

POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

April 18, 2022 – 6:00 p.m.

406 Princess Anne Street, Fredericksburg, VA 22401

www.fampo.gwregion.org

Committee Members Present: *(V) indicates voting member*

Mr. Jason Graham, First Vice-Chair, City of Fredericksburg (V)
Mr. David Ross, Spotsylvania County (V)
Ms. Lori Hayes, alternate Spotsylvania County (V)
Mr. Timothy Baroody, City of Fredericksburg (V)
Ms. Meg Bohmke, Second Vice-Chair, Stafford County (V)
Ms. Monica Gary, Stafford County (V)
Ms. Crystal Vanuch, Stafford County (V)
Ms. Michelle Shropshire, alternate Representative from the Secretary of Transportation (V)
Dr. Robert Schneider, Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC) (V)
Mr. Ivan Rucker, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
Ms. Susan Gardner, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Mr. Stephen Haynes, alternate Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Ms. Ciara Williams, Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)
Ms. Jamie Jackson, FREdericksburg Regional Transit (FRED)
Mr. Hank Scharpenberg, Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC)

Committee Members Present (remotely, without virtual participation request):

Committee Members Absent:

Mr. Tim McLaughlin, Chair, Spotsylvania County (V)
Mr. Chris Yakabouski, Spotsylvania County (V)
Mr. Matthew Kelly, City of Fredericksburg (V)
Mr. Kevin Marshall, alternate Spotsylvania County (V)
Ms. Deborah Frazier, alternate Spotsylvania County (V)
Ms. Pamela Yeung, alternate Stafford County (V)
Mr. David Brown, alternate City of Fredericksburg (V)
Ms. Marcie Parker, Representative from the Secretary of Transportation (V)
Mr. Joe Stainsby, alternate PRTC (V)
Mr. Darrell English, Stafford County (V)
Ms. Tonya Holland, Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
Mr. Cedric Rucker, Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB)
Mr. Todd Horsley, Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)
Mr. Aidan Quirke, alternate FREdericksburg Regional Transit (FRED)
Mr. Jeffery Sili, Caroline County
Mr. Jeffrey Black, alternate Caroline County
Ms. Cathy Binder, alternate King George County
Mr. Matthew Rowe, alternate CTAC

Others Present (remotely or in person):

Mr. Alex Owsiak, Stafford County
Mr. Nick Ruiz Virginia Railway Express
Devyn Bell
Mr. Paul Agnello, Spotsylvania County
Mr. Chip Boyles, GWRC
Mr. Rupert Farley, CTAC member

Staff Present:

Mr. Ian Ollis, FAMPO Administrator
Mr. Becky Golden, Transportation Planning Manager
Mx. Colie Touzel, Public Involvement/Title VI Coordinator
Ms. Jordan Chandler, Transportation Planner II

Staff Present (remotely):

Ms. Kari Barber, Transportation Planner II

1. Call Policy Committee Meeting to Order

Vice Chair Graham called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Vice Chair Graham led the pledge of allegiance.

3. Roll Call and Determination of Quorum

Mx. Touzel conducted roll call and determined a quorum present.

4. Approval of the April 18, 2022 Policy Committee Agenda (ACTION ITEM)

Motion was made to approve the April 18, 2022 Policy Committee agenda.

Motion: Ms. Bohmke; Second: Mr. Ross

Motion passed with unanimous consent.

5. Public Involvement

Mr. Rupert Farley, member of the CTAC made comments about the committee and I-95 considerations. Mr. Farley mentioned that there was a non-unanimous vote during the last CTAC meeting (<https://youtu.be/FQq6L50ouFc>) where the Chairman of CTAC, Mr. Hank Scharpenberg, wanted to make suggestions for an Outer Connector to the Policy Committee. Mr. Farley wanted the Policy Committee to know that he is amongst the 30 percent who did not vote in favor of Mr. Scharpenberg making comments because his suggestions are short-sighted and impractical. Mr. Farley suggests that the region make sustainable and affordable changes, to reduce the demand for the roads by increasing the gasoline sales tax to incentivize people to get off the roads. Mr. Farley recognizes that the gasoline sales tax gets people off all the roads, but it only helps if it gets people off congested roads. Therefore, he suggests congestion pricing, but state laws do not allow it to apply to roads. His final suggestion is to have a Legislative Committee to go to Richmond or Washington D.C. to get the laws changed to utilize congestion pricing; the tolls for this can pay for public transit.

No other public comments were made.

6. Consent Agenda

a. Approval of March 28, 2022 Policy Committee Minutes (ACTION ITEM)

Motion to approve the consent agenda:
Motion: Ms. Bohmke; Second: Mr. Ross
Abstentions: Ms. Vanuch
Motion passed with unanimous consent.

7. FAMPO Administrator Report

Mr. Ollis provided a quick overview of congestion in the region, the upcoming Freight Summit, and IJJA funding. Mr. Ollis shared that traffic trends data show freight traffic has grown massively since COVID. Mr. Ollis explained that between our region and D.C., has the worst freight delay times in the state of Virginia. The Freight Summit hopes to capture freight problems and encourage a discussion about these issues to help solve the problems. The goal is to produce a report on the freight needs and problems in the region. The Freight Summit, which is in the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), will be in September 2022. Mr. Ollis then gave an update on IJJA funding.

A suggestion was made that the Hazard Mitigation group should be invited to the Freight Summit because of the chemicals coming into and out of this area. A question was asked about how many freight cars are coming out of New York, with trash, and through the FAMPO region to King George County.

8. In response to a comment made that Butler Road is a big congestion area for freight traffic, Mr. Ollis mentioned that the East-West Study is looking at that area.

9. Action/Discussion Items

a. Virginia Railway Express (VRE) Ridership Trends Before & During COVID – Mr. Nick Ruiz, Virginia Railway Express (VRE)

Mr. Ruiz presented data about VRE's ridership before and during COVID. Discussion ensued about VRE running weekend service and reverse service, the volume of thru traffic ridership, and cross-platform agreements with Amtrak. Mr. Ruiz responded that ridership is not thru traffic, but terminating at the Core, and that weekend service and reverse service would not be available until 2026. Cross-platform agreements are not operational at this time, but are a part of VRE's System Plan.

b. I-95 Outer Connector History and Process – Ms. Michelle Shropshire and Mr. Stephen Haynes, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

Mr. Haynes provided a presentation on the region's 35-year history to try and implement an Outer Connector.

Ms. Shropshire then provided an explanation of current Outer Connector options including the projects' timeframe, costs, and locations.

c. SMART SCALE Round 5 – Ms. Kari Barber

Ms. Barber provided an update on SMART SCALE pre-applications and said the next update will show TAC's recommendation for the removal of one project from the pre-application list as only four final applications are allowed.

- d. Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)/Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) Update – Mr. Ian Ollis and Ms. Jordan Chandler

Ms. Chandler provided a presentation on the approved CMAQ applications and existing STBG projects. After scoring and ranking the applications, FAMPO will seek endorsement from TAC and approval from the Policy Committee in May. A question was asked about the timeline for these projects, of which the response was present time-FY25.

- e. DRAFT FY23 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) – Mr. Ian Ollis and Ms. Becky Golden

1. Resolution 22-32 Direction Public Comment Period for the Draft Fiscal Year 2023 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) (ACTION ITEM)

Ms. Golden provided highlights on the Draft UPWP projects and funding.

Motion to approve Resolution 22-32, approving a 30-day public comment period:

Motion: Ms. Bohmke; Second: Dr. Schneider

Motion passed with unanimous consent.

2. Special Executive Committee Meeting May 18, 2022 Time: TBD

The purpose of this is to authorize the Policy Committee Executive Committee Members to adopt the FY23 UPWP 30 days after the Public Comment Period has ended (on May 18, 2022) on behalf of the Policy Committee, since there will only be 28 days in between the Policy Committee meetings.

Motion to approve Special Executive Committee Meeting:

Motion: Dr. Schneider; Second: Ms. Bohmke

Motion passed with unanimous consent.

- f. Bylaw Discussion – Chairman Tim McLaughlin

1. Current Policy Committee Bylaws – Amended March 28, 2018

The Chairman was not present and did not send any remarks about this item, therefore the item was skipped.

10. Correspondence

Ivan Rucker's correspondence was included in the Agenda Pack. No other correspondence was received.

11. Staff and Agency Reports

No Staff or Agency reports were provided.

12. Board Member and Chair Comments

The Chairman of CTAC, Mr. Scharpenberg, provided a handout suggesting ideas for an Outer Connector, which included an Eastern and Western crossing. Concerns were raised by members in regard to sprawl and that transit is a service just like roads are. Other concerns noted that if I-95 is backed up, it is a public safety issue to get into or out of Stafford County, because residents would have nowhere to go. The solution was proposed to incorporate a combination of modes to solve the problem, including transit. Mr. Ollis explained the principle of induced demand. Comments were made about “triple convergence theory” where a “beltway” would not have a long-term impact on traffic because it creates inevitable congestion when the only option for people is to get in a car. However, public transit does provide options for people who could take public transit instead of drive.

13. Adjourn/Next Policy Committee Meeting May 16, 2022 at 6:00pm.

Vice Chair Graham adjourned the meeting at 8:20 pm.