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## Workgroup on the Reorganization of the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA)

### Meeting #1 Minutes

#### 1. Attendance:

1. Senator Michael Jackson, Chair, Senate Budget and Taxation Subcommittee on Public Safety, Transportation and Environment Subcommittee
2. Mike Kelly, Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB)
3. Delegate Marc Korman, Chair, House Environment and Transportation Committee
4. Jon Laria, Chair, Baltimore Regional Transit Commission (BRTC)
5. Assistant Secretary Joe McAndrew on behalf of Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) Acting Secretary Samantha Biddle
6. Marly Millic on behalf of Delegate Mark Edelson, House Appropriations Committee
7. Wesley “Wes” Mitchell, MTA Rider
8. Sameer Sidh, MTA Rider
9. Kate Sylvester on behalf of MTA Administrator Holly Arnold

#### 2. Call to Order

1. Assistant Secretary Joe McAndrew called the meeting to order. Mr. McAndrew designated Mr. Sameer Sidh as the Chair of the Workgroup on the Reorganization of the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA).
2. Chair Sidh provided opening comments regarding the Workgroup’s authorizing statute, the Maryland Department of Transportation’s (MDOT) Final Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP), and highlighted transit related investments that included the Light Rail Modernization Program, the Purple Line, the Washington Area Metropolitan Transit Authority (WMATA), and MARC and statewide transit services.
3. Chair Sidh provided guidance to the Workgroup regarding the Open Meetings Act. Chair Sidh made a motion to designate Mr. Sean Winkler, MDOT, as the Open Meetings Act contact for the Workgroup. The motion was seconded by Senator Michael Jackson. **There was no discussion and the motion carried unanimously.**
4. Chair Sidh reviewed the proposed meeting schedule with the Workgroup. Mr. Jon Laria noted a potential conflict with the proposed Workgroup meeting on October 9<sup>th</sup>.

#### 3. Briefings

1. Mr. T. Patrick Tracy, House Environment and Transportation Committee, provided an overview of the Workgroup's authorizing legislation and highlighted the Workgroup has two different reporting dates. The authorizing legislation requires the Workgroup to produce a Final Report on December 1, 2026; however, the budget bill provides a deadline of December 1, 2025. Mr. Tracy noted the Workgroup will have to determine how to respond to the December 1, 2025, reporting requirement. He noted that an Interim type of report may be acceptable to the Maryland General Assembly.
2. Mr. Samuel Quist, Department of Legislative Services, provided an overview of MDOT's governance structure and the consolidated Transportation Trust Fund. He noted the revenue increased that passed in recent legislative sessions.
  - i. Delegate Korman requested a breakdown of Purple Line and MARC funding within MTA's capital and operating funds. He acknowledged this information would likely be addressed in MTA's overview presentation.
  - ii. Delegate Korman asked if MTA had always been structured in its current form and noted the previous existence of a State Rail Administration (SRA).
3. Ms. Kate Sylvester provided an overview of the MTA which included its current governance, service, and funding structure. She also provided an overview of the MTA's capital budget broken down by Baltimore region, Statewide, and MARC services.
  - i. Chair Sidh asked where the Locally Operated Transit System (LOTS) funding is contained, in the operating or capital budget? Ms. Sylvester responded noting LOTS receive both capital and operating funds and that LOTS capital funding is relatively stable due to federal support.
  - ii. Mr. Laria noted that the MTA's Capital Needs Inventory that approximately 90% of MTA's state of good repair investment needs are met. He asked if this was true in the out-years not within the CTP programming years. Ms. Sylvester noted that the 90% funding need is only within the CTP period.
  - iii. Delegate Korman asked if this has always been MTA's governance structure. Ms. Sylvester responded it has not always been. Mr. Korman noted the previous existence of the SRA. Ms. Sylvester responded nothing that governance change is possible. Assistant Secretary McAndrew encouraged the Workgroup to be briefed on the SRA in the future. Mr. Korman asked if MTA's current structure is unique compared to other State Departments of Transportation and regional transit systems across the nation. Ms. Sylvester responded that MTA's structure is relatively unique but noted that Massachusetts and Utah have similar structures.
4. Mr. Sean Winkler provided an overview of the Secretary's Office (TSO) with a particular emphasis on rail and transit related functions at TSO.
  - i. During Mr. Winkler's comments regarding TSO's Office of Rail and Intermodal Freight, Senator Michael Jackson asked if Mr. Winkler could

comment on TSO's coordination with freight railroads. Mr. Winkler noted that MDOT works closely with Class I freight railroads, Amtrak, and short line railroads to identify projects and service opportunities. He noted that, ultimately, MDOT needs railroad permission for project and service activities given they are the infrastructure and right of way owners in most cases.

- ii. Delegate Korman asked if there was an opportunity to consolidate certain functions like human resources, government affairs, and public information out of the Secretary's Office. Mr. Winkler responded that these functions at TSO are able to provide a global perspective of all multi-modal issues facing the Department; at the modes, these functions are focused on their specific services and unique workforce requirements.
- iii. Chair Sidh asked if the capital functions at MTA used to be at TSO and if the current arrangement creates bifurcation. Ms. Sylvester noted that MTA is the direct Federal Transit Administration (FTA) recipient for the State of Maryland and leads specific transit related compliance for subrecipients, like local governments that receive federal LOTS funding.
- iv. Senator Jackson asked about TSO's real estate function and noted an opportunity for enhanced transit oriented development (TOD) coordination in Prince George's County. Assistant Secretary McAndrew noted the State's TOD leadership role is focused on state-owned assets, primarily parking lots located near MARC stations. MDOT, in partnership with the Moore-Miller Administration, is focused on turning these underutilized assets into economic and transit ridership generators.
- v. Delegate Korman noted MTA's request for personnel support this session for the Purple Line's police force. He asked for a breakdown of what Purple Line services and functions are the responsibility of the public-private partnership (P3) contractor and which are the responsibility of the State of Maryland. Ms. Sylvester responded noting that the P3 contractor is primarily responsible for operating the system when it is complete and in revenue service. Mr. Korman asked if there is opportunity to consolidate the FTA required State Safety Oversight (SSO) program in the greater Washington region and noted the unique arrangement at WMATA. He also asked if the Purple Line workforce would be governed by FTA or the National Labor Relations Board. MDOT and MTA noted they would follow up on these topics, but they would have to be coordinated with FTA.

## 5. Other Business

- i. Chair Sidh moved to other business and noted for the Workgroup that the Central Maryland Transportation Alliance had provided a briefing memo to the Workgroup.
- ii. Mr. Laria noted that the next two proposed meeting topics are on MTA's contracts, federal relationship, and workforce. He asked what the process

was for requesting meeting topics and identifying potential briefings. Chair Sidh responded that the next two meetings are required by the legislation to identify all contractual relationships and note potential changes that would be required if MDOT and MTA are reorganized.

- iii. Delegate Korman noted that an Interim Report was not particularly unusual. He suggested MDOT and the Chair would submit a letter to the Budget Committees and negotiate in good faith with the Maryland General Assembly on what to include. Chair Sidh noted the Workgroup will revisit the Interim Report topic.
  - iv. Senator Jackson requested a formal designee process be determined by the Workgroup as he noted an upcoming conflict for the September meeting.
  - v. Mr. Winkler requested the Workgroup to please provide him with contact information to create an accurate member roster for communications.
6. Adjournment.
- i. Chair Sidh moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Laria seconded. **There was no discussion and the motion to adjourn carried unanimously.**