



**Meeting of the External / Legislative Affairs Committee of
Hampton Roads Transit**

Wednesday, April 15th, 2026 at 1:30pm.

509 E. 18th Street, Norfolk, VA 23504 - In Person - Zoom

Chair Goodwin called the External and Legislative Affairs Committee (ELAC) meeting to order at 1:30 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

Amy Jordan, Director of Business Development

John Powell, Telecommunications Specialist

Caleb Smith, Military and Government Affairs Outreach Liaison

Jayda Aldegon, Hampton Roads Transit

Reagan Reaves, Executive Assistant/Mail Room Attendant

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

Mindy Carlin, Access Point

Janice Taylor, League of Women Voters

Jerri Wilson, City of Newport News

David Westcott, City of Chesapeake

Approval of March 18th, 2026, Meeting Minutes

Chairman Goodwin asked for a motion to approve the minutes from March 18th, 2026, External and Legislative Advisory Committee (ELAC) meeting. Commissioner White made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Chair Goodwin. The committee unanimously approved the minutes.

Federal Legislative Report

Jeremiah Van Auken of The Ferguson Group provided a legislative update reporting that the House and Senate are both in session this week and next week. Mr. Van Auken also reported that House Transportation & Infrastructure (T&I) Committee Chair Sam Graves announced his retirement.

Mr. Van Auken provided ELAC with information on the Surface Transportation Reauthorization Bill reporting that Chairman Graves aims for markup in April and to have the bill on House floor in May. On the Senate side, Environment & Public Works Chair Capito says Senate leadership is still negotiating topline funding levels with White House but continues to target late April or May for markup.

Mr. Van Auken continued that the White House released the Fiscal Year 2027 Presidential Budget on April 3rd. The proposed budget included notable cuts to federal transit and passenger rail programs, including a proposed Federal Transit Administration budget of \$16.3 billion (the agency is currently funded at \$20.9 billion). Mr. Van Auken explained that Presidential budgets serve as policy recommendations, many of which Congress does not follow.

Mr. Van Auken completed his report by updating ELAC on HRT's Fiscal Year 2027 mobile telescoping security unit earmark request. Although the project was not advanced by Rep. Scott or Rep. Kiggans, it can still move forward via Sen. Warner and Sen. Kaine. Noelle Pinkard responded that the House had strict limits on appropriations submissions and noted that Rep. Scott has promoted HRT projects for the last three years.

State Legislative Update

Mindy Carlin of Access Point provided ELAC with a state legislative updated reporting on HJ 28 – the Hampton Roads Regional Transit Study. Ms. Carlin advised ELAC that HJ28 passed the House and Senate and that no action by the Governor was needed. Ms. Carlin explained that the legislation creates a joint subcommittee to study options for providing long-term, sustainable, dedicated funding and cost containment strategies for transit services throughout the Hampton Roads region, including a review of the following:

- Operating and capital needs for HRT, Suffolk Transit, and WATA.
- An evaluation of current and future transit options (bus, light rail, ferry, paratransit, microtransit, and more) to ensure the system can meet the region's growing demand.
- Examination of potential regional revenue sources for new dedicated operating/capital funding for Hampton Roads transit agencies that leverages and exists in addition to current state and local funding commitments, and
- Examination of industry-wide cost-saving and cost-containment strategies to ensure the long-term fiscal sustainability of regional transit operations.

Ms. Carlin concluded her report by noting that the committee will also examine the impacts of telework on regional transit ridership and evaluate the use of local bus services and their fixed routes and the impacts on residents and visitors in the region and consider whether routes should be expanded or altered to best

meet ridership needs. A report with findings and recommendations to be delivered to the General Assembly at the conclusion of a two-year study.

Marketing & Strategic Communications Department update

Alexis Majied presented the Committee with a Marketing and Communications update. Marketing and Strategic Communications has kicked off Earth Month by organizing and hosting community cleanups. Businesses and community organizations are invited to roll up their sleeves and clean up a bus stop or transit center. Our department set the example by cleaning up the site of the Evelyn Butts Transit Center groundbreaking ceremony. If you are interested in participating in a community cleanup, please contact Kayla Schmidt at kschmidt@hrtransit.org.

In mid-March, HRT held its soft launch of the GoMobile fare collection system. Customers can now pay their transit fare by downloading the GoMobile app, loading funds onto the interface, and scanning their device on the validators located on buses and ferries. To prepare for the May 3rd hard launch, we have been working on several collaterals, including flyers, signage, videos, brochures, and more.

May is Bike Month and HRT is planning several events to celebrate. Our Hampton Roads Bike Expos will be back - this time on Thursday, April 30th from 5-7 at The Slover in Norfolk and Saturday, May 2nd from 2-4pm at the Newport News Main Street Library. Attendees will receive information on biking and bike safety, learn the rules of the road and places to ride, meet other bike enthusiasts and connect with area bike vendors.

Later in May is Bike to Work Week, and HRT and goCommute will be hosting several pitstops on Bike to Work Day. Visit gocommute.org for more information.

Lastly, Marketing and Communications continues to promote OnDemand Ridesharing service in Chesapeake and Hampton. Ridership continues to grow since the service launched in January. Look out for some fun social media reels featuring mayors from both cities encouraging their constituents to try OnDemand.

New and Old Business

Chair Goodwin announced that May 20th, 2026, ELAC meeting has been cancelled due to the Virginia Transit Association conference being held at the same meeting time. The next ELAC meeting is scheduled for June 17th, 2026, in the Norfolk boardroom.

Adjournment

With no further business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at 2:20 pm.