



External Legislative Advisory Committee Minutes

Wednesday, March 19th, 2025

1:30 PM Hampton, VA

Commissioners in Attendance:

Commissioner Anthony Goodwin, Chair ELAC
Commissioner Roland White, Hampton

Attendees:

Michael D. Hawthorne, Squire Patton Boggs
Sheri Neil, City of Portsmouth
Janice Taylor, League of Women Voters
Cassidy Taylor, Access Point Public Affairs
David Westcott, City of Chesapeake
Gretchen Heal, Hampton Roads Chamber

HRT Staff:

Alexis Majied, Chief Communications Officer
Amy Jordan, Director of Business Development
Noelle Pinkard, Organizational Advancement Officer
Petra Jovanovic, Executive Assistant
Thomas Becher, Communications Manager
Anthony Clemmons, Sr. Client Technology Specialist

The meeting began at 1:30 pm with Commissioner Anthony Goodwin, Chair, calling the meeting to order.

Chairman Goodwin asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the February 19th, 2025, External and Legislative Advisory Committee (ELAC) meeting. Lacking a quorum, the vote was postponed to the April ELAC meeting.

Federal Legislative Update:

Michael Hawthorne of Squire Patton Boggs provided the federal legislative report. The House and Senate narrowly averted a government shutdown by enacting a continuing resolution (CR) funding the federal government through the end of the fiscal year, mainly at FY24 levels. The “clean” CR did not include FY25 earmarks for individual projects. Congress is expected to quickly pivot to FY26 appropriations bills which will likely include earmarks. Challenges to President Trump’s early Executive



Orders, memos, and other early actions remain ongoing, including a review of all Biden Department of Transportation Grants.

State Legislative Update:

Noelle Pinkard provided the state legislative report noting that the Governor has until Monday, March 24th to act on legislation and budget items passed during the 2025 General Assembly session. The reconvened session is scheduled for Wednesday, April 2.

Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation (OLDCC) Flood Resiliency Study

Chair Goodwin presented the Committee with Portsmouth's resiliency and flood mitigation program that is particularly focused on access to military installations. Chair Goodwin emphasized the importance of HRT having a seat at the table in these discussions, as they could provide solutions to challenges like adapting parking lots into retention basins. He also mentioned a Safe Streets initiative to improve pedestrian and bike safety. He suggested that the strategies developed for the City of Portsmouth could be applied to other Hampton Roads cities to support military installations.

DC Advocacy Day

The DC Advocacy trip is scheduled for May 18th, 2025, to discuss appropriations requests for FY26 which coincides with the APTA legislative conference. The conference and hill visits will provide an opportunity to discuss pending issues and meet with the Congressional delegation on potential earmarks and reauthorization issues. The Committee will discuss this in more detail during the next ELAC meeting on April 16th, 2025.

Local Advocacy City Council Presentations

Noelle Pinkard provided Committee with updates regarding Local Advocacy City Council presentations.

HRT is working on scheduling meetings for this summer with all 6 member cities to provide updates on projects in their respective cities and service levels that will be recommended for the next fiscal year. Right now, the city councils are engaged in their budget deliberations.

Marketing & Strategic Communications Department update

Alexis Majied gave the Marketing & Communications update.

The Marketing and Communications team has been working on new recruitments videos. This new campaign will also include billboards and a strong digital and social media component. Majied presented 3 new recruitment videos to the Commission.



Videos are available on the official HRT YouTube channel
<https://www.youtube.com/@hamptonroadstransit2526/videos>

A Community Resource Fair will be held at the Hampton Transit Center on March 25th, 2025, from 2pm-4pm. The same event is scheduled on the Southside at the Newtown Road Light Rail Station on April 8th, 2025. This event is an opportunity for HRT to invite several community organizations to come to our premises and talk to our customers about the different resources that they provide. The Community Service Board, Department of Health Services, YWCA, the United Way and other similar organizations are among the attendees.

The goCommute team will organize the Hampton Roads Bike Expo Event, that was previously managed by the Downtown Norfolk Council. goCommute is excited to extend this into a region-wide program and it will host events on the Peninsula on April 30th, 2025, in Hampton Public Library and on Southside on May 1st, 2025 at the Slover Public Library.

HRT will celebrate Earth Day on Tuesday April 22nd, 2025, offering its customers free fares on all buses, light rail, ferry, OnDemand rideshare and paratransit service. On the same day, Commissioner Ride-alongs will take place, a yearly event when HRT invites commissioners from different communities out to ride a bus and invite the public to ride with them.

Chair Goodwin asked about updates regarding parking issues with the start of the new season at Harbor Park. Majied explained that HRT has been working with the City of Norfolk and Tides to help with parking issue caused by construction work near Harbor Park. As a result, HRT will offer free rides on ferry and light rail 2 hours prior to and after Tides game.

The meeting adjourned at 2:00pm.

The next ELAC meeting is scheduled for April 16th, 2025, in the Norfolk Boardroom.