



MINUTES

RTA Joint Partners Coordination and Central Maryland Transportation & Mobility Consortium

September 26, 2017

Clive Graham of Howard County Transportation served as Chairperson of the meeting. Stephanie Dittman, the RTA, Office Manager of Corporation, served as the Secretary and recorded the meeting proceedings.

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 1:08pm.

Review/Approval of August 22, 2017 Joint Partners and Central Maryland Transportation & Mobility Consortium Meeting Minutes (Clive Graham)

The August 22, 2017 Joint Partners and Central Maryland Transportation & Mobility Consortium meeting minutes were approved.

Adoption of Commission Bylaws. Election of Commission Chairperson and Vice Chairperson (Clive Graham)

The seating of the Commission and adoption of the bylaws has been deferred to the October Partners meeting, due to the absence of a signed revised single MOU by all jurisdictions. The revised single MOU incorporates the revised budget exhibit reflecting county budgets for the remainder of FY18 provided July 2017.

Action Item: Single MOU signed by all jurisdictions required for the seating of the Commission and adoption of the bylaws.

August 2017 Financial Report (Suzanne Brown)

Suzanne Brown reviewed the financial reports with an explanation for August detailed expenses including the month ending at \$18,355 under budget. Cash fare recovery continues to decline. However, ticket sales are above budget for both fixed route and paratransit sales. The number of transfers disbursed for the month of August was 11,292 with a year to date disbursement of 21,496 transfers.

Kathleen Donodeo commented that with cash fares down and tickets sales up this reflects a positive measure for less cash collected on the buses.

Statistical Snapshot Report (Mark Pritchard)

Due to issues pertaining to the previously provided electronic August statistical snapshot, the updated information will be provided as a combined August and September report and available for the October Partners meeting.

Clive requested that Mark Pritchard provide information for future statistical reports reflecting the call center statistics. Clive receives frequent complaints regarding unreturned messages left with the Call Center. The callers complain that when contacting Customer Service they can't get through and leave a message but never receive a return call. Clive stated that clearly a key part of service is to return phone calls. Mark Pritchard advised Clive that the phone system can provide the requested information for future statistical reports. Clive stressed the importance in gathering as much detailed information as possible when taking a complaint. This is a service business and we need to ensure that the clients are treated properly.

Action Item: August and September statistical snapshot report information to be provided for the October Partners Meeting. Mark Pritchard to provide information on returned Customer Service Call Center figures for future statistical reports.

GM Report/Staff Updates (Mark Pritchard)

Mark reviewed the information provided in the GM Report. Mark noted that one of the new electric buses has been out of service for over a week due to an electric motor failure, requiring manufacturer assistance. The fleet has improved service with the addition of five of the eight new smaller buses. The additional buses have enhanced the ability in providing rider service over the past two weeks. Clive noted that Howard County legislation was introduced last week to order six new buses. An RFP was submitted for financing up to six new buses based on the current low interest rates. Howard County's plan is for the loan to settle in November with an October 2018 delivery.

Mark noted that there were twenty three service failures with no buses available in the fleet to cover the routes. Paratransit buses were utilized for eleven routes to ensure rider service. Due to driver absences, five routes utilized Supervisors to operate the buses.

Updated bus schedules reflecting the changes effective October 1st will be available on the buses beginning Friday, September 29th. Rider announcements are available on the website reflecting the route changes along with the ability to download updated bus schedules. Temporary signs are posted on bus stop poles reflecting changes effecting bus stops.

“J” Davis requested that future safety meeting training dates be announced to provide the option for attendance by the Partners and future Commissioners.

Discussion ensued regarding the release of RouteShout 2.0 to provide riders access to real time data. Sue Poole explained that the RouteShout 2.0 application will provide individual notifications to riders that have downloaded the app. Promotional signs will be posted on all the buses showing instructions to download the app. Once the rider has completed the application with their profile information, RTA will be able to provide the rider with timely notifications.

Sue stressed the importance of launching the RouteShout 2.0 application to allow the rider to access information on their route to avoid calling customer service for assistance. With the added

responsibility to enter updated data information into the program it was suggested to provide staff from the Call Center to assist Dispatch at the OPS facility.

The question was raised regarding requests from jurisdictions for interior bus advertising announcements. Sue stated that any jurisdiction can request promotional advertising to support county services. Sue requested a dollar amount be set per jurisdiction so revenue dollars are shared equally. To date Howard County requested \$350 for the Senior Expo. Clive has asked Sue Poole to follow up on jurisdictional interior bus advertising.

Clive noted that Mark Pritchard is back as the interim General Manager after two weeks of retirement. Mark will continue to perform duties as the interim General Manager until his successor is appointed. Conversations continue to ensue with a General Manager candidate and possibility of an October start date.

Action Item: Future Safety training meetings will be announced to provide the option for attendance by the Partners and future Commission members. RouteShout 2.0 application to be available in October. Sue Poole to follow up on establishing jurisdictional dollar amounts for promotional event advertising on the interior of buses. Conversations continue with a General Manager candidate.

FY 18 Budget, Allocations, Memorandum of Understanding (Clive Graham)

The FY18 budget was previously adopted for only the first quarter pending the availability of approved county budgets. The updated FY18 RTA budget figure which will be utilized for the remainder of the FY18 fiscal year is \$15,636,000.

Any changes to jurisdictional service need to be communicated to RTA in the next two to three weeks in terms of their budget. Sue Poole noted that any route changes require a minimum of 45 days with major changes requiring no less than 60 days. Changes affecting 25 percent or greater of service on a route will require public notifications and public hearings. For FY 19 Jai Saunders suggested an alternative option to the FY 18 process; working with the budget that is adopted, followed by changes in expenses but avoiding the complications of adopting a new budget. Based on service changes, the jurisdictions may achieve savings by the end of the fiscal year.

Plans for FY 2019 Budget Process (Clive Graham)

Clive Graham discussed the previously distributed FY19 budget timetable.

September 26	Kick off budget process
October 13	Partners provide new/adjusted service proposals to RTA
October 24	Partner meeting, RTA to present preliminary draft budget (line by line). RTA to pose questions/challenges for partners.
November 7-21	RTA preliminary draft budget discussions with Partners staff
Defer November Partners Meeting	
November 29	RTA to deliver revised draft budget
December 5	Partners meeting – review revised draft budget
December 20 (tentative)	Howard County staff submits RTA budget to Howard County budget office
January 23 2018	Partners adopt proposed RTA budget

Kathleen Donodeo commented that this is adopting a budget proposal to be provided to the counties. This is the dollar amount of what RTA needs to provide and operate service for the year. The budget will not be final until all jurisdictions have received their approved available budget. Clive wants to avoid adopting a three month budget for FY19. Prince Georges County has to have their budget request submitted by November 15th. Ron Crites from Prince George's County, commented that Prince George's County needs a number for a place holder as a rough draft. Clive Graham reminded Partners that any service changes for FY 19 need to be provided by October 13.

Clive Graham reminded that the core issue is what will happen next summer/fall. Clive asked Norm Schnobrich with Howard County to attend today's meeting. Norm has followed the budget and noted that with RTA providing service effective July 1st each year the entire budget cannot be adopted in May if Anne Arundel County does not have their final budget until the middle of June. Emphasis was made to provide a budget, which is the budget. Possibly as Jai Saunders suggested by making changes to the revenue to avoid the budget dilemma pertaining to the current fiscal year. Norm shared that there is a budget line in Howard County that you know will change but can't anticipate the number resulting in a contingency budget. This information is submitted the third week of April with budget amendments for the budget to be submitted to Council and adopted.

Clive Graham noted that the FY19 budget will include new routes being proposed in the Transit Development Plan (TDP) with implementation in January 2019 with an increased yearly cost of 1.3 million.

The question was raised if the RTA budget can be changed to October 1st? Clive responded that perhaps this option of changing the date can be reviewed along with Norm and Jai's suggestions.

Action Item: FY19 budget timetables, request to change the RTA budget date to October 1st.

Transit Development Plan Update (Clive Graham)

The overall feedback of the four transit development plan meetings was positive in terms of route reconfiguration. The consultants are drafting the full TDP with the anticipated delivery of the draft by the end of October. Transit Development Plan to be presented to Howard County Transportation Board at its December meeting with introduction to Howard County Council for consideration in January 2018

Action Item: TDP draft plan expected by the end of October. TDP to be presented at the December meeting of Howard County Transportation board, with introduction to Howard County Council for consideration in January 2018

Next Meeting: October 24, 2017

Adjournment: 2:52pm

Attendees:

John Spencer	Anne Arundel County
Ramond Robinson	Anne Arundel County
Mike Dwyer	City of Laurel
Monta Burrough	City of Laurel
Clive Graham	Howard County Office of Transportation
Kathleen Donodeo	Howard County Office of Transportation
Allison Calkins	Howard County Office of Transportation
Jai Saunders	Howard County Office of Transportation
Earl Armiger	Howard County
Norm Schnobrich	Howard County Office of Budget
Judith “J” Davis	Prince George’s County
Anthony Foster	Prince George’s County Office of Transportation
Ron Crites	Prince George’s County
Mark Pritchard	General Manager, RTA
Andrew Johnson	Assistant General Manager, RTA
Suzanne Brown	Director of Finance, RTA
Elaina Evans	Human Resources Manager, RTA
Victor Jimenez	Call Center Manager, RTA
Susan Poole	Director of Communications and Marketing, RTA
Kevin Randall	Assistant General Manager of Maintenance, RTA
Stephanie Dittman	Office Manager, RTA