

Hampton Roads Transportation Accountability Commission (HRTAC)
Technical Advisory Committee
Summary Minutes of the May 19, 2015 Meeting

The Hampton Roads Transportation Accountability Commission (HRTAC) Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting was called to order at 9:35 a.m. in the Regional Board Room, 723 Woodlake Drive, Chesapeake, Virginia, with the following in attendance:

HRTAC TAC Members in Attendance:

Neal Crawford, Chair
Lynn Allsbrook
Helen Dragas*
Joe S. Frank
Harry Lester
W. Sheppard Miller, III
C. Earl Sorey, Jr.

HRTPO Interim Executive Director:

Camelia Ravanbakht

Other Participants:

Joanne Carter
Tom Inglima
James Utterback

HRTAC TAC Members Absent:

James Koch
Jody Wagner

* Denotes Late Arrival or Early Departure

Others Recorded Attending:

Frank Papcin (Citizen); Thelma Drake, Jeffrey Raliski, Ron Williams (NO); Bryan Stilley, Jerri Wilson (NN); Bob Matthias (VB); Scott Forehand, Don Quisenberry, Suzanne Shomon (eScribeSolutions); Deborah Brown (Parsons Brinckerhoff); Tony Gibson, Jim Long (VDOT); Nancy Collins, Mike Long, Chris Vaigneur (HRPDC); Kathlene Grauberger, Danetta Jankosky, Mike Kimbrel, Kendall Miller (HRTPO)

Call to Order

After the Call to Order, Chair Neal Crawford welcomed new Committee members Mr. C. Earl Sorey, Jr. and Mr. W. Sheppard Miller, III.

Public Comment Period (limit 5 minutes per individual)

Mr. Frank Papcin spoke on container truck traffic bottlenecks, specifically at the Port and on roads in general. He expressed concern that all road projects be completed more quickly to alleviate current congestion.

Minutes of the September 2, 2014 HRTAC TAC Meeting

Mr. Joe Frank Moved to approve the minutes of the September 2, 2014 HRTAC Technical Advisory Committee Meeting; seconded by Mr. Lynn Allsbrook. The Motion Carried.

Overview and Role of the Technical Advisory Committee:

Dr. Camelia Ravanbakht, HRTPO Interim Executive Director, provided an overview of the role and scope of HRTAC. She explained the history of the body, noting the legislation effective on July 1, 2014, which created the entity and enumerated the membership of HRTAC. The Technical Advisory Committee, comprised of nine individuals, six appointed by the HRTAC Chair and three appointed by the CTB Chair, is charged with the development of a funding plan for projects, all of which must align with the Statewide Transportation Plan. Dr. Ravanbakht explained that HRTAC has the authority to use regional funds deposited in the Hampton Roads Transportation Fund (HRTF) for new construction projects on certain new or existing highways, bridges, and tunnels. Authority was given to HRTAC to finance and issue bonds for projects. As directed by legislation, the monies should be spent on projects providing the greatest impact on reducing congestion for the greatest number of citizens residing in Planning District 23. The TAC is to make recommendations on funding strategies to be in the program of projects identified by the HRTPO and HRTAC. For further clarification, Dr. Ravanbakht recommended reviewing the HRTAC Guidebook, which was distributed at the meeting to the TAC members.

Mr. Miller questioned whether the funds would be subject to the HB2 scoring process. Dr. Ravanbakht replied that projects funded by the HRTF are excluded from HB2, unless additional state funding is included.

Mr. Miller inquired as to how the HRTAC projects are aligned with the Statewide Transportation Plan. Dr. Ravanbakht stated HRTAC projects must be included in the HRTPO Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and that the region's LRTP is incorporated into the Statewide Transportation Plan. She noted that VDOT will provide a briefing to both the CTB and HRTAC, which should assist in the clarification.

Mr. Miller inquired whether a project might be done that was not included in the six-year plan. Mr. Inglima stated that it would depend on whether FHWA approval was required and whether the HB2 prioritizing process would apply. Dr. Ravanbakht added that the CTB would soon approve policy guidance and submit it for public comment.

HRTAC Projects – Schedules and Updates: VDOT

Mr. Jim Long, District Major Project Delivery Director, reviewed project information on the nine HRTF Candidate Projects as follows:

- I-64 Peninsula Widening Segment I – Fully funded with \$100 million federal/state funds, and \$44 million from HRTF. Current estimate is \$122.6 million.
- I-64 Peninsula Widening Segment II – \$6 million for PE currently funded from HRTF. RFQ currently out with responses due at the end of May. Neither Right of Way nor Construction is currently funded.
- I-64 Peninsula Widening Segment III – Currently not funded and no work has been completed yet.
- I-64 Fort Eustis Boulevard Interchange – Currently not funded and no work has been completed yet.
- I-64/I-264 Interchange – \$17 million federal/state funds allocated. HRTF monies used to fund the rest of PE and Right of Way. Expect advertisement for Segment I in April 2016 and Segment II in 2017.
- I-64 Southside Widening including the High Rise Bridge – \$20 million allocated from HRTF to partially fund PE. Right of Way and construction have not been funded.
- Third Crossing Components (2) – Patriots Crossing and I-664 Widening from Hampton to Bower's Hill. The projects are not funded. \$9 million previously spent on EIS work, and HRTF recently added an additional \$5 million for supplemental EIS for all harbor crossings.
- Route 460/58/13 Connector – Currently not funded and no work has been completed yet.

Mr. James Utterback noted that there was an additional \$5 million of federal/state funds to conduct the EA/NEPA work for I-64 Southside Widening project.

Mr. Frank asked if VDOT had considered removing trees from the median and sides of road. He noted that weather events can cause trees to fall on roads causing hazardous situations and mobility problems, especially in emergency situations. Mr. Utterback noted that the development work does look at tree removal.

Mr. Long shared summary pages for each project highlighting the project schedules and updates.

Mr. Frank asked about the two pieces of the Third Crossing: Patriots Crossing (including the Craney Island Connector) and the I-664 Widening. Mr. Long explained the current concept.

Mr. Harry Lester asked about the timetable of completion of the I-64 Southside Widening (including the High-Rise Bridge) and the I-64/I-264 Interchange project. Mr. Utterback stated that two years of PE and three to five years of construction are needed for the I-64 Southside Widening project. He indicated that the expected completion of the I-64/I-264 Interchange project would be sometime in 2019. Dr. Ravanbakht noted that moving projects forward depends upon the completion of the environmental studies.

Mr. Miller asked for cost, timeline schedule, and steps needed to complete each project. He requested that HRTAC and the HRTPO provide a list of priorities and costs so as not to spend money on the least vital of the projects.

Mr. Frank noted that care should be taken not to spend money on environmental impact statements too early and risk obsolescence before the project begins. He questioned the efficiency of doing all projects simultaneously and asked whether VDOT needed more resources or if the HRTAC should be prepared to provide supplemental outside resources. Mr. Utterback replied that VDOT is prepared with different resources, is operating differently from the past contractually, and partnering with consultants. He noted that simultaneous construction is not realistic.

Mr. Frank requested that VDOT provide a time frame for completion and probable costs of the projects. Chair Crawford advised that the ability of VDOT to move these projects along will be part of the planning process.

Mr. Frank shared concerns that paying with cash constrains the completion of all of the projects and that bonds would move projects forward faster. He stated the TAC needs the tools to evaluate and analyze what can be done to expedite the projects. Mr. Inglima advised that HRTAC authorized the preliminary engineering work on Segment II of the Peninsula work, but not the entire project in order to give the TAC the opportunity to develop a plan for payment.

Mr. Utterback explained the initial financing commitment so far for the Peninsula Segment II Project and noted that by the fall of 2015, VDOT will need to know how the region wants to fund it.

Ms. Helen Dragas requested a calendar projection of funds, including what has already been allocated and a snapshot of the current position on all projects.

Projects Referred to TAC

Chair Crawford noted that HRTAC had referred to TAC development activity projects relating to the I-64/I-264 Interchange and the Route 460/58/13 connector.

Mr. Inglima advised the TAC that the language should be whether the TAC is comfortable that these projects can be built into the existing funding plan without compromising the existing plan.

Mr. Lynn Allsbrook noted that the \$10 million requested in connection with the I-64/I-264 Interchange is for studies. Dr. Ravanbakht added that studies have been on-going since the 1990's and that the location is the most congested in the area.

Mr. Frank inquired as to the ultimate cost and completion date of the project. Mr. Utterback replied that the information is not yet available. Dr. Ravanbakht stated the only figure was for the entire I-264 corridor, but that planning level estimates are available from a study done in 2006.

Mr. Miller stated his reluctance to spend money without a blueprint. Mr. Sorey noted the goal to develop a working level estimate to determine if the projects could be funded and incorporated into the existing package of projects. Ms. Dragas asked if the project included in that portion of the I-64/I-264 Interchange is part of the enabling legislation. Dr. Ravanbakht indicated that it was not. Mr. Inglima advised that HRTAC has to state that it wants the project built and authorize the funds.

Chair Crawford noted that members have valid concerns and recommended that the TAC defer the matter to the June 16, 2015 meeting. Mr. Frank and Mr. Lester wanted to assure HRTAC that the TAC is not trying to discourage or delay projects.

Chair Crawford announced expectations of the TAC having its own financial advisor.

Overview and Project Funding Evaluation: PFM Consulting

Ms. JoAnne Carter, Managing Director of PFM, presented an overview of different options available to the TAC to accomplish the nine projects. Ms. Carter noted that the following are some questions that must be addressed in a finance plan:

- How much will be funded on a pay-go basis?
- How much will be financed?
- What is the optimal mix?
- What is the expected performance of revenue streams created by HB2313?
- How much debt is affordable?
- How much revenue can be produced?
- What are other revenue streams?
- What credit rating will result?

Mr. Miller stated that when tolling is used, only about 78% of the toll money is actually available for the roads.

Ms. Dragas questioned whether there are CTB allocated state or federal funds on any of the projects and whether there are regional efforts to procure more federal funding. Dr. Ravanbakht responded that \$100 million in state and federal funds have been allocated on I-64 Peninsula Widening, Segment I, and that HRTAC Chair Alan Krasnoff regularly expresses interest in being ready to pursue federal and state monies.

Mr. Miller expressed concern regarding the make-up of the CTB. He noted that the region is not well represented and that Hampton Roads is a donor region with regard to transportation money. Dr. Ravanbakht offered to provide an update on the CTB, state money, and project submission deadlines.

Mr. Frank stated that other alternatives to the sales tax and fuel tax need to be considered, since more sales are taking place over the Internet and fossil fuels may not exist in the next 20 years. He added that revenue sources need to be reliable and predictable.

Chair Crawford stated that all options should be considered. He recommended HRTAC moving forward with the process of hiring a financial advisor and that the TAC plans to meet monthly on the Tuesday prior to the HRTAC meetings. Additionally, he charged the Committee to develop the scope of work and timing as requested by Ms. Dragas.

Ms. Dragas asked if the TAC could avail itself of an outside resource to give advice on the economic impact of potential tolling scenarios. Chair Crawford agreed.

Mr. Miller reminded the members that Elizabeth River Crossings has a contract that allows them to pursue damages if a free water crossing is built. Chair Crawford agreed that the financial implications of that potential will be considered.

Next HRTAC Technical Advisory Committee Meeting

The next meeting of the HRTAC Technical Advisory Committee is scheduled for June 16, 2015 at 2:00 p.m. at the Regional Building.

With no further business to come before the Hampton Roads Transportation Accountability Commission Technical Advisory Committee, the meeting adjourned at 11:27 a.m.