

Regional Transportation Partnership Meeting

Draft Minutes, February 27, 2025

The recording of this meeting can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Etcq63NFOuU>

VOTING MEMBERS & ALTERNATES		STAFF	
Brian Pinkston, Charlottesville	x	Christine Jacobs, TJPDC	x
Natalie Oschrein, Charlottesville	x	Lucinda Shannon, TJPDC	x
Diantha McKeel, Albemarle	x	Gretchen Thomas, TJPDC	x
Mike Pruitt, Albemarle	x	Sarah Richardson, TJPDC	x
Katy Miller, DRPT *	x	Igor Kalina, TJPDC	x
Randy Parker, Jaunt Rural	x	Taylor Jenkins, TJPDC	
Vacant, Jaunt Urban			
Scott Silsdorf, UTS	x		
Kendall Howell, UTS (alternate)			
NON-VOTING MEMBERS		GUESTS/PUBLIC	
Garland Williams, CAT	x	Jason Espie, Jaunt *	x
Jamie Gellner, Alb County PS		Jessica Hersh-Ballering, Albemarle County *	x
Vicky Marsh, UVA Hospital		Danny Plaugher, VTA *	x
Peter Thompson, CAA			
Sara Pennington, Rideshare *	x		
Ann Wall, Albemarle	x		
Peter Krebs, PEC	x		
Mike Murphy, Jaunt	x		
Ben Chambers, Charlottesville	x		
Jen Fleisher, CAA (alternate)	x		
Daniel Richardson, Alb County PS (alternate) *	x		

* Remote attendance

1. **CALL TO ORDER:**

The Regional Transportation Partnership Chair, Diantha McKeel, presided and called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. She invited those at the meeting to introduce themselves.

2. **GENERAL ADMINISTRATION (MINUTE 1:33)**

Approval of Agenda

Katy Miller joined via Zoom and said she is in Richmond for an in-person meeting and was unable to get to the meeting in Charlottesville in time.

Motion/Action: Scott Sildorf made a motion to allow Katy Miller to participate remotely. Natalie Oschrein seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.



Motion/Action: Natalie Oschrein moved to approve the agenda. Scott Sildorf seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Diantha McKeel gave members a few minutes to look at the minutes which were not included in the packet. Everyone received hard copies of the minutes for review.

Motion/Action: Natalie Oschrein moved to approve the January 23, 2025, minutes. Mike Pruitt seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

3. MATTERS FROM THE PUBLIC (MINUTE 6:20)

None.

4. RTA LEGISLATIVE DISCUSSION (MINUTE 6:41)

Danny Plaugher, Virginia Transit Association, said what he is hearing is that next year there will probably be a transportation session, which usually happens every 5-10 years. That session will impact transit as well as roadways. By 2029, maintenance on roadways will overtake 50% of the construction funds. They have been starting to do that in the last couple of years and he thinks that will continue in the next several years.

He said there will be a discussion on how to improve regional funding.

He shared a spreadsheet on the regional entities and the revenue sources that are directed to regional transit. He said he will share a copy of the document with the committee through Lucinda Shannon.

He continued with an in-depth review of the funding for the numerous transportation/transit organizations throughout Virginia, including WMATA, NoVA Transportation Authority (NVTA), NoVA Transportation Commission (NVTC), Potomac & Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC), Hampton Roads Transportation Accountability Commission (HRTAC), Hampton Roads Regional Transit Fund (HRTF), Central Virginia Transportation Authority (CVTA), and the I-81 Corridor Improvement District.

Ms. McKeel reiterated that whatever CARTA chooses as a tax revenue source, there will need to be a request to the legislature.

Mr. Plaugher suggested that Virginia Senator Creigh Deeds may be a good advocate for the Authority.

He also said none of the requests have to go through the CTB.

There were questions about how the gas tax works for the regions.

Brian Pinkston joined the meeting at 4:29 p.m.

There was an extensive conversation about funding and how to acquire it and once it is acquired how best to spend it.

He said their annual conference is in May (28-29). He said Senator Lucas will be a keynote speaker. He invited those at the meeting to attend the conference to speak in one voice in support of transit. He will send that information about the conference to Lucinda Shannon who will send it out to the committee.

5. MICROCAT UPDATE (MINUTE 26:32)

Garland Williams said they are celebrating 15 months of being operational. He briefly introduced the staff behind the success so far. He gave background on MicroCAT and Via. He said that Via is increasing their footprint in Virginia. Mr. Williams said they have partnered with Albemarle County Public Schools to improve student outcomes in the community.

He presented some stats on ridership and accounts created. He reported that the average rating for FY24 was 4.9 out of 5.

He said there are currently eight vans which are all hybrid vehicles. They are looking to add to the fleet in the future. It will still be fare-free through June 2026. The vans are both ambulatory and non-ambulatory. He noted that there has been significant growth in one year. It started with 500 riders per month and now has 6800 riders per month. He noted that the average passenger per revenue hour has gone up to 3.5, so that means the cost per rider is continuing to go down. He stated that it is highly efficient and the cost-per-ride continues to drop with over 40% of rides being shared rides.

He showed that MicroCAT provides increases in public transportation across the covered area. It was noted that a healthy transit network harnesses the powers of demand response and fixed route in a complimentary fashion. He also said that MicroCAT has proven to be essential for riders, making it easy for folks to get around the area, especially those without vehicles, those with long-term disabilities, and riders with an annual household income of less than \$25,000.

He stated that integrated transit features on the app deliver smooth rider experiences and increased efficiency across modes. There is an integrated schedule, intermodal and allows for a mode preference.

Scott Silsdorf left the meeting.

He finished by reporting on the impact that MicroCAT has had on the environment.

6. REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY WORKING GROUP UPDATE (MINUTE 1:21:07)

Ann Wall reported that both the City and the County have activated the Authority and therefore the first CARTA meeting was held last Thursday, February 20. Diantha McKeel was elected Chair and Natalie Oschrein was elected Vice Chair elected at that meeting. There was a great deal of time spent on the draft set of bylaws at that meeting.

Ben Chambers said the meeting schedule would be every other month, with RTP meetings held in the other months. He also said they focused on what tasks they should be focusing on in the next five years. He noted that TJPDC will be applying for a grant for funding through DRPT.

To clarify, Ms. Jacobs said the RTP will have meetings every “even” month, and CARTA will be meeting on the odd months. The RTP will meet at the Water Street Center from 4 – 6 p.m. and CARTA will meet in Conference Room One of the TJPDC offices from 5:00 – 6:30 p.m., unless otherwise specified.

7. TRANSIT PROVIDER UPDATES (MINUTE 1:26:12)

Albemarle County Public Schools – Daniel Richardson, Assistant Director of Transportation of ACPS, said they are having a big technology upgrade going on right now for routing the buses.

University Transit Services – Scott Silsdorf had to leave the meeting so there was no report.

CAT – Garland Williams said they are being asked to remove services from the grounds of Fashion Square Mall starting tomorrow. They are working on a fix for getting around that area to stay on public roads. Riders will have to walk farther if they want to get to Belk, the only store still functional at the Mall.

City of Charlottesville Schools – there was no report.

Jaunt – Mike Murphy said their CFO is retiring. They have had hundreds of resumes for the position. They also have had a great response to their RFP that are currently out.

DRPT – Katy Miller said the amended budget was sent to the Governor and there are a handful of transit and rail bills. She said there is funding for WMATA and transit in the Hampton Roads area. She said there are a few bills for signature for specific issues for VRE and Virginia’s transportation district commissions. She said HB2619 will require any private contractor that provides public transit services to benefit or compensate an employee of said company at the equivalent rate of a comparable public sector employee as well as collective bargaining agreements be recognized by that company. She noted that the GA will reconvene on April 2 to address any vetoes or amendments.

If you have any specific questions, please let her know and she will have someone get back with you. She said the concrete is being poured at the Belmont bus stop today.

Mr. Williams added that there is also one planned for Midway Manor and two in the County and two in the City coming. He noted that the Belmont bus stop is approximately \$120K, and they anticipated

that it would cost \$30K. There were unanticipated issues that came up with the stop that made the cost dramatically increase.

8. OTHER BUSINESS/UPDATES/REMINDERS (MINUTE 1:38:36)

Ms. McKeel asked to have CAT and Jaunt present their budgets to the RTP in a future meeting.

The next meeting will be April 24, 2025, from 4 – 6 p.m. in person at the Water Street Center, 407 E Water Street, Charlottesville, VA.

9. ADJOURN

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