



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Virginia Passenger Rail Authority

DJ Stadtler
Executive Director

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Mariia Zimmerman
Chairperson

MINUTES

Meeting of the Board of the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority

Thursday, January 22, 2026 · 10:30 am

919 East Main Street, Richmond, VA 23219

The Virginia Passenger Rail Authority Board held a regular, in person meeting (with certain members participating remotely) on January 22, 2026 at 919 East Main Street, Richmond, VA 23219.

MEMBERS PRESENT IN PERSON

Mariia Zimmerman (Chairperson), Sandy Bushue, Katie Choe, Neal Crawford, John Delandro, Darien Flowers, Cynthia Lawrence, Beth Rhinehart, John Watkins, and Benny Zhang.

Susan Spears joined at 12:30 pm

John Watkins left at 1:06 pm

MEMBERS PARTICIPATING ELECTRONICALLY

Jennifer Mitchell, Susan Spears

MEMBERS ABSENT

Patricia Doersch, D.J. Jordan, Charles Payne

VIRGINIA PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY STAFF

DJ Stadtler, Michael McLaughlin, Joan Verbonitz, Michael Westermann, Laura Farmer, Charles Nelson, Erica Sayre, Cosmin Udrea, Selma Nuhanovic, Adam Sharpe, Lamar Bates, John Kostyniuk, Shirlene Cleveland, Geoff Pelletier, Rob Pinckney, Matt Jett, Jeremy Latimer, Jonathan Capek, and Mary Estelle Douglas.

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Chairperson Zimmerman presided and called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. Mary Estelle Douglas called the Roll and confirmed a quorum was present.

BOARD CHAIR WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Presented by: Mariia Zimmerman, Board Chairperson

Mariia Zimmerman welcomed everyone to the January 22, 2026, Board meeting. Mariia Zimmerman introduced the new board members, Katie Choe and Benny Zhang.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was one written public comment that was shared with the Board in hard copy.

MOTION TO APPROVE PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made by Darien Flowers and seconded by John Delandro to approve the Board meeting minutes from December 16, 2025. The motion was carried, with the vote in favor cast by Sandy Bushue, Neal Crawford, John Delandro, Darien Flowers, Cynthia Lawrence, Beth Rhinehart, John Watkins, and Benny Zhang.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Presented by: DJ Stadtler, Virginia Passenger Rail Authority

The Executive Director's Report provided updates regarding the Long Bridge Project work windows, Long Bridge Construction Phase Project Addendum, a FY26 Budget Adjustment for third party projects, and an update on the 2026 General Assembly Session.

John Watkins asked about the status of negotiations with NCDOT for the Richmond to Raleigh project. Mike McLaughlin responded.

Sandy Bushue asked about the siding projects, if they were new or being replaced, and Mike McLaughlin responded.

A motion was made by John Watkins and seconded by John Delandro to ratify authorization of the Long Bridge Project addendum (construction phase) with CSX. The motion was carried, with the vote in favor cast by Sandy Bushue, Neal Crawford, John Delandro, Darien Flowers, Cynthia Lawrence, Beth Rhinehart, John Watkins, and Benny Zhang.

A motion was made by John Delandro and seconded by Beth Rhinehart to authorize FY26 budget adjustment for third party projects. The motion was carried, with the vote in favor cast by Sandy Bushue, Neal Crawford, John Delandro, Darien Flowers, Cynthia Lawrence, Beth Rhinehart, John Watkins, and Benny Zhang.

PROJECT PARTNERSHIP AND FINANCING AGREEMENT (I-66, LONG BRIDGE)

Presented by: Michael Westermann, Virginia Passenger Rail Authority

Michael Westermann reviewed the toll backed USDOT loan and project partnership and financing agreement between VDOT and VPRA.

Sandy Bushue asked if Commonwealth Transportation Board was the collector of the revenue. Michael Westermann responded.

Darien Flowers asked what type of loan this was, and Michael Westermann responded.

A motion was made by Darien Flowers and seconded by Beth Rhinehart to authorize VPRA to execute I-66 financing PPFA with VDOT. The motion was carried, with the vote in favor cast by Sandy Bushue, Neal Crawford, John Delandro, Darien Flowers, Cynthia Lawrence, Beth Rhinehart, John Watkins, and Benny Zhang.

CONSTRUCTION UPDATES REPORT

Presented by: Michael McLaughlin, Shirlene Cleveland, Geoff Pelletier, and Rob Pinckney, Virginia Passenger Rail Authority

Updates on all VPRA projects under construction were provided.

Sandy Bushue asked about funding for the ped bike bridge at Long Bridge, and Shirlene Cleveland responded.

Mariia Zimmerman asked about the size of the New River Valley station site. Rob Pinckney, DJ Stadtler, and Mike McLaughlin responded.

John Watkins asked how the UP-NS merger will impact VPRA and DJ Stadtler responded.

FY27 BUDGET

Presented by: Laura Farmer and Selma Nuhanovic, Virginia Passenger Rail Authority

Capital budget changes and updated Management Reserve information was reviewed.

A motion was made by Darien Flowers and seconded by John Delandro to authorize VPRA to submit the recommended FY27 Capital Budget to CTB. The motion was carried, with the vote in favor cast by Sandy Bushue, Neal Crawford, John Delandro, Darien Flowers, Cynthia Lawrence, Beth Rhinehart, Susan Spears, John Watkins, and Benny Zhang.

A motion was made by Darien Flowers and seconded by Benny Zhang to approve Management Reserve balance. The motion was carried, with the vote in favor cast by Sandy Bushue, Neal

Crawford, John Delandro, Darien Flowers, Cynthia Lawrence, Beth Rhinehart, Susan Spears, John Watkins, and Benny Zhang.

SERVICE PERFORMANCE UPDATE

Presented by: Jeremy Latimer, Virginia Passenger Rail Authority

Service performance updates were provided, including Long Bridge work window data.

Mariia Zimmerman asked how the impact of bus service on on-time performance will be captured. Jeremy Latimer responded.

Darien Flowers asked how on-time performance correlated with delays at WAS, and if we have predictable delays, how do we handle them? Jeremy Latimer responded.

ADJOURNMENT

Mariia Zimmerman, Chairperson, adjourned the meeting at 1:45 p.m.

All presentations to the Board and meeting videos can be found at <http://vp.ra.virginia.gov/about/Board-meetings> and on the VPRA YouTube site.

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VPRA BOARD MEMBER REQUEST TO CHAIRPERSON FOR REMOTE PARTICIPATION

I, Susan Spears hereby notify the chairperson of my intent to, and do hereby
(Name)
request to, participate remotely from Fredericksburg using electronic communication
(Remote Location)
means during the public meeting of VPRA Board of Directors scheduled on
(VPRA Board, or name of VPRA committee)
January 22, 2025 for the following reason:
(Date)

- I have a temporary or permanent disability or other medical condition that prevents my physical attendance; or
- a medical condition of a member of my family requires me to provide care that prevents my physical attendance; or
- my principal residence is more than 60 miles from the meeting location; or
- I am unable to attend the meeting due to a ^{professional} personal matter, which is

(Identify with specificity the nature of the personal matter)

*The Chamber's Annual "State of the Chamber" event overlaps the VPRA board meeting time. I can login when my work responsibilities conclude, likely by around 11:30am. *I am located just over an hour away.*

This request is (for the chairperson to select):

- APPROVED
- DENIED

This form constitutes the record of notice, request, and approval or disapproval required for remote participation pursuant to Va. Code § 2.2-3708.3 and shall be recorded in the corresponding minutes of the VPRA Board or the name of the VPRA committee.

Chairperson Signature

¹ Remote participation based on a "personal matter" may not exceed the greater between two times and 25% of meetings, in each case, during a specific calendar year with respect to a specific public body. Meetings of the full VPRA Board and meetings of each committee will be measured independently.

VPRA BOARD MEMBER REQUEST TO CHAIRPERSON FOR REMOTE PARTICIPATION

I, _____ hereby notify the chairperson of my intent to, and do hereby
(Name)
request to, participate remotely from _____ using electronic communication
(Remote Location)
means during the public meeting of _____ scheduled on
(VPRA Board, or name of VPRA committee)
_____ for the following reason:
(Date)

- I have a temporary or permanent disability or other medical condition that prevents my physical attendance; or
- a medical condition of a member of my family requires me to provide care that prevents my physical attendance; or
- my principal residence is more than 60 miles from the meeting location; or
- I am unable to attend the meeting due to a personal matter, which is _____.¹
(Identify with specificity the nature of the personal matter)

This request is (for the chairperson to select):

- APPROVED
- DENIED

This form constitutes the record of notice, request, and approval or disapproval required for remote participation pursuant to Va. Code § 2.2-3708.3 and shall be recorded in the corresponding minutes of the VPRA Board or the name of the VPRA committee.

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