



# Meeting Minutes of the Transportation District Commission of Hampton Roads

Special Telephonic Meeting - Thursday, March 26, 2020 •  
1:00 p.m. 509 E. 18<sup>th</sup> Street, Norfolk, VA

## **Call to order**

A quorum was attained, and Chairman Hunter called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

## **Commissioners in attendance via Phone:**

Commissioner Hunter, Portsmouth  
Commissioner Gray, Hampton  
Commissioner Fuller, Chesapeake  
Commissioner Hamel, Chesapeake  
Commissioner Pittard, VDRPT  
Commissioner Kanoyton, Hampton  
Commissioner Woodbury, Newport News  
Alt. Commissioner Cipriano, Newport News  
Commissioner McClellan, Norfolk  
Alt. Commissioner Inman, Norfolk  
Commissioner Rowe, Portsmouth  
Alt. Commissioner Jackson, Portsmouth  
Commissioner Ross-Hammond, Virginia Beach  
Alt. Commissioner Reel, Virginia Beach

## **Hampton Roads Transit Staff in attendance:**

Ray Amoruso, Chief Planning and Development Officer  
Amy Braziel, Manager of Operations Administration  
Conner Burns, Chief Financial Officer  
David Burton, General Counsel, Williams Mullen  
Gene Cavazos, Director of Marketing & Communications  
Brian Smith, Chief of Staff  
Erin Glen, Interim Chief CIO/CTO  
William Harrell, President and CEO  
Tom Holden, Media Relations Specialist  
Keith Johnson, Paratransit Services Contract Administrator  
Sibyl Pappas, Chief Engineering & Facilities Officer  
Jim Price, Chief of Bus Operations  
Luis Ramos, Sr. Executive Assistant/Commission Secretary  
Benjamin Simms, Director of Transportation & Security  
Robert Travers, Corporate Counsel  
Kim Wolcott, Chief of Human Resources

## **Others in attendance via phone:**

Brian DeProfio, City of Hampton

The TDCHR meeting package was distributed electronically to all Commissioners in advance of the meeting. The meeting package consisted of:

- Agenda
- Summary of supporting information for Agenda

## **Public Comments**

There were no public comments due TDCHR Meeting being held telephonically for emergency purposes.

## **President's Monthly Report**

Mr. William Harrell welcomed everyone to the meeting. Comments were made by Chairman Hunter and CEO William Harrell prior to the meeting starting.

Mr. Robert Travers stated that only items related to the COVID-19 and the related Essential Service Plan can be discussed on the call.

Mr. Harrell called on key staff members to provided updates on agency activities related to the COVID-19. The reports by staff included the following:

- Mitigation tactics supporting health and safety
- Ridership and service updates: Essential Service Plan
- Communications and customer relations
- Workforce update
- Financial update
- Emergency State/Federal policy actions
- Future Meetings

Staff recommended to the Commission for a motion to approve the Essential Service Plan effective Tuesday, March 31, 2020, in response to COVID-19.

A motion was made by Commissioner Woodbury to approve the Essential Service Plan. The motion was properly seconded by Commissioner Fuller. A roll call vote resulted as follows:

Ayes: Commissioners Hunter, Gray, Fuller, Hamel, Pittard, Kanoyton, Woodbury, Cipriano, McClellan, Rowe, Ross-Hammond, and Reel.

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Commissioner Rowe noted that Route 43 was not on the Essential Service Plan and would like to have an off-line conversation with staff to add Route 43 which services the Portsmouth Naval Hospital.

Commissioner Rowe motioned that if it is determined that Route 43 is necessary it will be added to the Essential Service Plan and the President & CEO shall have the authority to authorize the addition without bringing it back to the board for vote. The motion was properly seconded by Commissioner Cipriano. A roll call vote resulted as follows:

Ayes: Commissioners Hunter, Gray, Fuller, Hamel, Pittard, Kanoyton, Woodbury, Cipriano, McClellan, Rowe, Ross-Hammond, and Reel.

Nays: None

Abstain: None

### **Old and New Business**

None

### **Comments by Commissioners**

#### **Chesapeake-**

Commissioner Hammel noted that reduced ridership during this emergency event may have a potentially useful impact in a time that paratransit service concerns need to be addressed. Commissioner Hammel shared his appreciation to HRT staff in this time of crisis.

#### **Hampton-**

Commissioner Gray stated that he was grateful that HRT staff restored the commuter routes to the Essential Service Plan on the Peninsula. Commissioner Kanoyton asked if cities will also get copy of the press release announcing service changes and Mr. Harrell noted that cities will receive the information.

#### **Newport News-**

Commissioner Woodbury stated that she was glad the commuter routes on the Peninsula were added back into the Essential Service Plan.

There was discussion regarding enhanced cleaning and procurement of emergency support. Ms. Pappas noted that HRT is able to use an existing contract for some enhanced cleaning and an additional emergency procurement for disinfectant spraying. Mr. Amoruso spoke to the Essential Service Plan, stating that services are operating seven days per week, except the PCS routes.

Alternate Commissioner Cipriano stated that she appreciated HRT staff's hard work and echoed the remarks by Commissioner Gray and Commissioner Woodbury related to the commuter routes.

Ms. Cipriano stated that she would like to discuss off-line the possibility of also putting route 64 to Smithfield into the Essential Service Plan. Ms. Cipriano also asked if HRT is tracking expenses related to COVID-19,, including expenses related to exempt employees. It was noted that HRT is

tracking these expenses. Mr. Amoruso noted the route 64 could be evaluated further and it is currently averaging 3 to 4 riders per trip.

**Norfolk-**

Commissioner McClellan thanked staff for their hard work and inquired about staffing capacity. There was discussion regarding staffing and the accommodations that have been made. It was noted that operations impacts have been minimal at current stage and total staffing was reported at 94 percent.

There was discussion regarding not collecting fares and allowing bus boardings through rear doors only. It was noted that HRT has been tracking this and impacts elsewhere. There was discussion concerning financial impacts to cities if free fares were implemented. HRT staff will pull together information and report back options in two weeks.

Alternate Commissioner Inman thanked the HRT team and supports the Essential Service Plan. She expressed appreciation for HRT staff participating in Norfolk’s service planning during this time.

**Portsmouth-**

Commissioner Rowe commended Mr. Harrell and his team for the Essential Service Plan and their plan for providing a safe and healthy service. A concern for route 43 and connectivity to Portsmouth Naval Hospital was noted for discussion off-line. Alternate Commissioner Jackson stated that he is looking forward to the route 43 discussion.

Commissioner Hunter inquired if there was any new information from the Attorney General related to guidelines for meetings during the emergency. Mr. Travers noted there was no new information.

**Virginia Beach-**

Alternate Commissioner Reel shared her gratitude for HRT staff. She noted the importance of the hospital connections. Ms. Reel stated that there have been no additional discussions related to trolley service and that would be subject for additional work.

**DRPT-**

Commissioner Pittard echoed the sentiments of previous commissioners related to the appreciation for HRT staff.

Mr. Pittard stated that it is important for everyone to remain positive and to maintain good lines of communication. He also noted the importance of planning for the long term and concerns about shortfalls and gaps in available funding that extend into funding cycles beyond the emergency itself.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 2:27 pm.

**TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT COMMISSION  
OF HAMPTON ROADS**

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**Brad Hunter**  
**Chair**

**ATTEST:**

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**Luis Ramos**  
**Commission Secretary**  
**March 26, 2019**