

A special meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Albemarle County, Virginia, was held on August 5, 2008, beginning at 10:00 a.m., at the Charlottesville Community Design Center, located at 100 5th Street NE, 2nd Floor, Charlottesville, Virginia. On July 28, 2008, the Chairman, Mr. Boyd, called a special meeting for the purpose of meeting with staff from the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission and Charlottesville City Council to discuss a Regional Transit Authority.

PRESENT: Mr. Ken C. Boyd, Mr. Lindsay G. Dorrier, Jr., Ms. Ann Mallek, Mr. Dennis S. Rooker, Mr. David Slutzky and Ms. Sally H. Thomas.

ABSENT: None.

OFFICERS PRESENT: County Executive, Robert W. Tucker, Jr., Assistant County Executive, Thomas Foley, County Attorney, Larry W. Davis, and Senior Deputy Clerk, Meagan Hoy.

CHARLOTTESVILLE CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. David Brown, Ms. Holly Edwards, Mr. Satyendra Huja, Mayor Dave Norris and Mr. Julian Taliaferro.

THOMAS JEFFERSON PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION STAFF: Mr. David Blount and Ms. Melissa P. Barlow.

Also present were: Senator Creigh Deeds and Delegate David Toscano.

I. Welcome, Work Session Goals, and Expected Outcomes

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Review of Special Legislative Session and RTA Study Activity Since the February 2008 Work Session
3. Work Session Goal: To reach consensus on the immediate next steps that City, County and TJPDC staff should take to prepare for upcoming 2009 Session of the General Assembly.
4. Expected Outcomes: During this work session, decision makers are expected to reach consensus on how to proceed with finalizing a desired governance structure and preferred tax and revenue option, so that draft legislation can be developed. Decision makers will also be asked to review and comment on the draft implementation plan for a RTA.

The meeting was called to order at 10:15 a.m. by Melissa Barlow, TJPDC Director of Transportation Programs, who welcomed everyone and asked for introductions. She reviewed the agenda and the goals and expected outcomes for the day.

Mr. Ivy Hinton, a transit consumer, was asked to share her experience riding the local transit system, as a reminder that our focus in discussing transit should remain on the consumer.

Ms. Melissa Barlow, Mr. Frank Spielberg (VHB Consultant) and Mr. David Blount (TJPD Legislative Liaison) led the attendees through a powerpoint presentation that reviewed the previously-endorsed transit vision, the major points from the February work session, the highlights of the consultants' study and the special legislative session on transportation.

II. Discuss Draft Final RTA Study Reports, and Structure, Governance, and Revenue Options

Comments and questions by decision makers are expected and encouraged at any time during this segment.

1. Summer 2008 Special Legislative Session Overview: Our legislative liaison to provide an overview.
2. Highlights of Remaining RTA Study Reports: The consultant will review the recommendations from several of the key remaining RTA Study reports that will assist decision makers in the development of the RTA. Examples include a Staffing Plan, Service Standards, and Service and Cost Allocation Plans.
3. Review of Implementation Plan and Schedule: The consultant will review the plan and schedule if legislation is approved during the 2009 General Assembly session.
4. Structure and Governance: At the February 2008 joint work session, decision makers unanimously decided to complete the study and pursue a Regional Transit Authority, in lieu of other forms of governance, as its final recommendation. Decision makers must now employ an effective working group to decide what the exact structure and governance for the RTA will be, in order to specify that structure in the enabling legislation.
5. Revenue / Taxing Options: At the February 2008 joint work session, decision makers unanimously agreed that in order to provide transit services at the level expected of a RTA, the enabling legislation must contain a taxing and revenue authority. Decision makers must now employ an effective working group to decide what tax and fee revenue opportunities this region should pursue, in order to specify them in the enabling legislation.

Members of the two governing bodies discussed the various approaches to drafting enabling legislation to present to the 2009 General Assembly. One member noted that what is done will depend on the amount of funding that can be obtained, which depends on the enabling legislation. He urged all the elected officials to review the 2005 Funding Options report, which recommended alternatives to generate revenue for local transportation projects. Another member expressed concern that considering the Funding Options report would bring pressure to build roads over transit needs. Several noted the importance of having broad support in the community for what is done, saying it was critical to get support from the public and from local legislators, and that we must reach out to the legislators now to find out what they would be willing to support.

Delegate David Toscano stressed that whatever is decided, there must be consensus among all the region's legislators. He said that trying to get approval of a transit authority with revenue enhancement is very problematic. He said that local community support also is a key and that to get that, you probably would need to go for a transportation authority.

Senator Creigh Deeds indicated that, while he preferred a statewide plan rather than regional plans, he would support what is agreed to if it has business and community support.

It was suggested and agreed that the working group as proposed by staff would be the group to meet with legislators after having worked with the City/County Attorneys to develop two or three structures/scenarios, in order to gauge what provisions the legislators would be willing to support.

III. Public Comment Period:

Ms. Robin Hoffman, citizen, asked that the governing bodies think about things other than the tax bases, such as park and ride lots with clinics (utilizing health funding), providing incentives for bio-diesel buses and using UVA students for studies and research rather than private studies.

Mr. Morgan Butler, Southern Environmental Law Center, expressed support for a regional transit initiative. He encouraged the leaders to establish a working group to work toward enabling legislation and to start thinking about backup plans as well.

Mr. Jeff Werner, Charlottesville resident and member of Piedmont Environmental Council, noted that we are still working with transportation plans based on sprawl. He expressed frustration that the group had spent most of the time talking about what they cannot do. He stated that doing nothing is not an option.

IV. Identify Next Steps:

1. Overview of Outstanding Issues and Decisions: Even if authority to establish a Regional Transit Authority is granted in 2009, many details must still be resolved for the Authority to function and sustain services. A brief overview will be provided.
2. Between now and the RTA: A brief discussion of how the City and the County should continue to develop funding and operations strategies to build and strengthen a robust regional transit service.

Most members made final comments on the various topics that had been discussed, including stating their preference for a type of authority (transit/transportation), funding options (if any), and involvement by stakeholders.

It was agreed by the members that the working group would include Mr. Dennis Rooker and Mr. David Slutzky (representing Albemarle), Mayor Dave Norris and Mr. Satyendra Huja (representing Charlottesville), Ms. Donna Shaunessy (representing JAUNT) and Ms. Rebecca White (representing UVA). It also was agreed that recommendations coming out of the working group would be carried back to the respective local governing bodies for consideration and any necessary action.

V. Work session wrap up

With no further business to come before the bodies, the meeting was adjourned at 1:05 p.m.

Chairman

Approved by Board
Date: 10/01/2008
Initials: EWJ