

**Arlington Transit Advisory Committee**  
**Meeting Notes**  
**November 13, 2018**  
**7:00 p.m.**  
**Ellen M. Bozman Government Center**  
**2100 Clarendon Boulevard**  
**“Cherry” and “Dogwood” Conference Room**

**TAC Members Present:**

John Carten  
Alexa Mavroidis  
Richard Price  
Harvey Berlin  
Erika Chiang  
James Davenport

**Attendees Present:**

Pierre Holloman (staff)  
William Jones (staff)  
Tim Roseboom (staff)  
Greg Matlesky (Metrobike)  
Andre Stafford (WMATA)  
Matt Wood (National Express – operator of ART)  
Phil Thomson (National Express – operator of ART)

**Call to Order**

- John Carten opened the meeting at 7:06 pm.

**Introductions**

- William Jones noted that Matt Wood and Phil Thompson, both of National Express' corporate staff, were in attendance to discuss ongoing issues and challenges with ART.

**Public Comment**

- No public comments submitted, no speakers from the public.

**Approval of Meeting Notes from September 11, 2018**

- September 11, 2018 meeting notes were approved unanimously.

**WMATA Budget Update – Tim Roseboom**

- Tim Roseboom noted that WMATA's GM/CEO's recommended FY 2020 budget totals \$3.4 billion, including \$2.0 billion of operating expenses, \$1.4 billion in capital program spending in FY2020, and six-year capital plan of \$9.2 billion include investment in ongoing projects, prioritized system preservation and renewal needs from WMATA's Capital Needs Inventory. The six-year capital plan includes \$436 million of reimbursable projects such as the Silver Line, the Potomac Yard infill station, and the Purple Line.

- PRIIA funding ends in Federal FY 2019. If there is not a reauthorization from Congress, capital contributions from jurisdictions will increase by nearly \$750 million over five years. With PRIIA, Jurisdictional Match and System Performance requirements will total \$2.6 billion over six years. Without PRIIA, Jurisdictional Match and System Performance will increase to \$3.3 billion over that time frame.
- WMATA has made improvements to their capital program delivery which has resulted in key improvements such as 550 plus new 7000-series Metrorail cars now in service, railcar performance highest in eight years – more than 100,000 miles between delays, track rehab and preventive maintenance programs which reduce delays, 88% on-time rail trips since early 2018, expanding underground cell and WiFi availability, escalator and elevator replacements and rehab, new buses and new bus facilities.
- Regarding the FY 2020 operating budget, the goals include: increasing ridership, improving customer experience, maximize operating efficiency, increasing non-fare revenues, enhancing employment engagement and development, and complying with dedicated revenue restrictions.
- To increase ridership, the WMATA's GM/CEO recommended FY 2020 operating budget includes a weekend flat fare, reduction in cost of the 7-day bus pass from \$17.50 to \$15, addition of a 3-day weekday pass, unlimited bus in all visitor and select passes, expand rush hour service periods, all red line trains operating to Glenmont, as well as other items. Under the proposed budget, Arlington's annual operating subsidy would increase to \$82M.
- There are several risks to WMATA's GM/CEO recommended FY 2020 operating budget including but not limited to: Federal uncertainty – PRIIA reauthorization, formula program funding, transit benefit, federal employment and contracting levels; ridership uncertainty due to changes in trip-making and transportation market (telework, alternate modes, gas prices, etc.); continued paratransit cost growth; emergencies and special events; establish a rainy day fund for emergencies starting with \$20 million in FY2020 (1% of operating expenses is unfunded); increasing pension and OPEB liabilities
- The TAC inquired about the increased cost of MetroAccess. Mr. Roseboom noted that the increase cost of MetroAccess is due to demand. The TAC also inquired about the next steps regarding WMATA's budget process. Mr. Roseboom noted that he will provide another update on WMATA's process to the TAC at their January 2019 meeting and WMATA is planning to move forward with public outreach and public comment on the proposed budget in the January – February 2019 timeframe. Mr. Roseboom also mentioned the Board is expected to adopt the FY 2020 budget sometime in March 2019.

### **Shared Mobility Devices - Greg Matlesky**

- Greg Matlesky provided an update on Arlington's shared mobility devices pilot program. In September 2017, dockless bikeshare launched in the region starting in D.C. and Montgomery County with five permitted companies. Scootershare launched in D.C. in March 2018 with three permitted companies. In June 2018, Bird entered Arlington with 500 scooters before any permitting was created. In July and August 2018, there was an industry transition away from pedal bikes to scooters. In September 2018, the Arlington County Board approved a pilot shared mobility device pilot program which was launched on October 1, 2018. The pilot allows for a new transportation option for first/last mile trips and encourages non-SOV trip making.
- Pilot regulations were drafted in consultation with regional partners and the County looked at best practices world-wide. The pilot is a 9-month program which will conclude on June 30, 2019. The pilot allows for growth from the initial fleet size of 350 per mode

per company and sets speed limits to 10 mph for scooters and 15 mph for e-bikes. The pilot also includes an \$8,000 permit fee to fund staff and consultant time paid for by each operator and \$5,000 surety bond if an operator goes bankrupt. There are many factors which are considered in terms of evaluating the pilot program's value to residents, business, and visitors, including: impacts to pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists; appropriate fleet sizes per mode; parking compliance from operators; sufficient communication with riders; number of riders and trips; and overall public satisfaction with the program.

- Biggest issues in Arlington include sidewalk riding, improper parking, unsafe behavior, and underage riders. Staff is currently working with operators to educate users on proper riding and parking procedures through the use of the Street Smart campaign as well as electronic message boards throughout the County. Staff is also working with Arlington Public Schools on underage riding as well as with Arlington County Police on enforcing only traffic safety issues.
- The TAC inquired about parking of scooters on sidewalks and at bus stops; and Mr. Matlesky noted the County is looking to implement scooter and bike parking corrals at locations near Metrorail stations and between parking spaces. The corrals would include spray paint on pavement within the roadway for scooter and bike parking only. The County is also working with operators to include drop off/pick up beacons on the map which would flag where individuals could park/find scooter and bike corrals. Mr. Matlesky noted that the parking corrals would roll out in the coming weeks. It was noted that if TAC members noted or had any issues with scooters, they could reach directly out to Mr. Matlesky.
- The TAC inquired about riding scooters within bike lanes and on trails, underage usage and the ability of individuals underage to sign up to ride scooters, accidents, and the use of helmets by users of scooters and e-bikes. It was noted that scooters are allowed and encouraged to use bike lanes; however, scooters are not allowed on trails. It was also noted that companies are requiring drivers licenses to sign up and there has only been one known serious accident related to a scooter since June 2018. The TAC requested an update on the pilot at their March 2019 meeting.

### **ART & STAR Service Update – William Jones**

- It was suggested by the TAC to move the STAR Service Update to the Report of the Accessibility Subcommittee. Mr. Jones noted the scheduled changes which went into effect on ART in on September 30 as well as the upcoming changes on December 16 and 17, 2018. ART held public meetings in October on the December service changes, and also included public meeting materials online whereby individuals were able to provide public comments online. Over 250 were submitted online and 10 were submitted during the physical public meetings. Comments includes support for the noted service changes, questions on the new ART 72 route, service reliability/performance, and concerns over additional service on N Barton Street. For the new ART 72, it was noted that as part of a grant the County received through the Commonwealth's SMART SCALE program, 8 new buses were procured to operate the new ART 72 route.
- The first quarter FY 2019 report for ART showed ridership at 745,548 passengers from July 1 – September 20, 2018 which was a 7% decrease from the first quarter of FY 2018. It was noted that the ridership decrease was a result of existing trends in ridership decreasing as well as the elimination of the ART 54 and ART 92 in June 2018. On time performance for ART was 82% which was 4.7% lower than the first quarter of FY 2018. There were 4.1 accidents per 100,000 miles in the first quarter of FY 2019 which was an 18% decrease from the first quarter of FY 2018. Regarding road calls, during the first

quarter of FY 2019, ART experience 6,612 miles between road calls which was a 66% decrease from the first quarter of FY 2018.

- On September 20, 2018, passengers were able to ride ART for free as part of ART's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.
- Regarding ART's ongoing service and maintenance issues, the County has held weekly meetings with the local and corporate staff of National Express. National Express is currently under contract with the County to operate and maintain ART. Representatives from National Express in attendance included Matt Wood, Chief Operating Officer, and Phil Thomson, Director of Operations. Mr. Wood addressed the TAC and noted prior and existing service challenges with ART. Mr. Wood mentioned National Express is working hard to improve reliability and maintenance related to ART as National Express has brought in additional talent on the operations and maintenance side and provided additional corporate support. National Express' Regional Maintenance Manager has dedicated full time work to improve the maintenance of ART buses as ART faced significant maintenance challenges in maintaining a full complement of maintenance staff. ART has also faced challenges in retaining bus operators due to the very competitive market in the D.C. and Baltimore region. Mr. Wood stated that National Express plans to adjust wages and offer recruiting incentives to ensure ART has a full complement of operators and maintenance technicians. It was mentioned that over \$1M in National Express company resources have been allocated to ART maintenance and operations in this fiscal year. Mr. Wood stated that National Express is committed to improving ridership and responding to County requests to deliver reliable services, improve on time performance, have a safe service and other improvements. It was also noted that State of Good Repair (SGR) is a major priority as many of ART's buses are aging with the average age between 8 – 10 years; moreover, National Express has achieved four campaign items related to SGR and is committed to being proactive to identify additional methods to ensure SGR by look at replacement trends.
- The TAC inquired about at times poor or confusing communication related to ART such as buses which will not operate. The TAC also inquired about how does ART bus operator salary compare with the rest of the region. Regarding communication, National Express will continue to work with the County to improve the information which is going out to the public regarding service delays and cancellations. Regarding wages of bus operators, ART not only competes with other public transit systems in the region but also competes with the wages of private operators. As a result, National Express has proposed to implement sign on bonuses as well as attendance bonuses to make ART more competitive with other public transit bus systems as well as with private operators. The TAC requested future updates in the spring of 2019 from National Express' corporate team on ART issues.

### **Crystal City Potomac Yard Transitway Extension to Pentagon City Update – Pierre Holloman**

- Pierre Holloman provided an overview of Transitway extension project to Pentagon City. For the Transitway extension, northbound travel will follow Crystal Drive from 18th Street South to 12th Street South, continue west along 12th Street to South Hayes Street, and then north to Army Navy Drive at Joyce Street. Southbound travel for the extension will follow Army Navy Drive east to South Hayes Street, continue east on 12th Street South, and then south on South Clark Street to the Crystal City Metrorail Station. The Transitway Extension includes new transitway stations as well as dedicated bus lanes on 12<sup>th</sup> Street S. An open house was held in Crystal City on November 8 to update the community on the project's scope and schedule. Mr. Holloman noted that the public can view the open house materials at

<https://projects.arlingtonva.us/projects/transitway-extension-to-pentagon-city/> and can still provide public comment until December 9, 2018. A traffic operations analysis will be conducted in calendar year 2019 and the results of this analysis will be shared with the public.

### **TAC 2019 Meeting Calendar – Pierre Holloman**

- Pierre Holloman provided the TAC with the proposed meeting calendar which includes a TAC meeting in January, March, May, July, September, and November 2019. The TAC had discussion regarding holding a meeting on January 8 or January 15 as activities related to the the Transportation Research Board's Annual Meeting may impact TAC attendance if the TAC was held on January 15. It was also noted that due to the holidays some TAC members may not be available on January 8, 2019. As a result, John Carten asked Mr. Holloman to poll TAC members after the meeting electronically to determine a preference of January 8 or January 15.

### **Report from Accessibility Subcommittee**

- Alexa Mavroidis noted that the Accessibility Subcommittee held a public comment forum on October 18, 2018. Many of the comments from that forum related to STAR's performance under Red Top Cab. It was stated that during the forum, several members of the public noted that Red Top were not picking STAR clients up at night, Red Top's use of a remote call center for STAR rather than a local call center, and individuals were frustrated with Red Top and what the County is doing to fix issues with Red Top.
- Ms. Mavroidis noted that the Accessibility Subcommittee had been looking for clear answers from the County regarding what was being done with Red Top and what changes need to be made to the contract. Ms. Mavroidis noted that issues with Red Top seem to be a systematic problem and there is a breakdown in service and communication as some people continue to make the same complaints over and over with Red Top. Questions which individuals have raised to the County regarding Red Top include how many trips have been impacted by declines in Red Top service, how many of Red Top's trips have been late and no show, what is going to happen to Red Top, what does negotiating or renegotiating Red Top's contract mean, and what should wheelchair riders of STAR deem as normal? William Jones noted that the County is currently looking to see what can be done with the existing contract as the existing contract does not include a dedicated number of vehicles from Red Top for STAR nor does the existing contract call for Red Top to keep its call center in Arlington.

### **Additional Items from Committee Members and Staff**

- The TAC requested updates on the Columbia Pike Transit Station Project as well as the Crystal City Metro East Entrance Project in 2019.
- It was noted that comments for the Streetlight Management Plan are due on November 30, 2018.
- It was noted that Mr. Holloman will send out an electronic poll to the TAC to determine the January 2019 meeting date.

### **Adjournment**

- The meeting was adjourned at 9:08 pm.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 15, 2019.