

**Regional Transportation Partnership Meeting**

Draft Minutes, February 22, 2024

The recording for this meeting can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9v17Tt3H3Ek>

VOTING MEMBERS & ALTERNATES		STAFF	
Brian Pinkston, Charlottesville	x	Christine Jacobs, TJPDC	x
Natalie Oschrin, Charlottesville	x	Lucinda Shannon, TJPDC	x
Diantha McKeel, Albemarle	x	Gretchen Thomas, TJPDC	x
Mike Pruitt, Albemarle	x	Curtis Scarpignato, TJPDC	
Katy Miller, DRPT *	x		
Hal Morgan, Jaunt Rural	x		
Lucas Ames, Jaunt Urban	x		
Kendall Howell, UTS (alternate)			
Scott Silsdorf, UTS	x		
NON-VOTING MEMBERS		GUESTS/PUBLIC	
Garland Williams, CAT	x	Ben Chambers, Charlottesville	x
William Shifflett, Alb County PS		Ann Wall, Albemarle	x
Vicky Marsh, UVA Hospital		Jessica Hersh-Ballering, Albemarle County	x
Peter Thompson, CAA	x	Stephanie Amoaning-Yankson, AECOM *	x
Sandy Shackelford, CAMPO	x	Ann Wall, Albemarle County	x
Sara Pennington, Rideshare	x	Jen Fleisher, BRHD	x
Trevor Henry, Albemarle	x		
Peter Krebs, PEC	x		
Mike Murphy, Jaunt	x		

\* Remote attendance

**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

The Regional Transportation Partnership Chair, Diantha McKeel, presided and called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. She invited those at the meeting to introduce themselves.

Ms. McKeel announced that Sandy Shackelford will be leaving the TJPDC and going to VDOT. Her last day at the TJPDC will be March 8.

**Motion/Action:** Scott Silsdorf made a motion to allow Katy Miller to join the meeting remotely. Natalie Oschrin seconded to motion, and it passed unanimously.

**2. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION (MINUTE 3:40)**

Approval of Agenda

**Motion/Action:** Brian Pinkston made a motion to approve the agenda. Natalie Oschrin seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.



## Approval of Minutes

**Motion/Action:** Brian Pinkston made a motion to approve the January 25, 2024 minutes. Hal Morgan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **3. MATTERS FROM THE PUBLIC (MINUTE 5:02):**

None.

### **4. GOVERNANCE STUDY FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS (MINUTE 5:25):**

Dr. Stephanie Amoaning-Yankson began by presenting the background of the governance study, and continued explaining the existing transit systems, the transit study, the study goals, the numerous engagement avenues, the study approach, and continued with the key findings and recommendations.

She noted that there is a ***desire for regional transit governance***, and she recommends that regional localities consider setting up an interim entity or agreement as the first step and enumerated how that could be done.

She continued with potential characteristics for an ideal regional transit authority and how to potentially make that happen. She gave some details on the roles of the Charlottesville Albemarle Regional Transit Authority (CARTA). Dr. Amoaning-Yankson provided some indicators of accountability for CARTA.

Dr. Amoaning-Yankson continued by recommending that the committee consider conducting a ***rural transit needs assessment*** that clearly identifies and articulates rural needs.

She noted that there is a ***perceived value and local control in regional governance***. She recommended continuing rural engagement in the developmental states and design of regional governance including drafting of potential legislation.

Regarding ***collaboration with UVA*** – she recommended engaging UVA leadership at a level where there is decision-making authority in subsequent efforts toward establishing a transit authority.

She presented the committee with ***potential revenue generation options***, including sales and use tax, transient occupancy/lodging tax, property tax, and/or real estate tax.

Natalie Oschrin asked whether fares would be useful for helping to pay for this service. Dr. Amoaning-Yankson said fares are a very small portion providing service and CAT is fare-free at this time. Garland Williams spoke on fares and the impact they may or may not have on the bottom line for creating a CARTA. He noted that the fares do not cover the total cost of service. Mike Murphy noted that it costs money to collect the money, and sometimes it just isn't worth it.

Mike Murphy noted that a tax increase should be presented to the jurisdictions as a penny increase instead of a \$.10 increase over ten years.

There was some clarification about how the Authority would function and its roles.

Mike Pruitt asked how to use the information from the other Authorities are doing and how they are being funded.

Ms. McKeel requested that the staff from City, County, and the TJPDC begin a discussion about creating a regional transit authority to meet over the next 90 days and come back to the RTP board with a recommendation, reading from Appendix F from the Virginia Transportation/Transit Authority Legislations/Code of Virginia. She noted that it will be important to get the work done prior to the next legislative session.

There was continued clarifying discussion on how to move forward and get consensus.

Ms. McKeel noted it would be good to have a resolution at the next meeting to take back to the elected officials.

Ms. Jacobs said 90 days is a very tight timeline to come up with recommendations. What is reasonable, in her opinion, is a draft resolution, and outline of the priorities from the governing boards.

**Motion/Action:** Brian Pinkston made a motion to endorse the final report. Hal Morgan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

It was noted that the TJPDC will facilitate the coordination of the working group of staff from the City, County, and the TJPDC.

**5. BLUE RIDGE HEALTH DISTRICT COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CHIP):**

This item was tabled due to time constraints. Jen Fleisher will present at the next meeting.

**6. TRANSIT PROVIDER UPDATES**

**Albemarle County Public Schools** – William Shifflett reported that they have four electric buses that are tethered to the urban ring. They have accumulated 24,000 miles of usage to date. They are estimating their fuel consumption as \$7800 vs \$13,000 in diesel. He noted that there are other costs that they have not realized yet, including a \$2,000 kit and a maintenance schedule that is more robust than the diesel buses. He also noted that when the temperature is too low, the buses' 12 volt batteries do not charge (just under 30 degrees). He said they are still recruiting drivers. There was a discussion about the EV buses and the battery issues.

**University Transit Services** – Scott Silsdorf said UTS is in the process of reviewing the transit tracking software system. He noted that UTS is moving forward with their options for procuring EV buses. They intend to submit a grant request for low and no emission vehicles. He said the charging system will be online soon. There was a discussion about infrastructure and reliability.

**CAT Charlottesville Public Schools** – Mr. Williams reported that the schools are looking at getting battery/electric buses and they will be applying for them with a grant by the end of February.

**CAT** – Garland Williams said next week there will be follow up to the alternative fuel study recommendations at the City Council. He noted that this effort has been undertaken by many organizations, not just CAT. The goal is to allow the Council members to ask as many questions as they can and tell CAT their recommendation on how to move forward. The transit strategic plan is tied directly to that decision.

Mr. Williams reported on the collective bargaining and noted that all parties seem to be happy with the way things are going.

**Jaunt** – Mike Murphy reported that they will have an update on the rural transit needs assessment in a few months. They are also continuing to work on the micro-transit study and will have more of an update soon. He also gave an update on electrifying their fleet and how to get proper infrastructure. He also said they had a meeting with Dominion Virginia on all of the projects they already offer and how they may create opportunities for Jaunt. Lastly, Virginia Tech Transit Institute is responding to a plan that has a rural plan with automated vehicles. They were looking for a letter of support, but that has not been completed to date. There will be a study period with a slow roll out of the program.

**DRPT** – Katy Miller said they are reviewing grant applications received on February 1.

## **7. OTHER BUSINESS**

Ms. McKeel said there is a conflict with the May meeting because there is a transit conference. It is her expectation that the May meeting will be canceled. If the meeting is canceled, Lucinda Shannon will send out an email within 30 days.

Natalie Oschrein said she saw solar powered signage for transit and she would be happy to send pictures to Lucinda Shannon who will send them out to the group.

## **7. ADJOURN**

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

The next meeting is on March 28 at the Water Street Center from 4 – 6 p.m.