



# MINUTES

## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

October 1, 2020  
Virtual ZOOM Meeting  
Livestreamed at [YouTube.com/PRTCtransit](https://www.youtube.com/PRTCtransit)

### Members Present

\*Andrea Bailey, At-Large  
\*Kenny Boddye (arrived 7:07 p.m.)  
\*Margaret Franklin, Chair  
\*Jeanine Lawson  
\*Yesli Vega (departed 8:40 p.m.)  
\*Cindy Shelton, Secretary  
\*Pamela Sebesky, Vice Chair  
\*Jeanette Rishell, At-Large  
\*Matthew Kelly (arrived 7:23 p.m.)  
\*Deborah Frazier, Treasurer  
\*Gary Skinner  
\*Elizabeth Guzman (departed 8:40 p.m.)

### Members Absent

Victor Angry  
Tinesha Allen  
Jennifer Mitchell  
Lee Carter  
George Barker

### Alternates Present

\*Ann Wheeler  
\*Bennie Smith  
\*Todd Horsley

### Alternates Absent

Pete Candland  
Maggie Hansford  
Meg Bohmke  
Gary Snellings  
Ralph Smith  
Preston Banks  
Hector Cendejas  
Donald Shuemaker  
Jason Graham  
Tim McLaughlin  
David Ross  
Jennifer DeBruhl  
Steve Pittard

### Jurisdiction

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

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

Prince William County  
Prince William County  
Department of Rail and Public Transportation

Prince William County  
Prince William County  
Stafford County  
Stafford County  
City of Manassas  
City of Manassas Park  
City of Manassas Park  
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  
Cynthia Porter-Johnson – PRTC  
Kenny Tuitt – PRTC  
Russ Tieskoetter – First Transit

Theresa Garber – First Transit  
Mike Ake – Keolis  
Barbara Murdock – Keolis  
Rich Dalton – VRE  
Steve MacIsaac – VRE  
Ben Owen – NVT  
Sharon Pandak – Greehan, Taves & Pandak

Chair Franklin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. noting due to the COVID-19 pandemic and pursuant to PRTC Commission Resolution No. 20-05-01, 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, Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call followed.

### **Approval of Agenda – 4 [RES 20-10-01]**

Commissioner Skinner moved with a second by Commissioner Sebesky. There was no discussion on the motion. (SKINNER/SEBESKY, UNANIMOUS)

Commissioner Boddye arrived at 7:07 p.m. making Commissioner Bennie Smith a non-voting alternate.

### **Approval of Minutes of September 3, 2020– 5 [RES 20-10-02]**

Commissioner Rishell moved with a second by Commissioner Bailey. There was no discussion on the motion. (RISHELL/BAILEY; LAWSON AND WHEELER ABSTAINED; UNANIMOUS)

### **Virginia Railway Express Acting Chief Executive Officer's Time – 6**

- VRE has developed health and safety measures to welcome returning riders. Those measures are being enhanced and monitored for best practices. Daily messaging is pushed out to riders to highlight the measures being taken. Passengers are required to wear face coverings on trains and at stations, and there's near 100 percent daily compliance.
- During the week of September 21, VRE participated in a nationwide effort to promote rail safety. VRE shared safety measures and used temporary message boards at several crossings along both rail lines.
- VRE continues to operate on a reduced level. In September ridership steadily increased to over 1,300 average daily riders.
- September on-time performance was 95.5 percent system wide.
- VRE staff continues to work remotely.
- Mr. Dalton thanked staff, train crews and others for planning and executing the additional health and safety measures.
- He thanked VRE's loyal riders and looks forward to having them back on trains soon.

Chair Franklin experienced computer problems starting at about 7:12 p.m. As a result, she temporarily left the meeting at 7:15 p.m. Vice Chair Sebesky ran the meeting during the Chair's absence.

Vice Chair Sebesky asked Mr. Dalton if there is a timeline to run trains on the regular schedule as ridership increases. Mr. Dalton said there is nothing definitive because VRE wants to take a measured approach and needs to provide for social distancing which minimizes the number of passengers per train car. As ridership increases, the plan is to add round-trip trains one-at-a-time. A round-trip train was added over the summer on the Fredericksburg line, but nothing has been added yet on the Manassas line.

Chair Franklin rejoined the meeting at 7:19 p.m. and resumed running the meeting.

Mr. Dalton gave background on VRE's preliminary FY2022 Operating and Capital Budget. The Operating budget is \$91.9 million, including operations, maintenance and existing debt service. As a comparison, the current FY2021 operating budget is \$91.4 million. The preliminary operating budget includes no changes to passenger fares and no increase to jurisdictional subsidy. Staff has proposed the jurisdictional subsidy

allocation be the same as the current FY2021 budget year. In lieu of master agreement survey the allocation would remain the same. Not including any available emergency funding, the preliminary operating budget has a net unfunded amount of \$25.7 million. VRE's CARES Act funding will be available to backfill lost fare revenue and ensure no additional jurisdictional contribution is required. The proposed FY2022 Capital budget includes commitments of \$101.8 million from federal, state, regional and local funding sources toward the Capital Improvement Program, which has undergone substantial revisions due to the Transforming Rail in Virginia program. A final FY2022 budget will be submitted in December for the VRE Operations Board's consideration.

Commissioner Kelly arrived at 7:23 p.m.

- **Authorize the Referral of the Preliminary FY2022 VRE Operating and Capital Budget to the Jurisdictions – 6.2 [RES 20-10-03]** Commissioner Skinner moved with a second by Commissioner Bailey. There was no discussion on the motion. (SKINNER/BAILEY, UNANIMOUS)

#### **Public Comment Time – 7**

No comments were received for this meeting.

#### **Consent Agenda – 8 [RES 20-10-04]**

Commissioner Sebesky moved with a second by Commissioner Boddye. There was no discussion on the motion. (SEBESKY/BODDYE, UNANIMOUS)

- **Acceptance of the PRTC Monthly Jurisdictional Financial Report for the Period Ended June 30, 2020 [RES 20-10-05]**

#### **Presentations and Information – 9**

Ben Owen, NVTC's Commuter Choice Senior Program Manager, presented the Commuter Choice Program Annual Report. Chair Franklin asked if the projects will be impacted by COVID-19. Mr. Owen said data is usually collected in March and April, so this is a pre-COVID snapshot.

- **Authorize NVTC's Executive Director to Submit the Commuter Choice Program FY2020 Annual Report to the CTB.** Commissioner Sebesky moved with a second by Commissioner Boddye. Commissioner Lawson asked for a copy of the presentation. (SEBESKY/BODDYE, UNANIMOUS). (NOTE: This item required only a motion and vote, not a resolution.)

#### **PRTC Executive Director's Time – 10**

Dr. Schneider updated the Board on the following items:

##### **Mentoring Program Graduation**

Dr. Schneider introduced the Mentoring Program to help staff members connect in a different way. The most recent class, M3, is graduating tonight. Program Coach Cynthia Porter-Johnson said she's witnessed the benefits of the program, the impact it's had on employee relationships and OmniRide's relationship with the community. The program's goal is to develop a team of positive leaders within a culture of mutual support and respect. In the past three years, 36 OmniRide staff members and six First Transit staff members have completed the program. Each year the mentees do a team project that must focus on making OmniRide a better place to work or our community a better place to live. This year's team project involved collecting items including masks, sanitizer and toiletry kits for the area's homeless population.

Mentor Kenny Tuitt thanked Dr. Schneider for starting the program and thanked Ms. Porter-Johnson and the other Program Coach, Holly Morello, for their guidance. The best part of the program is the opportunity to share, learn and grow, he said. Mentee Theresa Garber said she learned a lot about members of the M3 group and appreciated the opportunity to build a relationship with her mentor, Mr. Tuitt. She also said Ms. Morello and Ms. Porter-Johnson are wonderful coaches.

Chair Franklin said she appreciates the Mentorship Program as a tool for changing the culture and moving forward.

Dr. Schneider congratulated the M3mentees: LaTricia Benson, Theresa Garber, Tracey Jurek and Charles Kent; and the mentors: Doris Lookabill, Joy Himes, Kenny Tuitt, Michael Williams, and Tracie Brodie.

### **Ridership Follow-Up**

Dr. Schneider said that Commissioner Rishell last month asked when ridership would resume normal levels and restart the pilot phase of assessing the impact of service changes made in December 2019. The current estimate is April 2021.

### **Virginia Passenger Rail Authority**

Virginia's Governor has appointed nine members to the Authority, and three appointees are from the Prince William area: Paul F. Nichols, Cynthia Moses-Nedd, and Rod Hall.

### **Legislative Update**

- There's a Continuing Resolution through December 2020 assuring no government shutdown before then.
- Any additional CARES funding seems to be stuck until post-election. OmniRide is not unique in hoping for federal assistance; WMATA is facing \$212 million budget gap with about 1,700 affected employees. OmniRide is doing its fiscal due diligence and will close out its audit soon so concrete financial numbers will be available. OmniRide is active with APTA which is before Congress frequently. This isn't just a regional mass transit issue but is a problem nationwide.

### **COVID-19 Update**

We continue to work on mitigating the spread of the virus by looking at what our peers are doing and following guidelines from the CDC and the Prince William Health Department. We are in the process of implementing temperature checks.

### **TSA Award**

The ceremony for winning the TSA BASE Gold Standard Award was held last week. Dr. Schneider gave special thanks to all the Commissioners who attended, and thanked Commissioner Angry specifically for presenting OmniRide with a commendation during the ceremony.

### **Western Facility Update**

We've received the occupancy permit, which doesn't mean we can move in but is the sign that the facility is being handed over from the construction company to OmniRide. The original plan was to operate service from the new facility starting in February 2021 but that's now planned for April 2021.

### **November 2020 Service Change**

Three routes with very low ridership will be temporarily suspended as of November 2. The three routes are: Dale City – Mark Center; Lake Ridge – Mark Center; and Woodbridge – Tysons Corner. The suspension is at least through the end of the year because ridership is in single digits per day. Passengers will be informed about alternatives on OmniRide and in vanpools.

### **September Work Stoppage and Transition from First Transit to Keolis**

On September 10, there was an unexpected work stoppage by some First Transit staff. Key PRTC staff stepped forward to handle dispatch functions, and buses ran on the Emergency Service Plan. First Transit corporate staff arrived that night to address issue. Buses ran on the ESP the following day as well. Dr. Schneider invited representatives from First Transit and Keolis to address the Board.

Russ Tieskoetter, First Transit Regional Vice President

- Apologized to passengers and the Board for the work stoppage, which was not tied to a single issue and was not supported by national union representatives.
- Hopes that some of the employees' actions can be resolved as Keolis takes over.
- Met on September 11 with union representatives, got a list of their concerns and worked to clear up any misunderstandings. One concern that stood out was the payout of leave. First Transit will follow all state and federal guidelines and its CBA with the union.
- Told union members they should contact him directly with any concerns.

- Said First Transit is working closely with Keolis on the transition.
- Thanked all the employees, the Board, staff and public.

Mike Ake, Keolis Regional Vice President:

- Said the transition is going well.
- Introduced Barbara Murdock as new General Manager and gave a quick overview of other members of the new management team, adding that they are representative of the workforce they will lead and the community they will serve.
- Goal is seamless and painless transition for passengers and staff.
- Complimented First Transit for being professional and accommodating during the transition.
- Said Keolis will inherit the majority of First Transit's staff and frontline employees.
- Thanked First Transit for leaving a fleet in very good shape, a highly trained workforce and inventory, supplies and equipment that will be purchased by Keolis.
- Said Keolis believes employee engagement and culture change are critical to its success. As a result Keolis staff have been onsite from day one to communicate with employees.
- On the initial day of operation, Keolis will have its entire senior executive team including the CEO on site with the local Keolis team to welcome the first bus out of the parking lot. He invited all Commissioners to join in and warned that it will be an early day. Keolis also tries to have luncheon and dinner events on the first day of operations.

Barbara Murdock, Keolis General Manager, gave these details about the transition:

- She has been on site for three weeks.
- 72 percent of the transition plan is complete.
- She has met with local union representatives.
- Keolis has signed offer letters for 167 operators – that's a full complement of drivers needed to start work on day one.
- 22 maintenance staff and 20 other staff members have received signed offer letters.
- About 100 employees have gone through HR onboarding.
- The first training class is scheduled for the weekend of October 3 at the Western Facility.
- All the local management team is on board except for the IT manager. Recruitment for that position is underway.
- This exceptional team of managers will allow Ms. Murdock to focus on employee engagement with the goal of building trust and establishing open and honest communication especially with frontline employees.
- She applauded OmniRide's Mentorship Program and committed Keolis to being part of future classes.
- Keolis is now finalizing training, doing background checks, performing drug testing, and transitioning from a start-up plan to a readiness plan. Next will be the Operational Transformation Plan, a 90-day program to introduce staff to the Keolis way of operating.
- She thanked PRTC leadership for their assistance with the start-up and thanked the frontline operators, mechanics and staff for welcoming Keolis.

Commissioner Bailey said she is encouraged by the positivity in this meeting and the level of professionalism and expertise during the transition. It's a step in the right direction and everyone who gave a report tonight is appreciated.

Chair Franklin thanked First Transit and Keolis for working together on the transition. These are challenging times economically and for our local transportation system. Keolis has the Board's full support, and she thanked First Transit for its commitment to Prince William County for all these years.

#### **PRTC Action Items – 11**

##### **Endorse PRTC's Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan 11.1 [RES 20-10-06]**

Dr. Schneider said the Federal Transit Administration requires the local governing board to adopt a safety plan. PRTC's plan was created in coordination with the Safety Management System. Commissioner Boddie moved, with a second by Commissioner Bailey. There was no discussion on the motion. (BODDYE/BAILEY, UNANIMOUS)

**Authorize Closed Meeting of the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission 11.2 [RES 20-10-07]**

Chair Franklin stated that the PRTC Board wants to go into a closed meeting to discuss a personnel matter regarding the PRTC Executive Director's performance evaluation and incentives, pursuant to VA Code § 2.2-3711.A.1. Commissioner Bailey moved with a second by Commissioner Rishell. There was no discussion on the motion. (BAILEY/RISHELL, UNANIMOUS). Chair Franklin said the Commissioners will go into a closed meeting and then will bring Dr. Schneider into the closed meeting. The closed meeting began at 8:15 p.m.

Commissioner Vega and Commissioner Guzman departed at 8:40 p.m. Commissioner Bennie Smith became a voting member for Prince William County.

**Certify Closed Meeting – 11.3 [RES 20-10-08]**

At 8:40 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 Boddye moved with a second by Commissioner Kelly. There was no discussion on the motion. (BODDYE/KELLY, UNANIMOUS)

**Chair's Time - 12**

Chair Franklin thanked PRTC staff for their work in winning the TSA BASE Gold Standard Award.

**Approval of the PRTC Executive Director's Incentive Measures for FY2021 – 11.4 [RES 20-10-09]**

Ms. Pandak said it's appropriate for the Board to consider the item that was discussed during the closed meeting. Commissioner Lawson moved with a second by Commissioner Bailey. There was no discussion on the motion. (LAWSON/BAILEY, UNANIMOUS)

**Commissioners' Time - 13**

Commissioner Frazier thanked Chair Franklin for running an efficient meeting.

Commissioner Horsley said DRPT has initiated the Springfield to Quantico Enhanced Public Transportation Feasibility Study which was directed by the General Assembly in the 2020 general session. A study report is to be complete by December 2021. DRPT has reached out to PRTC and Prince William County to appoint members to the Technical Committee. The Commission can expect updates several times during the year.

**Adjournment – 14**

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:48 p.m.