



MINUTES

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

February 11, 2021
Virtual ZOOM Meeting
Livestreamed at [YouTube.com/PRTCtransit](https://www.youtube.com/PRTCtransit)

Members Present

*Victor Angry
*Kenny Boddye
*Margaret Franklin, Chair
*Kalai Kandasamy
*Bennie Smith
*Yesli Vega
*Tinesha Allen
*Cindy Shelton, At-Large
*Pamela Sebesky, Secretary
*Jeanette Rishell, Vice Chair
*Matthew Kelly
*Deborah Frazier, Treasurer
*Gary Skinner (departed 8:47 pm)
*Elizabeth Guzman (departed 8:40 pm)
*George Barker

Members Absent

Andrea Bailey, At-Large
Jeanine Lawson
Jennifer Mitchell
Lee Carter

Alternates Present

Kim Short
Ralph Smith
Alanna Mensing
Darryl Moore
*Jennifer DeBruhl

Alternates Absent

Pete Candland
Maggie Hansford
Ann Wheeler
Meg Bohmke
Tom Coen
Preston Banks
Jason Graham
Tim McLaughlin
David Ross
Todd Horsley
Steve Pittard

Jurisdiction

Prince William County
Prince William County
Prince William County
Prince William County
Prince William County
Prince William County
Stafford County
Stafford County
City of Manassas
City of Manassas Park
City of Fredericksburg
Spotsylvania County
Spotsylvania County
Virginia House of Delegates
Virginia Senate

Prince William County
Prince William County
Department of Rail and Public Transportation
Virginia House of Delegates

Prince William County
City of Manassas
City of Manassas Park
City of Manassas Park
Department of Rail and Public Transportation

Prince William County
Prince William County
Prince William County
Stafford County
Stafford County
City of Manassas Park
City of Fredericksburg
Spotsylvania County
Spotsylvania County
Department of Rail and Public Transportation
Department of Rail and Public Transportation

*Voting Member

Arrivals/departures following the commencement of the PRTC Commission Board Meeting are notated with the approximate arrival/departure time.

Staff and Public on ZOOM

Dr. Robert A. Schneider, PhD – PRTC
Doris Lookabill – PRTC
Carl Roeser - PRTC
Becky Merriner – PRTC
Christine Rodrigo – PRTC
Betsy Massie – PRTC
Perrin Palistrant – PRTC
Joyce Embrey – PRTC
Joe Stainsby – PRTC

Bhupendra Kantha – PRTC
Barbara Murdock – Keolis
Mike Ake – Keolis
Rich Dalton – VRE
Christine Hoeffner – VRE
Mark Schofield – VRE
Steve MacIsaac - VRE
Ben Owen – NVTC
Sharon Pandak – Greehan, Taves & Pandak

Chair Franklin called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. noting due to the COVID-19 pandemic and pursuant to PRTC Commission Resolution No. 20-05-01 dated May 7, 2020, this meeting of the PRTC Board of Commissioners is being conducted virtually via Zoom. Public access for this meeting is being provided via livestreaming on PRTC's YouTube channel. The public was given notice on PRTC's website, Facebook, at the Transit Center, and in InsideNova and the Free Lance-Star. The Chair then read an announcement detailing procedures for the electronic meeting. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance followed.

Approval of Agenda – 4 [RES 21-02-01]

Commissioner Angry moved to approve the agenda with a second by Commissioner Vega. There was no discussion on the motion. (ANGRY/VEGA; UNANIMOUS)

Approval of Minutes of January 14, 2021 – 5 [RES 21-02-02]

Commissioner Angry moved with a second by Commissioner Vega. There was no discussion on the motion. (ANGRY/VEGA; RISHELL ABSTAINED; UNANIMOUS)

Virginia Railway Express Chief Executive Officer's Time – 6

Mr. Dalton updated the Board on the following items:

- VRE continues to operate at a reduced service level
- VRE continues to manage and enhance the health and safety measures implemented system wide in 2020. There has been a mandatory requirement for all riders to wear face coverings on VRE trains and at VRE stations since May 2020 so VRE is in full compliance with the February 1, 2021 federal mandate requiring face coverings on public transportation.
- January average daily ridership was about 1,000
- VRE did not operate service on the New Year's Day and Martin Luther King Jr. holidays. There also was no service on January 19-20 due to heightened security associated with the presidential inauguration.
- January on time performance was 92 percent system wide due to weather delays and system congestion due to freight and Amtrak trains.
- Most staff continue to work remotely, and all business functions are fully operational

Commissioner Kelly thanked Mr. Dalton for providing information on CSX tanker cars in Fredericksburg.

Authorize Closed Meeting of the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission 6.2 [RES 21-02-03]

PRTC Attorney Sharon Pandak stated that the PRTC Board will go into a closed meeting to discuss the potential acquisition of real property pursuant to VA Code § 2.2-3711.A.(3). Commissioner Rishell moved with a second by Commissioner Angry. There was no discussion on the motion. (RISHELL/ANGRY, UNANIMOUS). The closed meeting began at 7:15 p.m.

Certify Closed Meeting – 6.3 [RES 21-02-04]

At 7:46 p.m., Chair Franklin asked for a motion certifying that the PRTC Board only discussed those matters that are legally allowed during the closed session, pursuant to VA Code § 2.2-3712. Commissioner Rishell moved with a second by Commissioner Boddy. There was no discussion on the motion. (RISHELL/BODDY, UNANIMOUS)

AUTHORIZE A BONA FIDE OFFER TO PURCHASE THE LAND AND IMPROVEMENTS LOCATED IN PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY AT 10305 PIPER LANE (AKA 10307 – 10367 PIPER LANE), 10405 PIPER LANE AND 10236

RESIDENCY ROAD, MANASSAS, VIRGINIA 20110, AND IN THE CITY OF MANASSAS AT 10599 RESIDENCY ROAD, MANASSAS, VIRGINIA 20110, GPINS 7594-99-5687, 7594-99-5235, AND 7695-00-2208 IN PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY, AND 092/01 00/60C IN THE CITY OF MANASSAS, CONSISTING OF 712,135 SQUARE FEET, MORE OR LESS, PURSUANT TO SECTION 25.1-204 OF THE CODE OF VIRGINIA

- [RES 21-02-05]

Ms. Pandak read a summary of the resolution and said the property is owned by Contractor Storage LLC. Commissioner Boddye moved with a second by Commissioner Angry. There was no discussion on the motion. (BODDYE/ANGRY; UNANIMOUS)

Public Comment Time - 7

No comments were submitted for this meeting.

Consent Agenda - 8 [RES 21-02-06]

Commissioner Barker moved with a second by Commissioner Rishell. There was no discussion on the motion. (BARKER/RISHELL; DEBRUHL ABSTAINED; UNANIMOUS)

- Acceptance of the PRTC Monthly Jurisdictional Financial Report for the Period Ended November 30, 2020 - [RES 21-02-07]
- Authorization to Submit FTA's FFY2021 Annual Certifications and Assurances - [RES 21-02-08]
- Authorization to Submit FY22 State Grant Applications - [RES 21-02-09]
- Authorization to Extend PRTC's Contract with Smartmaps Inc. for the Design and Production of Bus Schedules and Bus Stop Information Displays - [RES 21-02-10]

PRTC Executive Director's Time - 9

Dr. Schneider updated the Board on the following items:

- On February 8, 2012 a report from Keolis was emailed to all Commissioners regarding a review of operator schedules, as requested.
- PRTC's enabling statute requires fidelity bonds, which are layered on top of our Officer's and Director's insurance. PRTC provides the funding for the bonds and also maintains the records for compliance. Newer Commissioners and Alternates will be asked to sign the bonds electronically through DocuSign. Staff will contact those Commissioners and Alternates directly.

Federal

- The House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure's Budget Reconciliation includes an additional \$30 billion of COVID-19 emergency funding for public transit. This would help prevent massive labor cuts and drastic service reductions until we see growth in ridership, fare revenue, and stability in state and local tax revenue. There is no certainty for passage of this amount nor the specific amount PRTC would receive; however, considering the ongoing impact on the commuter rail and bus services, we are hopeful we have an opportunity to continue to manage resources through the recovery.
- The Executive Order mandating masks on transit with enforcement and possible civil penalties is less about our region or even our service, but instead provides teeth to transit systems in localities where the state or local government is less focused on mask-wearing as prevention.
- We're in a holding pattern on vaccines, especially for front-line employees, but OmniRide has created a webpage for PRTC and Keolis employees as well as our contracted security and cleaning companies for the fleet and facilities to stay informed about the latest guidelines, resources and vaccination schedules. Everyone has the option to choose to be notified of vaccine availability by personal or work email or phone. This also assists Keolis in communications because they have many more employees. It's a one-stop-shop to help employees as we navigate to the next phase of recovery.
- On February 19, I will join other transit leaders in a meeting with Senator Warner to discuss the impacts of COVID-19 on our organizations. We will focus on the near term impacts for drivers, passengers and organizations, and the long-term effects commuter services. As an organization that has built itself around key issues of throughput, fare recovery, and operational efficiency with a low capital overhead, PRTC has been doubly-impacted by the pandemic because most of the aid

was tied to how much capital money the agency received but didn't really directly offset fare recovery.

State

Crossover between the House & Senate occurred last Friday, and we are watching a few key items. Several amendments were approved by the Transportation sub-committees of the House Appropriations Committee and the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee. We will track these as they move to Conference Committee later in the session. A few key items are:

- Funding included for DRPT to conduct a Transit Equity and Modernization Study. The amendment is now at the Senate Rules Committee and we expect that to find funding resources, and a link to the information will be included in the meeting summary you'll receive on February 12. <https://budget.lis.virginia.gov/amendment/2021/2/HB1800/Introduced/CA/442/2h/>
- The Senate approved amendments containing \$5 million in FY21 from federal funding to support transit incentives focused on fare and congestion reduction programs, which is where we focus, especially on I-66 and I-95. The link to the information will be included in the meeting summary you'll receive on February 12. We continue to thank Senator Barker for his aggressive support of those issues as they directly relate not just to us as an organization, but to the region as an economy and as individuals who make up our footprint as citizens. <https://budget.lis.virginia.gov/amendment/2021/2/SB1100/Introduced/CA/442/3s/>
- A language-only amendment in the Senate budget would waive the 25 percent cap on the Transit Ridership Incentive Program to allow for more funding for transit equity to support the reduction or elimination of fares due to the pandemic. <https://budget.lis.virginia.gov/amendment/2021/2/HB1800/Introduced/CA/442/1h/>

Other

- I will join a group of transit CEOs within the Virginia Transit Association umbrella to review equity within our organizations in terms of services, planning process, and community outreach. This isn't an internal scrub of agencies, but rather will look at the challenges we face in creating equity, especially in services. One example is our commuter services that have a higher rate of return on investment; we tend to invest more money there because it costs less over time, but local services that have lower ridership may not receive the same attention even though the need for trips is sometimes the same if not more. I will join with transit leaders from Richmond, Hampton Roads, and elsewhere in Virginia to help bridge the gap in our values vs. what gets funded and ultimately delivered. It's an exciting endeavor and I'm proud to be asked.
- OmniRide is a finalist for the Prince William Chamber of Commerce Award for Outstanding Business. Our emphasis on response, resiliency, and adjustments has help lead the way in the community and it's an honor to get this far. The announcement will be made on February 25. It's exciting to be recognized, but it truly is a case of an entire organization pulling the same direction that makes the difference.
- OmniRide's safety performance was stellar during our most recent storm; the entire team did a great job from Operations, Safety, Communications, and beyond.

Keolis Update

Keolis General Manager Barbara Murdock updated the Board on the following items.

- Board members should expect to receive an invitation next week to Keolis' first Town Hall meeting, which is scheduled for Sunday, February 21 at 2 p.m. The virtual informational meeting will have speakers including the PRTC Chair, PRTC Executive Director, Keolis management and Union representatives. All employees will be invited, and Keolis will solicit questions before the meeting, so anyone with a topic to add to the agenda should contact Ms. Murdock or Dr. Schneider. Hopefully all Board members will be able to attend.
- The Operations team is preparing for and monitoring the winter weather to ensure the buses are ready, lots are sanded, and safety measures are implemented for employees and riders.
- The PRTC mask-wearing protocol is being implemented. All customers are required to wear a mask, and those who aren't wearing one will be offered a mask and the policy will be explained by the driver. A refusal will prompt notification to Dispatch and Supervisors, and finally to police.

- Staff is working on the three month relocation plan for the Western Facility and also working on spring and summer run cuts and bids.

Dr. Schneider wrapped up his report by noting that tonight's materials include an industry article, *Washington Area Employers Expect Majority of Workers Back in Offices by Fall*. The article, about a survey conducted by the Greater Washington Partnership, ties into our budget discussion for projected ridership and revenue and has helped inform us about what to expect. The two-phase survey gives an indicator of large business' response of when they expect employees to return to work. It addresses not only timeframe, but also timeframe percent of workforce, by size of employer, and approximate amount of time in the office. This has generated a lot of data and good discussion.

Supervisor Vega thanked Dr. Schneider for his presentation to the Prince William Board of County Supervisors on February 9, 2021. She requested that the Commissioners receive information about the average ridership per route and how long it would take to gather that information. Dr. Schneider said the information would be sent to the Commissioners either in the meeting summary or separately next week. Staff has the ridership by route but the information that will be shared with Commissioners will also put it in context.

Chair Franklin said there was a question at the January meeting about how the runs are picked. An email was sent to all the Commissioners last week with information and she asked if there were any comments about that. Ms. Murdock said the information was submitted to Dr. Schneider and then shared with the Board members. Chair Franklin asked if Keolis had reached out to the individuals to go over how the run cuts came about. Ms. Murdock said Keolis spoke with them in December. Chair Franklin noted that Commissioner Skinner had asked questions at the January meeting and said the information could be reviewed if necessary.

Presentations and Information Items – 10

- Ben Owen, Commuter Choice Senior Program Manager at Northern Virginia Transportation Commission, presented an update on the I-395/95 Commuter Choice Program Round Two.
- Joyce Embrey, OmniRide Director of Finance & Administration, presented PRTC's proposed FY22 budget.

Commissioner Skinner asked about projections for Spotsylvania's fuel tax revenues. Ms. Embrey said Spotsylvania's fuel tax revenue was estimated at \$4,570,700 in the revised FY21 budget, but that projection was revised again during the FY22 budget process. PRTC now estimates Spotsylvania County will have fuel tax revenues of \$5,477,700 in FY21, an increase of \$907,000.

Dr. Schneider said the state initially expected fuel tax revenues to fall by 30 percent to 40 percent due to the pandemic, but that didn't happen so the projections have been updated.

In response to a question from Chair Franklin, Dr. Schneider said the budget does not include the use of reserve funds. The key is that OmniRide reduced overall service to minimize the jurisdictions' expenses and preserve as much of the fund balances as possible.

Commissioner Guzman departed at approximately 8:40 pm.

Commissioner Frazier had internet connection problems and left at approximately 8:40 pm.

PRTC Action Items – 11

Authorization to Refer PRTC's Proposed FY2022 Budget to Member Jurisdictions for Consideration and Hold Public Hearings on the Proposed FY2022 Budget and Federal Grant Applications - 11.1 - [RES 21-02-11]

Commissioner Skinner moved with a second by Commissioner Shelton. There was no discussion on the motion. (SKINNER/SHELTON; UNANIMOUS)

Commissioner Frazier returned at approximately 8:43 pm.

Dr. Schneider gave brief overviews of Action Items 11.2, 11.3, and 11.4. Chair Franklin then asked for a motion to consider all three items in a single vote.

Approve Action Items 11.2, 11.3, and 11.4 [RES 21-02-12]

Commissioner Angry moved with a second by Commissioner Rishell. There was no discussion on the motion. (ANGRY/RISHELL; UNANIMOUS)

- **Authorize the Executive Director to Issue an Invitation for Bids for Maintenance and Repair of PRTC Owned Bus Stops and Shelters [Res 21-02-13]**
- **Authorize the Executive Director to Issue an Invitation for Bids for Trash Removal Services at PRTC Maintained Bus Stops and Shelters [Res 21-02-14]**
- **Resolution to Ratify Action of the Executive Director to Provide Letters of Support for Proposed Regional Transportation Projects [Res 21-02-15]**

Chair's Time - 12

Delegating Administrative Powers and Duties to the Executive Director 12.1 – [RES 21-02-16]

Chair Franklin said the powers and duties that would be delegated to the Executive Director include things like submitting applications for external funding, executing deeds of easement for utilities, issuing IFBs and RFPs, and issuing letters of support for projects beneficial to the region's transportation infrastructure. All these activities are to be reported to the Commission. Delegating these powers will not give the Executive Director any powers that the Commission has in terms of voting on the items.

Commissioner Skinner departed at 8:47 p.m.

Dr. Schneider said 10 separate items brought before the Board over the past six months were retroactive approvals or had been delayed while waiting to receive Commission approval. All items that are handled under this delegated power will be listed out as Information Items on the monthly agenda. This will keep all the powers of the Board intact while allowing staff to move forward with items, and the Executive Director will be held accountable for those actions.

Commissioner Shelton moved with a second by Commissioner Angry. There was no discussion on the motion. (SHELTON/ANGRY; UNANIMOUS)

Chair Franklin noted that the Commission will return to its regular schedule of meeting on the first Thursday of the month starting in March.

Commissioners' Time - 13

Commissioner Boddye said he likes the direction that the proposed FY22 budget is going and the fact that we're trying to restore some of the things we couldn't last year due to COVID-19.

Commissioner Barker said 2½ weeks remain in the legislative session. The House and Senate budgets were just released. Some transportation initiatives are on the table. We're seeing good signs for restoration of ridership on some transit systems. We're also seeing tremendous benefit on passenger rail services. The Senate budget has \$250 million to increase rail service from Washington to Roanoke and extend it to Christiansburg. The operating costs between Washington and Roanoke are fully covered by fares, which is a good sign and better than in most places in the country.

Adjournment – 14

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Franklin entertained a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Vega moved, with a second by Commissioner Boddye. There was no discussion. (VEGA/BODDYE; UNANIMOUS)

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.