

Arlington Transit Advisory Committee
Meeting Notes
Tuesday, May 11, 2021
7:00 PM
Microsoft Teams Meeting

TAC Members Present:

John Carten
Erika Chiang
Kate Garman
Deidre Grant
Richard Price
Alexa Mavroidis
Herschel Kanter

Attendees Present:

Lynn Rivers (staff)
Pierre Holloman (staff)
William Jones (staff)
Robin McElhenny (staff)
Kirk Dand (staff)
Paul Mounier (staff)
Cala Fils (staff)
Hui Wang (staff)
Christine Baker (staff)
Andre Stafford (WMATA)
Jiaxin Tong
Sue Gutierrez

Call to Order

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

Introductions

- John Carten led roll call of TAC members present, Arlington staff, and others present. Pierre Holloman introduced Hui Wang and Christine Baker from Arlington DES – Transportation Engineering and Operations Bureau.

Public Comment

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

Approval of Meeting Notes from March 9, 2021 TAC Meeting

- The amended meeting notes were approved unanimously.
- **July TAC Meeting Notice (date Tuesday July 13, 2021)**
Pierre Holloman noted that in November 2020 the TAC adopted a 2021 meeting calendar which included July 13, 2021 as the date for the annual Transit Capital Projects tour. Mr. Holloman noted that within the last several years, the TAC members

have requested that the tour take place on the third Tuesday in July to get around conflicts with summer vacation schedules. Mr. Holloman also noted that this year's tour will be virtual and hopefully the 2022 tour will be in person. Mr. Holloman stated a poll will be sent out to the TAC to confirm the meeting date for the July 2021 TAC meeting with two options:

- July 13, 2021
- July 20, 2021
- Mr. Holloman mentioned the poll will be sent out/opened by close of business on May 14, 2021 and will close on June 4, 2021.

Proposed TAC Charter Amendments (cont. from 3/9/21 meeting)

- Pierre Holloman provided an overview of the prior TAC discussion on TAC amendment changes held on January 12, 2021 and March 9, 2021. Mr. Holloman noted the following **proposed changes were accepted by the TAC at the 3/9/21 meeting:**
 - Membership Section
 - All members will serve at the pleasure of and can be removed from the Committee by the County Manager. **Committee members are expected to participate regularly and will be subject to dismissal if attendance at regular meetings falls below 50% in one calendar year.**
 - The Committee will designate a member to serve as Chair **and Vice-Chair. The Chair and Vice-Chair will be responsible for reviewing meeting agendas, overseeing Transit Advisory Committee meetings and facilitating any official correspondence.**
- Mr. Holloman noted such changes will be forwarded to the County Manager for final approval in July 2021 as there may be additional changes to the TAC charter to include language or a statement on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (D.E.I). Mr. Holloman provided ***draft D.E.I language for the TAC's consideration:***
 - ***Mission Section***
 - ***The Committee will help with Arlington County's ongoing efforts to maintain and build an inclusive, open, and engaged environment where differences of beliefs, opinions, and values are integral to success.***
- Mr. Holloman requested feedback from the TAC prior to the July 2021 meeting

Vision Zero Presentation

- Christine Baker provided an update and overview of Arlington Vision Zero Action Plan. It was noted that the plan will be up for adoption at the May 15 County Board meeting. The planning and branding for the Action Plan began in November – December 2019. Draft action items were developed between May – June 2020. Between July and August 2020; a plan for public engagement was developed and public engagement on safety began in September 2020. Between November – December 2020, staff reviewed, and incorporated feedback received during the public engagement activities and developed a draft Action Plan. Additional public engagement was held on the draft Action Plan between January – February 2021. Staff took feedback received from the public

engagement activities and incorporated such into the finalized Action Plan between March – April 2021.

- Using finding from public engagement activities and data analysis efforts, staff focused on the following safety target areas: Intersections, Pedestrians, Bicycles, Alcohol, Speed, Distraction, Work Zones, High-Injury Network Corridors, Equity, Information Quality, Safety Culture, and Transparency & Accountability. Data regarding Arlington’s Crash Analysis is available at: <https://transportation.arlingtonva.us/vision-zero/maps-and-safety-data/>
- It was noted that actions specific to transit include:
 - ❖ Using the inventory of bus stops to assist in identifying/prioritizing improvements
 - ❖ Prioritizing projects that provide safer access to transit
 - ❖ Revisiting bus stop guidelines and standards, when appropriate
 - ❖ Including transit access/operation tools in the Multimodal Safety Toolbox
 - ❖ Improving bus stops through upgrade/repave efforts
 - ❖ Including access to transit guidance in the MOT guidelines
 - ❖ Improving transit as part of community education programs
 - ❖ Coordinating with WMATA & other transit service providers
 - ❖ Engaging with TAC, Transportation Commission, etc. to learn about transit safety issues
- If the Vision Zero Action Plan is adopted on May 15, the next scheduled update to the plan will take place between 2025 and 2026. Between the adoption and 2025, staff will implement action items, review outcomes, and identify next steps in an iterative and collaborative process. To follow what actions are being take, it was noted that the public can visit: transportation.arlingtonva.us/vision-zero.
- The TAC noted that transit riders are pedestrians as well as cyclists. The TAC asked if there are issues in terms of vehicles blocking sidewalks and bus stops and ADA issues, who should they report such to within Arlington? It was noted that such issues can be reported via Arlington’s online reporting tool. The TAC asked about shared mobility devices such as scooters and bikes blocking sidewalks and other areas along the sidewalk and if there was a mechanism to enforce users or shared mobility device companies to not create such a disruption for accessibility. It was noted that Arlington’s Commuter Services Bureau monitors the shared mobility device program and works with the share mobility device companies to have scooters and bikes moved to not block pedestrian and/or vehicle areas as soon as possible once an issue is reported. The TAC also inquired TAC member Richard Price applauded the Action Plan, the 2030 horizon within the Action Plan, and the County’s commitment to include strategies.

Arlington Transit and STAR Service Status Report

- William Jones provided an update on Arlington Transit and STAR service. For Arlington Transit, it was noted that the 53, 61A, 61B, 62, and 74 remain suspended. Front door boarding and fare collection began on January 1 and bus shield barriers were installed in all buses at the end of 2020. Arlington Transit is taking direction from the Federal Transit Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention regarding masks and such are still be required onboard buses. It was noted that bus operators also have spare face masks for passengers who may board without one. There are also hand sanitizer dispensers available onboard buses for passenger convenience.

- FY 2021 (Total Ridership) to date was noted to be 1,007,191 compared to FY 2020 (Total Ridership) as of May 2020: 2,196,474. The decrease of 54.2 % resulted from reduced travel during COVID-19 pandemic. Systemwide On-Time-Performance (OTP) has increased since January 2021 and currently stands at 86.9%. Improvements began in late December/early January as a result of additional on-street supervision and service monitoring by First Transit. FY 2021 Miles between road calls decreased by 25% decrease from FY 2020 to FY 2021.
- Regarding social media engagement, between January 1, 2021 and March 31, 2021 Arlington Transit's engagement rate on Facebook was 10.96%, 15.60% on Instagram, and 1.73% on Twitter.
- Between February – March 2021, STAR ridership was just over 3,000 passengers. Between the third quarter of FY20 and third quarter of FY21, there was a 64.6% decrease in STAR ridership, a 56.6% decrease in revenue hours operated, a decrease of 61.2% in revenue miles operated, a decrease of 17.7% in passenger per hour, 63.9% decrease in trips provided, and a 25.5% decrease in customer complaints per 1,000 passengers.
- The TAC requested that for future presentations, there is a clear distinction between the colors on the bar charts. The TAC also noted that the change in Arlington's Transit bus operator has seemed have made a major difference based on direct observations and the decrease in road calls.

WMATA Budget, Construction, Service Changes Update

- Kirk Dand noted WMATA's FY'22 budget was adopted using CRRSAA and ARPA relief funding to remove the need for service cuts, station closures, and layoffs. The six-year Capital Funding Agreement (CFA) was approved for execution:
 - The CFA is on the Arlington County Board May agenda for approval and signature.
 - The CRRSAA funds were approved, and Arlington County will receive a \$5,822,703 credit to our subsidy bill.
- Regarding ridership, it was noted that Metrobus ridership has increased each month since February 2021 with approximately 5 million trips made in April 2021. Metrorail has started to slowly rebound as ridership has also increased between February 2021 and April 2021.
- WMATA continues to provide service ahead of demand, which requires anticipating conditions approximately three to six months in advance. The FY2022 budget maintains rail service at 80% of pre-Covid-19 levels, bus service at 85% of pre-Covid-19 levels. As approved in the budget, bus and rail service enhancements are being added in June and September, including extending bus service to 2 am. WMATA's service restoration goals are to maximize coverage and to prepare for returning ridership while protecting employee and customer health and responding to customer priorities.
- WMATA is running extra special service which ends at 11:00 pm for Washington Wizards and Washington Capitals playoff games, and for Washington Nationals and DC United games. If the games run over 11:00 pm, WMATA will ensure there is service to accommodate customers once the game is completed.
- Regarding the Arlington Cemetery Metrorail Station Platform Improvement Project, the station will re-open at the end of May with blue line trains resuming service on May 23rd.

- Sue Gutierrez asked if WMATA has estimated the number of people who will continue to telework as it was noted that Ms. Gutierrez’s employer has went to full time telework and Ms. Gutierrez does not have a car. Mr. Dand noted that WMATA has conducted outreach with major employers and has closely followed ridership patterns to determine current levels of service and for planning for future levels of service. The TAC followed up and inquired if WMATA has developed a business plan for increasing service. Mr. Dand noted there is a 29-page document which will be shared with the TAC after the meeting which includes a deep dive in as survey and questions about future plans for service.

Update on FY22 CIP and FY22 DRPT Capital Assistance Grant Applications

- Robin McElhenny provided an overview of proposed transit capital projects in the draft FY2021 CIP and feedback received from DRPT on FY2022 Capital Assistance Grant Applications. The draft FY2021 CIP includes projects from the prior adopted CIP including but not limited to: Arlington Transit’s Operations and Maintenance Facilities, Ballston Multimodal Improvements, Metrorail Station Entrances, the Transitway Extension to Pentagon City, Bus Stop Accessibility Improvements, Arlington Transit fleet investments and Transit ITS and Security.
- Regarding the FY2022 DRPT Capital Assistance Grant Applications, in April 2021, DRPT released their draft FY22 Six Year Improvement Program (SYIP) which recommended two grant awards for the County totaling \$14.7M:
 - Replacement Bus Purchase (20 buses)
 - Replacements Transit ITS Assets (equipment and software replacement)
- Total amount proposed for FY22 DRPT Capital Assistance Program is \$98M statewide; awards focused on State of Good Repair (SGR) projects. DRPT received a significant increase in the number of applications and prioritized FY2022 Capital Assistance grant awards for SGR projects The Commonwealth Transportation Board will approve grant awards in June/July 2021

Report from Accessibility Subcommittee

- Alexa Mavroidis stated there were not new items; however, the subcommittee did receive an update from staff on the STAR performance data which was provided to the TAC during this meeting. The subcommittee was seeking to obtain an update on the STAR Call Center procurement. Lynn Rivers noted that staff will be able to report on the procurement as part of the Additional Items from Committee Members and Staff at the July TAC meeting.

Additional Items from Committee Members and Staff

- Pierre Holloman mentioned that the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) will go back to normal service on June 1, 2021. Mr. Holloman also noted that a poll will be sent out to the TAC members to indicate preference for the July 2021 TAC meeting/annual Transit Capital Projects Tour.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 pm.

Next Meeting

- The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July (TBD), 2021.