need is greater than \$20M.

12. Transit Oriented Development

In 2020, the City Council requested City Staff work with GRTC to find a permanent location for a permanent transfer station. The strategy was to develop a committee that included city, businesses, and community. In November 2020, a survey was conducted and 59% agreed that the next steps should be to identify a feasible site to be acquired and Transit Oriented Development was an important aspect of this project and 83% strongly agreed. Efforts with the committee were put on delay when GRTC was told they had to evacuate the temporary right of way location adjacent to the public safety building due to the City selling the property and a temporary solution was made. Transit Oriented Development is key to success for many revitalized cities and there is infrastructure funding from the federal level available for improvements.

13. Financial Projections

Mr. Zinzarella reviewed in detail the long-range forecast model for the baseline revenue and baseline expense. He discussed the cost impact for service expansion, priorities for CVTA expenses and CVTA legislation.

14. Board Engagement Discussion - Mr. Dillard stated that the Board should have received an email from him regarding the ridegrtc email addresses for each of you. We are trying to make this agency more efficient. Soon, the Board will stop receiving calendar invites and GRTC will have a Board of Directors Portal that each of you will be able to access. This portal will be a central location for GRTC's Board of Directors and its committees and all-important documents.

Areas for Follow Up/Champion – We have a new Board and it is not the same as it has been in the past and it is advantageous for us to have the elected officials on our Board. One of the projects that we can use some support for is the Permanent Transfer Station. We have everything we need at the base but there is one thing that we need and it is relationships. Central Virginia is based on relationships and you all have different doors and can make things happen faster than we can here at GRTC. We would like to make sure that when we need increases in funding and different resources that we have the Board to help with that.

15. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:30PM.

APPROVED:



Tyrone E. Nelson, Chair
GRTC Board of Directors

August 15, 2023
Date