

BALTIMORE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD

October 16, 2020
Baltimore Metropolitan Council
9:24 to 10:28 A.M.

MINUTES

The 324th meeting was called to order at 9:24 A.M. by the Chair, Commissioner Stephen Wantz.

1. BRIEFING: MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Secretary Greg Slater expressed his appreciation at the opportunity to address the Board and respond to areas of concern to the members. Mr. Slater shared that traffic volumes are beginning to rebound from a sharp drop in the spring. He went on to share financial impacts to the Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) and MDOT MTA operating revenues which in turn has reduced bonding capacity.

The approach to the Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) this year was geared to addressing system preservation yet MDOT did include areas that plan for the future. Some of the big projects moving ahead include the Howard Street Tunnel, dredging of key channels, Light Rail vehicle overhaul and Metro preservation, as well as TOD at Martin MARC station.

Mr. Slater explained that decisions on the areawide projects were made based on asset management and optimization tools to give the best balance for each MDOT SHA District. This includes knowledge of historical percent of funding, committed stand-alone projects, and what is going on in the area. Mr. Slater mentioned progress with the triple bridges at I-70 and I-695 as well as the additional Bay Bridge span. It is still critical for MDOT to listen and collaborate with jurisdictions and the public.

Reduced funding for MDOT MTA versus WMATA was discussed and the perceived disparity between the regions. Mr. Slater also acknowledged negotiations to address the situation for the stalled P-3 supporting the Purple Line. In closing, Mr. Slater committed support from MDOT to the BRTB effort on Regional Transit Governance and Funding.

Administrator Kevin Quinn started with financial news. MDOT MTA has received \$392 Million in CARES funding which was spent by September 2020. Regarding state support to LOTS, MDOT MTA is currently reviewing the formula. Regarding SSTAP funding the formula is set in state code at 60% divided equally between the jurisdictions and the remaining 40% is based on the percent of elderly and disabled population in each jurisdiction. The distribution of

federal funds is based on a federal formula that includes: bus and rail revenue vehicle miles, bus passenger miles and fixed guideway route miles, population, and population density.

Mr. Quinn then switched to the Regional Transit Plan which is now complete and has transitioned to an Implementation phase. There is an Implementation Team that meets quarterly and MDOT MTA continues to consult their three advisory committees. Mr. Quinn described a series of work plans and a coming dashboard on metrics. Finally, there was a discussion of the new, voluntary Statewide Transit Plan a plan that is expected to be visionary and ambitious but also achievable. The purpose and approach is to create a 50-year vision of transit statewide and create a framework for coordinated transit service and customer experience. A survey link for this new effort was shared.

Following the presentations by the Secretary and Administrator, several BRTB members inquired about specific projects such as the Ma & Pa Trail, the Patuxent River Crossing Bridge, and the 150 Express Route.

[PowerPoint: MDOT MTA Updates]

2. PRESENTATION: FHWA/FTA CERTIFICATION REVIEW OF THE BALTIMORE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

FHWA Maryland Division Administrator, Greg Murrill provided an overview of the certification review for the Baltimore region. Mr. Murrill focused on the 6 noteworthy practices and 6 recommendations for improvement. The final report, issued July 13, 2016 stated, "...the transportation planning process carried out by the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board for the Transportation Management Area is certified as meeting the requirements..."

[PowerPoint: MDOT MTA Updates]

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITY

- Mr. Donald Fry, President of the Greater Baltimore Committee, thanked the BRTB for the opportunity to speak, noting that transportation and transportation funding has always been a hallmark issue for GBC. First, Mr. Fry thanked County Executive and Baltimore City Mayor Young and Council President Scott for quickly coming forward to speak out against inequitable transit cuts proposed by MDOT MTA. GBC appreciates these efforts to speak out against these cuts and stands behind those working to ensure equitable and fair funding for transit in the Baltimore region. Mr. Fry noted that although they were pleased that the proposed service cuts were cancelled by MDOT MTA, he noted that this is one of several troubling transportation funding issues that need to be addressed in the region.

Mr. Fry went on to ask for the BRTB's support in addressing other policy decisions. He began first by citing the CTP and asked why have \$150 million in cuts been made to MDOT MTA's budget, on top of last year's sharp cuts of \$303 million, while WMATA capital funding was held

completely harmless. He asked for the BRTB's support looking into this and advocate against MDOT MTA operating cuts.

Next, Mr. Fry asked about the cost overruns with the Purple Line. The question remains – how is the state going to pay for cost unanticipated cost overruns for the Purple Line? Administrator Quinn, in statements before the Montgomery County Council noted that \$1 billion in unanticipated costs will need to come from the MDOT MTA's existing budget. Mr. Fry noted that this is an extraordinary amount of money, even for a large project, and asked for more information about how these costs will affect transit in Baltimore and the rest of the state.

Finally, Mr. Fry noted GBC's work in advocating for strong federal support for transit and inquired about reports of CARES Act funds being used to backfill other holes in budgets outside of transit. He stated that having those funds directed to MDOT MTA might have avoided the proposed cuts. Mr. Fry asked the BRTB to support a call for a complete, transparent inventory of what funds were received and how they were utilized, noting that taxpayers deserve to know if the funds were used as intended. In closing, Mr. Fry said that GBC stands ready to work with the regions elected officials in addressing these and other important transportation issues.

- Mr. Brian O'Malley, Central Maryland Transportation Alliance, began by thanking County Executives Olszewski, Pittman, and Ball and Mayor Young and Baltimore City Council President Scott for their strong statements in September to speak out against MDOT MTA transit cuts, which would have been extremely harmful to many people. Many transit riders report fatigue in coping with COVID and impacts on employment, so the thought of fighting to save transit from harmful cuts was overwhelming to many. He thanked MDOT MTA leadership for listening carefully to comments and for the support of the regions leaders in getting proposed cuts cancelled.

Next, Mr. O'Malley shared that the region is not only facing \$150 million disinvestment in the transit system while at the same time that the MARC commuter rail and MTA's light rail and subway systems are breaking down more than any other systems in the country. He also noted that MTA buses are breaking down at a rate of 8th most in the nation. Mr. O'Malley said these are not ways in which the region should be standing out in the nation. He called for the leaders to address the backlog of transit repairs and maintenance needs so that the system can operate reliably and safely.

Third, Mr. O'Malley thanked the BRTB for their leadership in exploring financing on governance opportunities. He noted that CMTA, in collaboration with the Greater Washington Partnership hired Eno Transportation to conduct a similar study on the topic. Their report is due out November 10 and CMTA looks forward to sharing the study in the hopes that it informs the discussion about exploring alternatives for how the region governs and finances transit in the region.

Lastly, Mr. O'Malley thanked the officials for their leadership in developing the MTA Regional Transit Plan (RTP). He encouraged members to continue to reference the RTP and incorporate its recommendations into local priority letters and regional plans and programs.

4. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business. The meeting adjourned at 10:28 A.M.

Members

Gregory Becoat, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region III
Barry Glassman, Harford County Executive
Ben Grumbles, Secretary, Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)
Mike Kelly, Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC) Executive Director
Ryan Long, Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Region III
Robert McCord, Secretary, Maryland Department of Planning (MDP)
Jim Moran, Queen Anne's County Commissioner
Heather Murphy (for Greg Slater), Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)
Gregory Murrill, Administrator, FHWA MD Division
John Olszewski Jr., Baltimore County Executive
Steuart Pittman, Anne Arundel County Executive
Sam Sidh, (for Calvin Ball), Howard County
Kate Sylvester (for Kevin Quinn), Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT MTA)
Elly Tierney, (for Mayor Gavin Buckley), City of Annapolis
Bernard C. "Jack" Young, Baltimore City Mayor
Stephen Wantz, Carroll County Commissioner

Staff and Guests

Kwame Arhin, FHWA MD Division
Regina Aris, Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC)
Samantha Biddle, MDOT
Tony Bridges, Maryland House of Delegates
Cindy Burch, BMC
Tyson Byrne, MDOT
Jasmine Clemons, Baltimore County
Steve Cohoon, Queen Anne's County Department of Public Works
Angelica Daniel, Baltimore County Department of Public Works (DPW)
Tim Davis, WSP Corp.
Lindsay Donnellon, FHWA MD Division
Donald Fry, Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC)
Lynda Eisenberg, Carroll County Department of Planning
Nate Evans, MDOT
Bruce Gartner, Howard County Office of Transportation
Monica Haines-Benkhedda, BMC

Don Halligan, BMC
Erin Henson, MDOT
Dan Janousek, MDOT
Todd Lang, BMC
Abigail Lowe, FTA Region III
Raymond Moravec, Wallace Montgomery
Carolyn Mozell, Baltimore City, Neighborhood and Economic Development
Sally Nash, City of Annapolis, Department of Planning
Theo Ngongang, Baltimore City Department of Transportation (DOT)
Eric Norton, Central Maryland Transportation Alliance (CMTA)
Brian O'Malley, CMTA
Lisa Nissley, MDE
Samantha O'neil
Matthew Power, Anne Arundel County
Tim Pratt, MDOT
Alex Rawls, Harford County, Department of Planning
Kathy Renzi, BMC
Lawrence Richardson, Maryland Chamber of Commerce
Ramond Robinson, Anne Arundel County, Department of Planning & Zoning
Elisabeth Sachs, Baltimore County, Job Opportunities Task Force
Tom Sadowski, University System of Maryland, Economic Development
Ross Seidman, Maryland General Assembly, Special Assistant to the Senate President
Steve Sharkey, Baltimore City DOT
Brian Shepter, BMC
Rebecca Smith, BMC
Sara Tomlinson, BMC
Adrea Turner, GBC
D'Andrea Walker, Baltimore County DPW
Roberta Windham, Carroll County, County Administrator
Bihui Xu, MDP

Respectfully submitted,

Todd R. Lang, Secretary
Baltimore Regional Transportation Board