



Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

August 21, 2017

<http://www.fampo.gwregion.org/committees/policy-committee/>

Members Present:

Mr. Paul Milde, Chairman, Stafford County
Mr. Matt Kelly, City of Fredericksburg
Mr. Tim Barody, City of Fredericksburg
Ms. Nancy Long, Caroline County (Non-Voting Member)
Ms. Ruby Brabo, King George County (Non-Voting Member)
Mr. Greg Benton, Spotsylvania County
Mr. David Ross, Spotsylvania County
Mr. Tim McLaughlin, Spotsylvania County
Ms. Laura Sellers, Stafford County
Mr. Chuck Steigerwald, Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC)
Ms. Marcie Parker, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

Others Present:

Mr. Tim Roseboom, Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)
Ms. Emily Stock, Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)
Ms. Susan Gardner, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Ms. Linda LaSut, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Ms. Michelle Shropshire, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Mr. Scott Shenk, Free Lance Star
Mr. Michael Smith, Stafford County
Mr. Todd Rump, Citizen
Ms. Cindy Shelton, Citizen

Staff Members Present:

Mr. Paul Agnello, FAMPO
Mr. Nick Quint, FAMPO
Mr. John Bentley, FAMPO
Mr. Colin Cate, FAMPO
Mr. Tim Ware, GWRC
Ms. JoAnna Roberson, GWRC

CALL FAMPO MEETING TO ORDER

Chairman, Mr. Milde, called the meeting to order at 7:18 p.m. and received acknowledgement that a quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF FAMPO AGENDA

Upon motion by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Mr. Benton, with all concurring, the FAMPO Policy agenda for the August 21st meeting was accepted as submitted.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

None

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

None

CONSENT AGENDA

- a.) Approval of Policy Committee Meeting Minutes of June 19, 2017 – Mr. Paul Agnello
- b.) Approval of Resolution No. 18-01, Amending the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to Add Funds for Safety Improvements for UPC #109519 (Rt. 711 Crossover Movement Conversion), UPC #109477 (Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities on Leeland Rd) and UPC #109467 (Rt. 1 and Telegraph Rd) – Mr. Nick Quint

Upon motion by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Mr. McLaughlin, with all concurring, items a & b from the Consent Agenda were adopted.

ACTION ITEMS/DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a.) **DC2RVA Update** – Ms. Emily Stock, Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)

Ms. Stock advised that DRPT is expecting a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to be published in early September. Ms. Stock stated that unofficially, the target release date is September 8th. Ms. Stock stated that once the draft is released, a 60-day public comment period will be held located in all regions across the state. Ms. Stock relayed that all public comments received will be included with the final EIS study. Ms. Stock advised that the meeting to be held in the Fredericksburg region will be scheduled early October and will be held at the Dorothy Hart Community Center beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Ms. Stock stated the study began in 2014 and is looking to add improvements to a 123-mile corridor from Richmond to Washington, D.C. Ms. Stock stated that most of the improvements will result in converting the existing two tracks to three tracks. Ms. Stock stated the track improvements will also result in by-passes, bridges, etc. being constructed in certain areas (several new bridges will be constructed in the Fredericksburg region).

Ms. Stock stated that the purpose of the study and project is to provide enhanced reliability to Virginia Railway Express (VRE), decreased travel times, and increased frequency of service. Ms. Stock advised that the 123-mile corridor has been divided into six sections. Ms. Stock relayed that the Ashland recommendations have been removed from the study, and this area will be re-evaluated and re-studied independently after the on-going study has been completed.

Ms. Stock advised that DRPT is conducting the study and have made recommendations to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA); however, FRA has the final approval on which improvement projects are implemented and the time frame for each to begin. Ms. Stock stated that currently DRPT does not anticipate FRA to be in disagreement with the recommendations. With this being said, Ms. Stock advised that the original eastern by-pass alternative that was considered as an option going through or around Fredericksburg is no longer a recommendation from DRPT. DRPT's recommendation now for the Fredericksburg region is to build a third track along the existing tracks. Ms. Stock stated a third track will double the rail capacity, have a much less expensive cost, and be able to utilize the existing tracks. Ms. Stock advised that DRPT's recommendations will be submitted to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) this fall, and the final EIS and Record of Decision (ROD) will be completed in 2019.

Mr. McLaughlin stated that once completed, the DC2RVA project is going to cost \$2 million. Mr. McLaughlin asked if DRPT can provide FAMPO with a return on investment briefing that the committee members can use to explain to citizens how the use of their taxpayer money will benefit them.

b.) Approval of Resolution No.18-02, Amending the Transportation Improvement Program – (TIP) to Add Funds for UPC #110914 (I-95 Exit 126, Rt. 1 SB onto Southpoint Parkway) -Mr. Nick Quint

Upon motion by Mr. McLaughlin and seconded by Ms. Sellers, with all in consent, Resolution No. 18-02 was adopted by the FAMPO Policy Committee meeting at the August 21st meeting.

c.) Update on Smart Scale Round 3 – Mr. Paul Agnello

i. State Response to Recommendations from FAMPO Smart Scale Task Force

Mr. Agnello advised that FAMPO submitted 27 recommendations to the State regarding changes to Smart Scale. Mr. Agnello relayed that FAMPO was the only MPO who provided input. Mr. Agnello relayed that the State accepted part or all of nine of the recommendations. Mr. Agnello stated that four accepted recommendations regard process changes and five regard prioritization methodology changes.

Mr. Agnello stated that significant changes in the Smart Scale process that resulted from FAMPO input in the Process and Scoring Metrics are:

- Process – to make the Smart Scale Technical Guide available before start of the application process
- Scoring Metrics – to add an accessibility factor of using existing traffic data versus projected traffic

counts that were previously used

Mr. Agnello advised that the CTB is scheduled to meet on August 22nd and they will adopt a final Smart Scale application process that will be utilized beginning with Round 3. Mr. Agnello stated that some major proposed changes are:

- Application period moved up from August 1st to March 1st in 2018
- Limits being applied to the number of applications that either an MPO, locality or applicant could submit (In the first 2 rounds, there was no limit on the number of projects an entity could present)
- Limits being applied on how far apart multimodal projects within the same application can be

Mr. Agnello stated that with the MPO's population being at less than 500,000, a total of four applications can be submitted from FAMPO, GWRC, GWRC localities and Fredericksburg Regional Transit (FRED). Mr. Agnello advised that for regions over 500,000 in population, eight applications can be submitted. This applies to PRTC and VRE.

Mr. Agnello advised that the Fredericksburg District Smart Scale meeting will be held on August 29th. Mr. Agnello relayed that a meeting will be open to staff from 1-3:30 p.m. for the purpose of discussing the Smart Scale changes.

ii. Discussion on Potential Candidate Projects

Mr. Agnello advised that each jurisdiction needs to review the current list of potential regional projects they would like to see pursued. Mr. Agnello stated that each locality needs to review with their respective boards and provide feedback so FAMPO will know which projects to submit. Mr. Agnello asked for a project listing to be brought back for discussion at the upcoming September Policy Committee meeting.

Mr. Kelly stated that he felt the concept of Smart Scale is good whereas once a project is selected it will be completely funded. However, as the amount of funding continues to decrease and the competitiveness increases, the region may need to re-think whether it wants to get out of the "interstate" business and submit other regional projects that possibly would be approved for funding. As the NB I-95 Rappahannock River Crossing project will continue to be the most expensive project from this region, and more than likely statewide, maybe it is time for the region to turn over interstate projects to the Commonwealth. By eliminating them from the application selection process, this could allow the region to receive more funding for smaller projects.

Mr. Kelly stated that even though the State has agreed to make some changes this year in the Smart Scale process, some of the major changes that FAMPO had requested be made – i.e. including all seven days of traffic, etc. — will not be incorporated into the Round 3 process. Mr. Kelly said the region is faced with two choices: 1) stay focused on what needs to be done and keep re-submitting every cycle, or 2) submit projects that would likely be approved.

Mr. Ross concurred with Mr. Kelly that he too felt FAMPO should get away from submitting interstate projects for Smart Scale consideration. Mr. McLaughlin stated that he too felt the region would never be able to afford the I-95 NB Rappahannock River Crossing project. Ms. Brabo

commented that the region could also only submit the I-95 NB River Crossing project and that maybe this approach would provide for more funding. Mr. Milde stated that in theory this would be a good approach; however, the risk is that the State could easily reject the I-95 NB River Crossing project and then the region would receive no funding as no other applications would have been submitted.

Mr. Ross stated that even though he feels the region needs to submit more local projects for consideration, studies clearly show the I-95 NB River Crossing project is desperately needed, so how can the committee now say the project is no longer important.

Mr. McLaughlin stated that as the region's population continues to grow, the committee needs to look outside of the box when trying to solve and re-solve transportation problems. Mr. McLaughlin stated that the region needs to have government agencies relocate within the region and get the commuters out of the D.C. area.

Ms. Sellers asked if the match money for a project could come from private donors instead of localities. Mr. Agnello stated that there is nothing that prevents private donations from being contributed. Mr. Milde stated that even though money allocated is going to decrease annually, the I-95 SB River Crossing project was approved and funded through the Smart Scale application process so he feels the I-95 NB project should remain on this region's project list, and it should be resubmitted.

d.) Update on Exploration of Additional Sources for Transportation Funding – Mr. Paul Agnello

i. Additional Research on State Gas Taxes

Mr. Agnello advised that staff was asked by Mr. Ross from the June meeting for follow-up on the gas tax revenue from other states compared to Virginia. Mr. Agnello advised that research was completed and Virginia still ranks 40th out of 52 in receiving less revenue than the other states. Mr. Ross stated that he felt this information still does not accurately reflect how Virginia compares to the other states. Mr. Ross stated that some states have no sales tax whereas Virginia does so they may receive less funding from one taxing authority but make up the difference in other areas. Mr. Ross asked if staff could compile a comparison listing taxes from all categories with the revenues generated.

ii. Regional Motor Fuels Tax

Mr. Agnello stated that also per request from the June meeting, staff was asked to provide a breakdown of how much additional revenue could be received for each FAMPO locality, as well as regionally, should a VRE gas tax floor be implemented. A spreadsheet of additional revenue opportunities was included in tonight's presentation. At this time, there is no additional discussion needed, and the spreadsheet was provided to committee members for their review.

Mr. Agnello advised that should a gas tax floor be implemented, the financial increase to each average driver would be \$18.15 per year or \$1.51 per month. Mr. Agnello stated that the pros/cons of implementing a gas tax floor are:

Pros:

- Helps to raise additional funding to be applied to local transportation funding projects
- Helps to raise additional funding for PRTC/VRE projects
- Could help local governments have funding leverages for consideration of statewide transportation funding programs such as Smart Scale and Revenue Sharing
- Could collect some additional tax revenues from out of the region drivers who pass through the region that could ultimately be used for local transportation funding

Cons:

- Concept can be viewed as a tax increase

iii. Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) Discussion

Mr. Milde stated that support of an RTA is currently only endorsed by the City of Fredericksburg. Mr. Milde relayed that even though Stafford County is considering it after receiving additional information, a majority are still resistant. Mr. Milde stated that the Stafford Board of Supervisors will have new members after the first of the year, and at that time the discussion results could be different. Mr. Milde also stated that Spotsylvania County is still adamantly against implementing this funding opportunity, and Mr. McLaughlin concurred. Mr. Milde recommended that this item be removed from meeting agendas until after the first of the year when it could be reevaluated. With this in mind, Mr. Milde stated that he did not see any reason to have representatives from NVTA and HRTAC come and provide presentations to the FAMPO Policy Committee.

Mr. McLaughlin concurred and made a motion that a briefing from both NVTA and HRTAC be provided to the committee at the September meeting. In turn, committee members can discuss this with their respective boards and provide feedback at the October Policy Committee meeting. If at that time a full presentation is needed or requested it can be scheduled accordingly, but in the meantime the Policy Committee did not want to waste either the presenter's time and/or the committee's time in listening to a presentation on a matter that currently does not have regional support. Ms. Sellers seconded the motion, with Mr. Kelly voting no and all others being in concurrence.

e.) Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) – Ms. Marcie Parker, VDOT

Ms. Parker advised that from a presentation made to the Policy Committee in June regarding HSIP projects, questions arose as to what types of projects have been funded. Ms. Parker stated that HSIP's purpose is to significantly reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads. Ms. Parker advised that HSIP is a federally-mandated program that is data driven, strategically approached, and includes three components: a strategic highway safety plan, highway safety improvement projects, and railway-highway crossing projects.

Ms. Parker stated that data obtained from the VDOT Fredericksburg District office in development of the strategic highway safety plan has focused on the following reasons for accidents: roadway departures, intersections, speeding, unrestrained drivers, distracted drivers, and young drivers.

Ms. Parker advised that six HSIP projects were approved by the CTB in June 2017 for FY2018-2023 funding:

3 – Districtwide – retroreflective back plates; shoulder rumble strips; & traffic actuated flashers

3 – FAMPO region – Fredericksburg – flashing yellow arrow upgrades;
Spotsylvania – offset right turn lane on Old Plank Road at Ashleigh Park;
Spotsylvania – mini roundabout at Old Dominion Parkway & Lee Hill Elementary School road

Ms. Parker relayed that the projects approved by the CTB prior to June, 2017 for the FAMPO region are as follows:

Stafford – bike/ped improvements on Leeland Road; Sidewalk on Courthouse Road
Spotsylvania – access management on Southpoint Parkway

Ms. Parker stated that the following two projects in the FAMPO region are currently under construction and these projects are as follows:

Fredericksburg – I-95 safety improvements at Route 3
Spotsylvania – intersection improvements at Route 1 and Harrison Road

Ms. Parker advised that before and after results from the projects being funded by HSIP reflects a 40% reduction in total crashes and a 74% reduction in injury crashes.

f.) 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Update – Mr. Paul Agnello

Mr. Agnello advised that as there will be limited funding for the 2045 Constrained Long Range Transportation Plan (CLRP) for the FY2018-2045 timeframe, a lot of projects will likely not be included. Mr. Agnello relayed that staff is required to complete a CLRP; however, an Unconstrained Needs Plan that was completed for FY2040 is not required to be updated this year.

Mr. Agnello stated that if the Policy Committee is in favor, staff could complete an additional/potential revenue source that goes beyond the CLRP. Mr. Agnello stated development of this plan could result in potentially an additional \$2 billion.

Mr. Agnello relayed that additional funding could come from the following sources:

Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) - \$1.343 b (FY2019-2045) (no regional consensus)
VRE Gas Tax Floor - \$146.8 m (FY2019-2045 @ \$3.17/gallon floor) (no regional consensus)
DC2RVA Rail Improvements - \$493 m (regional support)
Additional I-95/395 Transit/TDM - \$25 m (regional support)
Additional Volkswagen Settlement Funding (some Transit/TDM) - \$5 m

Mr. Milde stated that the region has nothing to lose and potentially could receive additional funding so he feels staff should proceed. Mr. Milde stated the plan does need to include both private/public partnerships that are available as well.

Mr. Agnello advised the FY2045 LRTP and I-95 Phase 2 schedule will be as follows:

2017:

August/September – Alternatives Development and Analysis for I-95 Phase 2 & LRTP

May to October – Development of Bicycle/Pedestrian projects

September/October – Draft results and additional analysis

November – Final Plan with MPO Committee review

December – Draft report for LRTP to be reviewed by MPO committees

2018:

January – Final review of Draft LRTP

January 25th – March 22nd – Public Comment Period

March – Round 3 of Smart Scale process begins

March/April – I-95 Phase 2 Highway Study completed

Late March/Early April – LRTP revisions (based on public comments received)

April – CLRP/LRTP approved by FAMPO and GWRC committees

i. Summary of 2045 LRTP Advisory Committee meeting of June 22, 2017

Included in agenda packet

STAFF AND AGENCY REPORTS

Mr. Agnello advised that new federal performance requirements that the region will have to comply with are forthcoming. Mr. Agnello stated that FAMPO will be meeting quarterly with VDOT to ensure the new guidelines are implemented. Mr. Agnello stated that seven additional performance measures in the safety category are the most significant changes, and this is the biggest change in federal regulations in quite some time.

MEMBER REPORTS -

Ms. Brabo advised that the Maryland Transportation Authority Harry Nice Bridge project currently has stated the improvements to the bridge will not contain shoulder and bicycle lanes. Ms. Brabo stated that King George County Board of Supervisors is adopting a letter of opposition that will be adopted at the upcoming board meeting on Tuesday. Ms. Brabo asked if FAMPO would also submit letters of opposition to both of the governors in Virginia and Maryland requesting that shoulders and bicycle lanes remain as part of the total improvement project. Ms. Brabo relayed that GWRC also agreed to provide letters of opposition earlier at tonight's meeting.

Mr. Milde stated that even though the request came from a non-voting FAMPO member, he did not see any reason why FAMPO too could not provide letters of opposition. Mr. Milde asked Ms. Brabo

to forward a copy of the letter to be approved by King George County and then FAMPO would forward documentation as well.

CORRESPONDENCE

In packet and self-explanatory

FAMPO COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Minutes from the Technical Committee and CTAG are included in tonight's agenda packet.

ADJOURN FAMPO MEETING/NEXT MEETING, AUGUST 21, 2017

The August 21, 2017 meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m. & the next meeting date will be September 18, 2017 at 7:15 p.m.