

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

Meeting #5 Minutes

1. Attendance:

- a. MTA Administrator Holly Arnold
- b. Delegate Mark Edelson, House Appropriations Committee
- c. Mike Kelly, Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB)
- d. Delegate Marc Korman, Chair, House Environment and Transportation Committee
- e. Jon Laria, Chair, Baltimore Regional Transit Commission (BRTC)
- f. Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) Assistant Secretary Jaclyn Hartman, on behalf of Acting Secretary Samantha Biddle
- g. Senator Cory McCray, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
- h. Wesley "Wes" Mitchell, MTA Rider
- i. Sameer Sidh, MTA Rider, Chair

2. Call to Order

- a. Chair Sidh called the meeting to order and welcomed all participants, noting that this was anticipated to be the last meeting of the 2025 interim session.
- b. Chair Sidh requested review and approval of the minutes from Meeting #4. Chair Sidh made a motion to approve the minutes from Meeting #4. A second was provided by Mr. Kelly. **The minutes were approved unanimously.**
- c. Chair Sidh informed the Workgroup that approval of the minutes from Meeting #5 would be sought electronically for public posting. He requested the Workgroup's review and cooperation with that process.

3. Reports and Briefings

- a. Presentation on Option C Governance Structure and MDOT/MTA Implementation Considerations – Chair Sameer Sidh and Sean Winkler, Senior Policy Advisor, MDOT
 - i. Chair Sidh provided a brief recap of the last meeting and the request to provide the Workgroup a refined Option C, reflecting the consensus reached at the previous meeting regarding MTA governance reform.
 - ii. Mr. Winkler provided a presentation on existing governance bodies at MDOT, Option C, and implementation considerations from MDOT and MTA. For the record, Mr. Winkler read an email from Senator Cory McCray, who was unable to attend, sharing his desire for representation to be provided for anchor institutions and labor on any governance body for the Baltimore region as well as the commuter services area.
 - iii. Delegate Korman asked for clarification regarding the proposed ex-officio membership.

1. Mr. Winkler noted it was the incorrect utilization of the word, and the intent was for the ex-officio members noted to be non-voting members, not necessarily ex-officio.
- iv. Mr. Laria expressed concern regarding a potential voting role for the MDOT Secretary on the Baltimore Core Service (BCS) Board of Directors. He noted that while the Secretary serves on other MDOT governance board, a formal vote for the Secretary may impact on the independent nature of the Board to consider MTA's budget request.
- v. Delegate Korman also noted Senator McCray's request to shift the BCS Board of Director seats to accommodate an anchor institution that provides transit service. There was consensus from the Workgroup members that, in regard to a labor union seat, the Office of Attorney General would be consulted given potential collective bargaining agreement impacts.
- vi. Mr. Winkler proposed a motion to the Workgroup that – would add an anchor institution seat to the BCS Board of Directors and remove the Secretary's voting role and make it a non-voting, ex-officio role. Chair Sidh made the motion as proposed. Delegate Edelson seconded the motion. **There was no discussion and the motion carried unanimously.**
- vii. Delegate Edelson noted that the intent of the potential BCS Board of Director power to approve the withdrawal of Capital Investment Grant projects was to insulate the region from a potential future antagonistic Administration. He requested that this approval authority require a supermajority of the BCS Board, ensuring a local government would have to concur with the Governor's request. No objections were raised to this request.
- viii. Mr. Laria noted, in his role on the BRTC, that the MTA budget request process has improved this year, but was still a work in progress. He noted again the potential conflict of interest a voting role of the Secretary of the Transportation, especially since the budget request approval would ultimately be non-binding on MDOT and it would retain final budgetary control through the CTP process and the Governor's Budget Request. Mr. Laria inquired about the operating budget process.
 1. Assistant Secretary Hartman provided the Workgroup with an approximate timeline and process for the operating budget. Early December was acknowledged as a potential request timeline for the Boards regarding the operating budgets.

b. Interim Report Considerations – Mr. Winkler

- i. Mr. Winkler provided potential consensus Workgroup findings for the Interim Report, as well as a brief history of prior meetings and the Workgroup's legislative mandates.
 - ii. Chair Sidh noted that the recommendations developed by the Workgroup would provide the overarching approval needed to draft the interim report, which is due December 1st. He requested the Workgroup to formally approve the proposed recommendations to ensure report drafting could commence.
 - iii. Delegate Korman requested the inclusion of a finding to request a study of a potential rail authority for the State of Maryland. He requested that the study include a discussion of peer systems, potential financial models, and considerations to potentially improve and fund rail improvements.
 1. Mr. Laria stated that while the Workgroup was not charged with determining revenue sources, it is the elephant in the room. He suggested that the findings include a note regarding revenue.
 2. Mr. Winkler noted that the findings in front of the Workgroup currently includes a finding regarding revenue.
 3. Assistant Secretary Hartman noted that the rail authority study would, by its nature, include a discussion of revenue sources and would be outside of the purview of the Workgroup and its stated goals.
 4. Delegate Korman requested the Workgroup vote on the recommendations to include the rail authority study.
- iv. Chair Sidh made a motion to approve the proposed findings with the inclusion of a rail authority study. Delegate Korman provided a second. **There was no further discussion and the motion carried unanimously.**
- v. Delegate Korman also requested that MDOT and MTA provide a discussion of the Purple Line and why it may not fit neatly into the currently proposed governance options.
- vi. Delegate Korman noted that, given the breadth of the governance reform proposals and MDOT and MTA's engagement to-date on the Workgroup, he did not see a need for the Workgroup to continue its work into 2026, assuming there would be support for a consensus legislative proposal that results from the Workgroup's findings.

4. Other Business

- a. Chair Sidh encouraged the sharing of a draft report among the Workgroup for finalization prior to submission to the General Assembly, noting that Thanksgiving week scheduling constraints would require coordinated effort. Chair Sidh noted that if an extension beyond December 1st is needed to ensure all partners have had a chance to review, he is hopeful there will be no objection to

granting MDOT a brief extension given the fast-paced nature of the Workgroup's efforts.

- b. Appreciation was expressed for the members' leadership and contributions throughout the process. Chair Sidh and other members noted that the Workgroup had completed two years of work in six months.
- c. Chair Sidh thanked all members for their engagement and productive collaboration, noting that the diverse perspectives and expertise at the table had led to substantive recommendations that can now be documented.

5. Adjournment

- a. Chair Sidh moved to adjourn the meeting. Delegate Edelson provided a second.

The motion to adjourn carried unanimously.