



Meeting of the Transportation District Commission of Hampton Roads

Wednesday December 3rd, , 2025, at 1:30 p.m.
509E. 18th Street, Norfolk, VA – In Person - Zoom

Chair Goodwin called the meeting to order at 1:40 p.m.

Commissioners in attendance:

Commissioner Anthony Goodwin, ELAC Chair, Portsmouth
Commissioner Roland White, Hampton

Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) staff in attendance:

Alexis Majied, Chief Communications Officer
Noelle Pinkard, Organizational Advancement Officer
Petra Jovanovic, Executive Assistant
Thomas Becher, Communications Manager
John Powell, Telecommunications Specialist
Caleb Smith, Military and Government Affairs Outreach Liaison

Others in attendance via phone/(Zoom)/In-Person:

Mike Miller, The Ferguson Group
Jeremiah Van Auken, The Ferguson Group
Jeffrey Burke, The Ferguson Group
Sheri Neil, City of Portsmouth
Annika Eng, Access Point Public Affairs
Cassidy Taylor, Access Point Public Affairs
Mindy Carlin, Access Point Public Affairs

Approval of November 5th, 2025, Meeting Minutes

Chairman Goodwin asked for a motion to approve the minutes from September 2025, October 2025 and November 2025 External and Legislative Advisory Committee (ELAC). Lacking a quorum, the vote was postponed until the January ELAC meeting.

Federal Legislative Report

Mike Miller and Jeremiah Van Auken of The Ferguson Group provided the federal legislative update by giving details on the federal government reopening and information about the current continuing resolution which funds the government until January 30,

2026. Federal departments and agencies are operating normally, but continued operations after January 30, 2026, are contingent on either the passage of a full-year spending package, a short-term Continuing Resolution (CR), or a long-term CR. HRT has a \$850,000 earmark for the paratransit fleet pending in the House version of the FY26 Transportation Housing and Urban Affairs (THUD) appropriations bill.

House and Senate Committees are actively working on their proposals for the upcoming surface transportation reauthorization bill. A draft from the House is expected early next year. House Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I) Chairman Sam Graves and Ranking Member Rick Larsen are opposed to the reported Administration proposals to eliminate the Mass Transit Account of the Highway Trust Fund and state Department of Transportation (DOT) spending flexibilities. The reported proposals would eliminate the Highway Trust Fund's Mass Transit Account, which has historically supplied roughly 80 percent of federal public transportation funding, and eliminate the Federal Highway Administration's eligibility to fund transit projects while also prohibiting state DOTs from using highway formula funds for transit purposes.

State Legislative Update

Mindy Carlin of Access Point provided the state legislative update and provided comments on the Commonwealth of Virginia's revenue and budget outlook. FY2025 revenues exceeded the forecast by \$572 million, and the total General Fund grew by 6.1%. FY2026 revenue collections through October rose by 5.5% over the same period in FY2025. Looking ahead to the FY2026-2028 base budget of \$32.7 billion, it is expected that available resources should exceed the base budget by \$5.7 billion with mandatory spending of \$4.5 billion

There are implications for this budget outlook for HRT. State budget flexibility exists, but it will be tied to economic performance in high-income segments. With uncertain revenue growth ahead, there's likely to be pressure to keep new spending targeted toward one-time or high-priority items. Infrastructure-focused funding may have support if framed as one-time or critical investments. State funding is not likely to support HRT's long-term sustainability needs.

The following dates for important upcoming legislative activities were provided:

- December 17, 2025 – Governor releases proposed budget
- January 10, 2026 – Inauguration of Governor-elect
- January 14, 2026 – Legislative session convenes
- January 26, 2026 – Transit Advocacy Day (Richmond)
- March 14, 2026 – Session adjourns (expected)

Marketing & Strategic Communications Department update

Alexis Majied presented the Committee with a Marketing and Communications update.

HRT had a very successful event on November 14th, 2025, at MacArthur Square light rail station and outdoor pavilion in downtown Norfolk. At this event HRT introduced its Winter Wonderland train, a specially wrapped Tide light rail vehicle emblazoned with a design embracing the season.

The decorated vehicles will operate through mid-February, giving customers a festive experience as they get around this winter.

The campaign was paid for through a Commuter Assistance Program (CAP) grant HRT's Marketing team received from the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation.

HRT also participated in the 39th annual Grand Illumination Parade in Downtown Norfolk on Saturday, November 22nd, 2025. Alongside the decorated bus, HRT staff walked with banners that had recruitment messages.

HRT won the most awards of any organization at the annual Pinnacle Awards presented recently by the Hampton Roads chapter of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), recognizing the region's best public relations programs and tactics.

The agency's Marketing and Strategic Communications team earned four excellence and five merit awards across multiple categories, including media relations, video, community relations, branding, and social media.

Excellence Awards were presented for:

- Best community relations campaign, in partnership with the City of Norfolk and the Norfolk Tides, to encourage baseball fans to take transit to ballgames
- Best content marketing to promote OnDemand Ridesharing.
- Best website for goCommute, the region's commuter options program.
- Best Video for HRT's 25th anniversary.

HRT also received Merit Awards for:

- Digital Platform: Going Places podcast
- Media Relations: Take Transit to the Tides
- Shoestring Budget Campaign: HRT's online system map
- Reputation/Brand Management: Rebrand of TRAFFIX to goCommute
- Social Media: Bike Month

New and Old Business

Noelle Pinkard provided an update regarding grant opportunities. She explained that HRT's Planning department is currently engaged in putting together applications for State grant programs. Those applications are due on February 1, 2026. Noelle also provided updates regarding Local Advocacy presentations. HRT has a scheduled meeting with City of Hampton regarding the System Optimization Plan on Wednesday, December 10th, 2025, at City Hall.

Adjournment

With no further business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m.