

COUNTY OF HENRICO, VIRGINIA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
SPECIAL MEETING
April 22, 2008

The Henrico County Board of Supervisors convened a Special Meeting on Tuesday, April 22, 2008 at 5:15 p.m. in the County Manager's Conference Room, Administration Building, Henrico County Government Center, Parham and Hungary Spring Roads, Henrico County, Virginia. The Chairman called the meeting to order at 5:19 p.m. Those present at the meeting were:

PRESENT

The Honorable David A. Kaechele, Chairman
The Honorable Patricia S. O'Bannon, Vice-Chairman (arrived at 5:25 p.m.)
The Honorable James B. Donati, Jr., Varina District Supervisor
The Honorable Richard W. Glover, Brookland District Supervisor
Mr. Virgil R. Hazelett, P.E., County Manager
Mr. George T. Drumwright, Jr., Deputy County Manager for Community Services
Ms. Angela N. Harper, FAICP, Deputy County Manager for Special Services
Mr. Leon T. Johnson, Deputy County Manager for Administration
Mr. Robert K. Pinkerton, P.E., Deputy County Manager for Community Operations
Mr. Randall R. Silber, Deputy County Manager for Community Development
Mr. Barry R. Lawrence, Assistant to the County Manager/Clerk to the Board
Mrs. Linda B. Jones, Deputy Clerk to the Board
Mr. C. Michael Schnurman, Legislative Liaison
Mr. Joseph P. Rapisarda, Jr., County Attorney
Mr. John L. Knight, Deputy County Attorney
Mrs. Tamra R. McKinney, Director of Public Relations & Media Services
Mr. John A. Vithoulkas, Director of Finance
Mr. Eugene H. Walter, Director of Management and Budget
Mr. Arthur D. Petrini, Director of Public Utilities
Mr. Edward L. Priestas, Director of Public Works
Mr. Timothy A. Foster, Assistant Director of Public Works
Mr. E. Todd Eure, Transportation Development Engineer, Public Works
Mr. John M. Lewis, Jr., Chief Executive Officer, Greater Richmond Transport Company (GRTC)
Mr. Larry Hagin, Director of Planning and Government Relations, GRTC
Mr. Tom Lappas, *Henrico Citizen*
Ms. Melodie N. Martin, *Richmond Times-Dispatch*
Mr. Rob Richardson, WWBT-TV 12

ABSENT

The Honorable Frank J. Thornton, Fairfield District Supervisor

Mr. Kaechele announced that Mr. Thornton would not be attending the meeting and that Mrs. O'Bannon would be arriving late.

GRTC Comprehensive Operations Analysis
(COA)

Mr. Hazelett advised that this topic was being brought forward to update members of the Board on the current status of public transportation in the region and where it is headed in the future. He recognized Mr. Lewis, who narrated a Power Point presentation on *Improving Public Transportation – Findings and Recommendations from the GRTC Comprehensive Operations Analysis* (see enclosed copy). Mr. Eure distributed copies of the presentation as well as a GRTC brochure on Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). Mr. Lewis noted that a team of consultants under GRTC's direction had recently completed an 18-month long short term comprehensive operations analysis (COA) of GRTC bus service. The first part of Mr. Lewis' presentation addressed the process used in the study; what was learned in terms of service area and operations; underperforming routes based on findings from two performance measures; systemwide and Henrico specific ridership trends; what was learned from the customer survey and peer review in terms of transportation/vehicle efficiency, service effectiveness, financial efficiency, cost effectiveness, and revenue generation; and three major products of the cost operations analysis (COA), including new communication tools, a transfer center, the elements of BRT, and the Richmond BRT concept.

Mr. Eure, Mr. Lewis, and Mr. Hazelett responded to questions and comments from members of the Board regarding the route and average ridership for the Azalea Connector; the need for more circumferential routes; ridership data and trends for park and ride lots located in the County; the square mileage of GRTC's service area within Henrico County; the projected cost of the proposed multimodal transfer center at Main Street Station in the City of Richmond and the type of transportation service that would be provided there; the current availability of parking in the vicinity of Main Street Station; the number of vehicles per day traveling in the Broad Street Road corridor between Henrico and Richmond; the potential of putting a transfer station in the

County; and future plans for the existing Staples Mill Road AMTRAK station and proposed Willow Lawn Transit Center.

There was extended discussion among Mr. Glover, Mr. Lewis, and Mr. Kaechele pertaining to the relationship of the proposed multimodal transfer center to AMTRAK's future plans for rail service in the region, how the transfer center could improve efficiency in public transit service, and the proportion of GRTC ridership and revenue that is attributable to residents of the City of Richmond. Using the existing Lakeside GRTC route as an example, Mr. Glover spoke at length about the advantages of placing the transfer center in a location more central to the region than downtown Richmond. He expressed concern that the downtown Richmond location would be inconvenient for Henrico residents and encouraged Mr. Lewis to have GRTC adopt a more regional perspective. Mr. Lewis responded by noting that the study took a macro look at the current status of GRTC service and how it can grow in the future. He also responded at length to a question from Mr. Kaechele relating to how GRTC farebox revenues for Henrico County routes compare with systemwide farebox revenues. Mr. Glover pointed out that the Staples Mill Road station is the largest AMTRAK station in Virginia. Mrs. O'Bannon commented on how regional bus service could be impacted if AMTRAK closes its Staples Mill Road station.

The Board recessed for dinner at 6:26 p.m. and reconvened at 6:31 p.m.

GRTC Comprehensive Operations Analysis
(COA) (continued)

Mr. Lewis continued his presentation by explaining why BRT is needed along Broad Street, offering examples of BRT in other United States cities, identifying the fund source and project qualifications for BRT, and reviewing the BRT plan. He concluded his presentation by highlighting the objectives, study area, and draft recommendations of the Richmond Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Regional Mass Transit Study (RMTS), which focuses on a long-range transit plan for the Richmond region and is

expected to be completed in May 2008. Mr. Lewis responded to questions from Mr. Hazelett and Board members regarding ridership on GRTC's Route 288 Connector, the impact of fuel costs on GRTC operations, why GRTC has not purchased buses that run on natural gas to achieve fuel economies, and whether the current transit studies are looking at costs as well as routes. He thanked the Board for the County's great relationship with GRTC. Mr. Hazelett ended the discussions by noting GRTC's cooperation with the Henrico Open golf tournament.

Mr. Hazelett briefly reviewed the evening's agenda. He advised the Board that State revenues for the upcoming fiscal year had been reduced by \$1.5 million and suggested that the Board consider a substitute paper for adoption of the annual fiscal plans reflecting this revenue reduction. He responded to a couple of questions from Board members concerning the impact of these reductions on County expenditures and the real estate tax rate. Mr. Hazelett responded to further questions from Board members pertaining to the number of senior citizens in the County who currently qualify for the Real Estate Tax Advantage (REAP) program, the status of the waiting list for mentally challenged adults needing day support services, the procedure for considering a substitute paper to adopt the budget, and the areas of the County's budget that would be impacted by the State funding reductions. Mr. Hazelett noted that the Board had received information from the Home Building Association of Richmond relating to the ordinance on the evening's public hearing agenda that would increase water and sewer connection fees and service charges and rates.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:58 p.m.


Chairman, Henrico County Board of Supervisors