

Regional Transportation Partnership Meeting

Draft Minutes, May 25, 2023

The recording for this meeting can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jyC9RWG1Ck4>

VOTING MEMBERS & ALTERNATES		STAFF	
Brian Pinkston, Charlottesville	x	Christine Jacobs, TJPDC	x
Lloyd Snook, Charlottesville		Lucinda Shannon, TJPDC	x
Diantha McKeel, Albemarle	x	Gretchen Thomas, TJPDC	x
Ann Mallek, Albemarle	x	Ruth Emerick, TJPDC	
Neil Sherman, DRPT		Ryan Mickles, TJPDC	
Hal Morgan, Jaunt Rural		Michael Barnes, VDOT	
Lucas Ames, Jaunt Urban	x	Curtis Scarpignato, TJPDC	
Becca White, UTS			
NON-VOTING MEMBERS		GUESTS/PUBLIC	
Garland Williams, CAT	x	Jessica Hersh-Ballering, Albemarle	x
Charmane White, Alb County PS		Ben Chambers, Charlottesville	x
Vicky Marsh, UVA Hospital		Caetano de Campos Lopes, CCC	x
Peter Thompson, CAA	x	Erin Belt, VDOT *	x
Sandy Shackelford, CAMPO	x	Daniel Wagner, DRPT	x
Sara Pennington, Rideshare		Katy Ebinger, Community Climate Collaborative	x
Ted Rieck, Jaunt	x	Ian Baxter, TJPDC	x
Juwhan Lee, CAT	x	Ethan Heil *	x
Kendall Howell, UTS (alternate)		Daniel Teninecz Miller *	x
Katy Miller, DRPT (alternate)	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. There was no quorum in person.

She invited those at the meeting to introduce themselves.

2. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION (MINUTE)

Approval of Agenda

Tabled due to lack of quorum.

Approval of Minutes

Tabled due to lack quorum.



3. MATTERS FROM THE PUBLIC (MINUTE 2:50):

Daniel Teninecz Miller said he is optimistic and excited for the electrification of the infrastructure. He is a data scientist that works around international supply chains, and from a taxpayer's perspective, he is very concerned that the medium- to long-term investments for ICE (internal combustion engine) vehicles and the networks that provide all the parts for the ICE vehicles, have an order of magnitude or moving parts than EVs. He is concerned that over the medium- to long-term that we might lock ourselves into those vehicles that will be really expensive to maintain and repair.

Ethan Heil, energy engineer at UVA, expressed appreciation for the opportunity to join the Jaunt alternative fuel advisory committee. He said he hopes to be able to share the results from the CAT study as well with the RTP. He said, not that there is an element that is common in these discussions that is a piece that is usually left out, and that is climate warming due to methane leakage upstream. He said, usually these types of studies only look at tailpipe emissions, but he urges everyone to consider these upstream emissions as well, which are more potent than carbon dioxide.

Caetano de Campos Lopes, Community Climate Collaborative, suggested that members of the community have an opportunity to talk after the presentations instead of at the beginning of the meeting.

4. ALTERNATIVE FUEL FEASIBILITY STUDY (MINUTE 8:40):

Jaunt Alternative Fuel Technical Report

Ted Reick presented the committee with Jaunt's Alternative Fueled Vehicles Feasibility Study. The project goals are to achieve 45% greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction by 2030 and net zero by 2050.

He reviewed the cost of fuel per gasoline gallon equivalent compared to the alternative fuels, compressed natural gas, propane autogas, battery electric, and hydrogen fuel cells, including the pros and cons of each fuel.

He reported that if Jaunt were to go with battery electric, they would have to create more fast-charging battery electric charging stations on their routes, possibly in the more urbanized portions of the rural areas they serve. He showed the fixed-route range requirements for electric-powered vehicles.

He provided a technology comparison analysis and shared the recommendations from the study.

CAT Alternative Fuel Feasibility Study Report

Ben Chambers gave the background on the feasibility study and environmental assessment. The purpose is looking at how to go from a mostly-diesel fleet to a zero-emissions fleet. The Charlottesville and Albemarle County climate action plan has helped to spur this study into action, and additionally, he noted that there is substantial funding available for transit agencies in transitioning to these types of fleets.

He presented numerous scenarios with battery electric buses (BEBs). He presented the pros and cons of each of the fuels for CATs buses and noted that only some of the routes would be able to transition to electric buses.

He said the BEB analysis could be to buy more buses, restructure blocks/routes or vehicle assignments, use of on-route charging, and/or purchase higher-end BEBs with larger batteries. He presented on the pros and cons of hydrogen and natural gas buses. He noted that factors for consideration include resources, operations, and sustainability.

He reviewed the next steps for the study and implementation.

DRPT Modernizing Transit Fleet (MTF)

Daniel Wagner gave a presentation on a guide to low- and zero-emissions buses. He discusses DRPT's role as areas start to transition to alternative fuel fleets. He gave a project overview, including stakeholder outreach and agency engagement, utility planning, background research and existing research, financial planning and emissions reduction scenarios, workforce development, transition plan template, and the DRPT action plan.

He spoke briefly on each of the items in the overview, as listed above.

VDOT Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Plan

Erin Ervin Belt, Decarbonization Lead at VDOT, gave some background on the Infrastructure and Investment Jobs Act (IIJA) signed into law on November 15, 2021. She went on to describe available programs and how to proceed if localities are interested in applying for them.

Ms. Belt reported that VDOT has been allocated over \$100 million over 5 years to build out Virginia's alternative fuel corridors, which she described, for eligible entities.

She continued discussing the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) formula program timeline, the deployment plan's vision and goals, planning phases (Phase I is from '22-'23 and Phase II is from '23-'26), the iterative planning process, charging station areas, and shared the public input website. (<https://publicinput.com/VirginiaNEVI>)

She reported on the Charging & Fueling Infrastructure Discretionary Infrastructure (CFI) grant and noted that VDOT will not be applying for that grant. She went on to discuss the general eligibility requirements, whether it makes sense for entities considering applying for the grant, how the entities can comply with the NEVI requirements, and how to provide support.

Ms. Belt provided website links for resources for additional information and her contact information.

Ms. Belt gave some clarification on funding and the sources of that funding.

There was a question-and-answer period about the numerous presentations described above.

Brian Pinkston asked about whether hydrogen is being taken seriously anywhere. A CAT representative noted that the federal government is considering it as a fuel. It is viable and used in Europe and growing in popularity.

There was a continued conversation about the safety and feasibility of hydrogen as an alternative fuel source.

Garland Williams said it will be important to be very measured in implementing CAT's next steps. He noted that there will be two electric buses incorporated into the fleet in the fall as part of expanding the fleet.

5. TRANSIT PROVIDER UPDATES (MINUTE 1:30:51)

Jaunt – Ted Rieck shared that Jaunt is not going to be servicing Greene or Buckingham due to lack of funding effective July 1.

Albemarle County Public Schools – Charmane White was not in attendance, so no update was given.

UTS – No representative from UTS was in attendance, so no report was given.

CAT – Garland Williams did not have anything else to report. Ben Chambers said that CAT has kicked off their transit strategic plan with upcoming outreach to the public and stakeholders.

DRPT – Katy Miller left the meeting, so no report was given.

7. STAFF UPDATES (MINUTE 1:33:30)

RTP Activity Update

Lucinda Shannon shared updates on projects, including the Governance Study, which is in its third phase. She said she has been participating in the Charlottesville Area Alliance (CAA) transportation working group and is working on an AARP project, currently in the scoping phase now. Ms. Shannon also reported that she is working with the Blue Ridge Health District on their CHIP plan.

Ms. Shannon continued by reporting that the Mobility Management Grant may be approved by the beginning of July. RFPs are out and they are meeting with prospective partners in the next few weeks. She is also meeting with organizations that may be interested in receiving mobility management services.

She continued by saying that she and Peter Thompson presented to the Charlottesville Rotary Club on the Transit Governance Study and Regional Transit Plan to gather support for those initiatives. There was great interaction with those who were in attendance.

8. OTHER BUSINESS (UPDATES AND REMINDERS) (MINUTE 1:38:20)

Ann Mallek gave an update on some legislative bills currently being considered in the General Assembly.

9. ADJOURN

Ms. McKeel adjourned the meeting at 5:41 p.m.

The next meeting is June 22, 2023 from 4 – 6 p.m. at the Water Street Center, 407 E. Water Street, Charlottesville, VA.