

## Thomas Jefferson Regional Transit Partnership

October 22, 2020

4:00 p.m.

Via Zoom Conference Call

(Video of full meeting can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=seJc0j7PiSg>)

### **Committee – Voting Members**

Diantha McKeel, *Albemarle Co - Chair*  
Lloyd Snook, *City of Charlottesville*  
Lucas Ames, *JAUNT Urban- Vice Chair*  
Randy Parker, *JAUNT Rural (Louisa)*  
Bea LaPisto-Kirtly, *Albemarle County*  
Nikuyah Walker, *City of Charlottesville*  
Neil Sherman, *DRPT (entered meeting at 5:00)*  
Becca White, *UTS*

### **Non-Voting & Alternates**

Karen Davis, *JAUNT*  
Brad Sheffield, *JAUNT*  
Garland Williams, *CAT*  
Juwhan Lee, *CAT*  
Trevor Henry, *Albemarle County*  
Kim McManus, *PVCC (absent)*  
Jim Foley, *ACPC*  
Alison DeTuncq, *CTB (absent)*  
Chris Rowland, *JAUNT (absent)*  
Sally LeBeau, *UVA Hospital*

### **Staff & Other**

Chip Boyles, *TJPDC*  
Sara Pennington, *Rideshare/TJPDC*  
Jessica Hersh-Ballering, *TJPDC*  
Gretchen Thomas, *TJPDC*  
Jody Saunders, *JAUNT*  
Stephen Johnson, *JAUNT*  
Kevin McDermott, *Albemarle County*  
Andy Bowman, *Albemarle County*  
Sean Tubbs  
Allison Wrabel

### **Call to Order**

Ms. McKeel called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

Ms. McKeel read the legal statement allowing the meeting to be held virtually/electronically due to circumstances beyond the RTP's control. She also described the guidelines by which the meeting would proceed.

### **Matters from the Public**

None

### **Minutes from August 27, 2020**

Ms. Lapisto-Kirtly made a motion to approve the minutes from the August 27 meeting. Mr. Parker seconded and the minutes were approved with Lloyd Snook abstaining.

### **Review of Strategic Plan**

Mr. Boyles reviewed details of the strategic plan on the website with notes from John Martin.

The immediate action items include:

- A need to reschedule one regional system peer visit with the RTP
- Begin formulating a vision statement
- Develop and adopt a Regional Transit Vision statement, values and goals for FY21.

Mr. Boyles noted that funding for RTP will be reconsidered in November or December.

### **Short-Term Goal Setting**

Mr. Foley identified some immediate needs and asked if any of the other transit agencies were putting in HEPA filters on the busses. He reported that one of his suppliers has access to a stand-alone air filter and can install them, but he thinks they may be too expensive and noisy.

Ms. White said UTS didn't even evaluate HEPA filters because their trip durations are so short. She was thinking about asymptomatic testing opportunities for the frontline, providing hazard pay, and vaccine deployment, when it becomes available, for drivers because she considers them to be frontline workers. UTS has mandatory mask wearing, rear loading and only 20 people on the bus at a time.

Mr. Williams said CAT has upgraded their filters and are looking at putting in a UV light filtration system. Busses also has see-through curtains (soon to be replaced) and only rear-loading. Each driver carries Lysol with him or her and every hour and/or at the end of the line, they spray the air.

Mr. Sheffield reported that JAUNT cannot permanently install plexiglass because the drivers' need to assist some of the passengers in case of emergency. They are considering face shields for the drivers in addition to masks and are building more time in between passengers to clean the vehicles.

Mr. Williams said he has been in touch with both Ms. White and Mr. Sheffield re: procedures and supplies.

### **Lessons Learned**

Mr. Sheffield said that the unified communication is going well. There is a need to reassess investment on the communication side. There is also a need for different space planning in the future.

Mr. Williams said the current situation made them reassess how many staff members they have. They do not have enough. He also noted that they are short on mechanics.

Ms. White said all of the transit providers are all using the same resources to employ best practices for the safety of the drivers and the passengers. She noted that there will probably be a commitment to telework and telemedicine. Contactless or web-based transactions or customer service will also remain or rise in popularity.

Ms. White also said that UVA has posted the alterations to the academic calendar through May of 2021 and starting to put out budget guidance for FY22. She also reported that academic boarding is down 76% and parking lot boarding/shuttle is down 22%.

Mr. Boyles said CAT's "fare free" is not free. Someone has to pay for it. There are many benefits to being fare free, including getting rid of the accounting and finance labor costs. He noted that there are other systems that are talking about doing this.

Mr. Sherman noted that DRPT is changing the verbiage to "zero fare", not "free fare". He also noted that some systems will be staying zero fare systems. He said there will be a request for information on this subject that is outside of the grant cycle, perhaps sometime in November or December.

Ms. White noted that even before the pandemic, there are segments of the regional transit system that are "fare free." CAT and UTS have a mutual agreement that anyone with a student id or UVA staff id can ride for free, and those who get on the UTS bus at certain stops around grounds could also ride for free. That agreement continues today.

### Ridership Reporting

Mr. Foley said he wanted to make it clear that ACPS have never charged a fare. He said they are transporting only about 10% of the students they normally transport.

Mr. Williams said CAT needs to fix the farebox issue in order to get an accurate count. There was talk about getting automatic passenger counters (APCs). There have been temporary APCs put on the busses and they have gotten much needed data. He is working on a dashboard to report on that data. There is an effort to move to the permanent APCs so more detailed information can be collected.

Mr. Sheffield reported that the urban ridership is still down around half and has been leveled off for the last month or so. Rural is around 40% of what they usually do, which includes commuters. He said that some of the Medicare trips are being scheduled as public trips, and if that is happening it is skewing the numbers for "fare free" trips. It is also taking up the capacity on the agency side (the non-public transit trips), and JAUNT is supposed to be recovering 100% of that cost, so it is hurting JAUNT's capacity and its funding.

### Long Term Goal Setting

#### Regional Visioning Plan and Umbrella Marketing and Branding

Mr. Boyles reported that there is a real need for a regional plan. He said the January meeting should concentrate on the long-range planning for the RTP. Mr. Boyles said all of the regional transit providers need to be seen as one group. Everyone of them has their own identity, but the strategic plan could have them promoting themselves as working together for safety precautions.

#### Growth in Service Area & Land Use Planning

Ms. McKeel recognizes that fixed routes are not necessarily best serving the community. There is a need for on-demand services as well. There is a need for bike racks, shelters, charging stations, etc. as well.

Ms. Lapisto-Kirtley said she would like to see a loop system that allows folks to get safely from one side of the street to the other. Affordable housing is difficult because there is no transit at some of the developments. Another idea for rural riders is to find them a way to get to a Park-and-Ride and then have a system that stops at those lots.

Ms. McKeel said this will be good to have this conversation after the first of the year.

## **Transit Service Provider Updates**

### CAT

Mr. Williams said as part of the planning process, his goal is to get good data. He is working towards getting the permanent ACPs and is looking forward to providing better data in the future.

### JAUNT

Mr. Sheffield had nothing more to add.

### UTS

Ms. White thanked CAT for the “Guardians of the Road” PSA. She also said that UVA has posted its academic calendar. UTS is in the midst of its annual rider survey and she will have more information at the next meeting. There is a construction project on Emmett Street at Bavaro Hall, and southbound will be impacted in the near future.

### Rideshare

Ms. Pennington said Rideshare is waiting on the final funding from DRPT. She said Rideshare partnered with the Community Climate Collaborative re: teleworking and worked on how to move telework into the future. She will also be putting together some commute stories to share in the future. She is also working with DRPT and CSPDS re: transit/transportation appreciation on social media.

### ACPS

Mr. Foley had nothing new to add.

### CAT Advisory Board Update

Mr. Snook asked Mr. Williams if the CAT Advisory Board will be advising him and not the Council. Mr. Williams said hey still would advise the Council, but there was discussion about the makeup of the advisory board. He thinks the advisory board would be doing the more technical work. He said he would like to bring in a consultant to see how the advisory board can best serve CAT.

Ms. Walker said the County and UVA will continue to have a slot on this advisory board in addition to the business community. She said it is important that the advisory board has direction and purpose.

Mr. Sherman said the CARES Act funding will include the Afton Express. 80% of the cost will be covered by CARES, and 20% will be a local cost. He reminded the board that December 1 – Feb 1 is the grant cycle for DRPT. He also reported that the Danville Express. DRPT is continuing to work on marketing ideas.

### **Other Business**

Ms. McKeel would like to put UTS’s survey on the agenda. She also thanked JAUNT for offering to take people to the polls to vote.

Ms. McKeel adjourned the meeting at 5:56 p.m.