



112 MacTanly Place  
Staunton, VA 24401

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**BRITE Transit Advisory Committee Meeting Summary  
January 9, 2019, 2:30 p.m.**

Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission  
112 MacTanly Place  
Staunton, VA 24401

	Name	Organization
✓	Steve Rosenberg	City of Staunton
✓	Jennifer Whetzel	County of Augusta
✓	Luke Juday	City of Waynesboro
✓	Karen Clark	Augusta Health
✓	Russell Neyman	Wilson Workforce & Rehabilitation Center
✓	Julie Markowitz	Staunton Downtown Development Association
✓	Terry Rodgers	Shenandoah Valley Social Services
✓	Cynthia Page	Blue Ridge Community College
✓	Becky Messer	Transit Service Rider
✓	Susan Newbrough	Virginia Regional Transit
	Steve Hennessee	Department of Rail and Public Transportation

	Name	Organization
✓	Nancy Gourley	CSPDC
✓	Devon Thompson	CSPDC
	Bonnie Riedesel	CSPDC
✓	Zach Beard, CSPDC	
✓	Connie Fahey, Staunton Veterans Clinic	

**Call to Order**

The meeting of the BRITE Transit Advisory Committee (BTAC) was called to order at 2:32 PM by Ms. Terry Rodgers, Chairperson.

**Public Comment**

Chair Rodgers opened the floor for public comment. There were no public comments.

**Approve Minutes**

Chair Rodgers presented the minutes from the November 14, 2018 BTAC meeting.

Ms. Karen Clark moved, seconded by Ms. Jennifer Whetzel, to approve the minutes of the November 14, 2018 meeting, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.



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## **Business**

Bylaw Amendment Action: Ms. Nancy Gourley reminded the committee of the proposed bylaw amendment introduced at the November 2018 BTAC meeting. The amendment addressed membership and removed the CATS Board representative, since they are no longer in existence, and replaced with a second rider representative. The committee recommended to move this amendment forward to the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (CSPDC) Commissioners for action, which was done at the Commission's December meeting. The CSPDC Commission voted to endorse the recommendation of the BTAC.

The next steps will be to advertise and recruit the new rider representative, and Ms. Gourley indicated that staff was open to suggestions on the best approach for soliciting interested riders. Ms. Whetzel believed all the avenues available to publicize that were discussed at the November meeting were sufficient. Ms. Julie Markowitz suggested that drivers could make recommendations as well. Ms. Gourley indicated that work will move forward on soliciting expressions of interest, and get a representative in place by the March meeting.

Ms. Becky Messer inquired about how she was selected to be a rider representative. Ms. Gourley indicated that during the original selection of representatives the CSPDC Commission appointed the organizations to be represented and those organizations named the representative. Ms. Messer was recommended, and expressed interest in being involved with the committee.

250 Connector Study Update: Ms. Gourley indicated that the 250 Connector Study is underway. Many committee members are participating in the stakeholder group, who is working with the consultant, Kimley-Horn. The rider survey had recently been completed, and there was some media coverage on the survey and the study. Kimley-Horn is working to develop recommendations that will be presented to this group and then to the public.

FY 2020 DRPT Grant Applications: Ms. Gourley announced that the state grant applications are open. Ms. Gourley indicated that the process is different this year since the General Assembly mandated performance-based funding. Capital applications will be scored similar to SMART SCALE applications, following the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) model. Operations funding will be based on performance measures, such as ridership, cost per passenger, and cost per mile.

The application deadline is February 1, 2019. The CSPDC will be making a minimum of four applications – two capital applications for the contracting and two operating applications for urban and rural. An application may be made for the Town of Bridgewater for up to three bus shelters within the town limits, for which they will provide the local match and be in charge of the installation. The Town has until mid-January to give a definitive answer as to whether they want to move forward with the application.



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Ms. Clark inquired about capital and operating applications. Ms. Gourley indicated the two capital applications are for capital cost of contracting, which is part of operations and the way some of the operations are funded. These applications are made by the CSPDC, and the applications are template-based, supported by numbers and budgets. An inquiry was also made on the success of past applications, and it was indicated that applications have been successful in the past. The money awarded should be equal to or greater than that received the prior year. Ms. Whetzel sought confirmation that the CSPDC is doing both urban and rural funding applications, and this was confirmed by Ms. Gourley.

2019 Triennial Review: Ms. Gourley indicated that this is the year for the Triennial Review with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Initial email correspondence was received in December and staff has been assembling the necessary information. FTA is closed due to the current partial federal government shutdown. At the time of the original correspondence, contracts had not been awarded to those performing the reviews, so a definitive schedule has not been established. The timeline for 2019 reviews will either be delayed or compressed. Staff is moving forward with preparations so they will be ready when the government reopens and a timeline has been provided.

BRITE Punch Cards Update: Ms. Devon Thompson indicated that punch card printing logistics are solved with Mid Valley Press. The committee had expressed interest in economical ways to protect against counterfeiting, and this has been taken into consideration. In November, a recommendation was made to research embossing the cards. There are many detailed and costly steps that go into having paper products embossed, such as the creation of the template, special ordered ink, and the exact footprint of the embossed object.

Through this process, Ms. Susan Newbrough proposed using a gloss card stock to print the punch cards on – similar to what Virginia Regional Transit (VRT) prints their business cards on. The printer proposed using a heavy, gloss card stock with a UV coat on one side. This should be a reasonable measure to protect against counterfeiting, and the cards should be distinct and fairly durable.

Ms. Thompson proposed that staff move forward with pursuing the gloss card stock, and if counterfeiting does become a problem, different methods can be looked into for future versions.

Contractor Update: Ms. Newbrough discussed various items with the committee:

- New Bus Stop Request – Staunton VA Clinic: Ms. Gourley began by giving the history of the Staunton Veterans Clinic bus stop request. A letter was received from the Veteran Outreach Coordinator at the Salem VA Medical Center requesting a bus stop at the Staunton Clinic, located on Lacy B. King Way. Correspondence between BRITE and the Veterans Clinic commenced to gather further information, and staff initiated the process outlined in the BRITE route and bus stop request protocol. BRITE staff conducted the necessary research, and Ms. Newbrough would be presenting the findings. Staff is at the point where they need direction from the committee as to how to move forward with the request. Ms. Gourley also



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introduced Ms. Connie Fahey from the Staunton Veterans Clinic. Ms. Fahey said a few words to address the need of the stop and the population and demographic of those they serve at the clinic, and Ms. Fahey indicated that she would be available for any questions.

Ms. Newbrough presented information on the new bus stop request (refer to the presentation materials attached). Ms. Newbrough provided the committee with background information on the stop's nearest route – the Staunton North & West Loops. This route originally began as the Staunton Silver Trolley in 2001, as a one hour loop operating Monday through Friday. When the service became BRITE, the adopted Transit Development Plan (TDP) recommended breaking the one hour loop into two thirty minute loops. This recommendation was implemented in 2016, creating the North & West Loops. Ms. Newbrough went on to discuss the connectivity and seamless timed transfers provided by the routes. The North & West Loops connect to the 250 Connector, BRCC Shuttle South, and the Downtown Trolley routes. Additionally, the service areas were outlined and increased ridership from 2016 to 2018 was reported. The North & West Loops route map was shown, and Ms. Newbrough indicated where the stop request was in relation to the existing route. The closest stop is 0.9 mile away at Bridge St / Maple St on the West Loop. While the clinic is served by BRITE Access, paratransit service, to serve the clinic with a fixed route the West Loop would have to be altered.

Ms. Newbrough indicated that under the established protocol, this request was classified as a “Adding a Stop to an Existing Route Creating a Significant Impact on a Route.” Some factors considered include: schedule timing impacts; safety check path and stop; BTAC discussion/direction; impacts on current rides; and financial impact. Ms. Newbrough indicated that including the stop on the route would add an additional 15 minutes of travel time – from the existing route to the requested stop and to get back to the route. The current schedule does not allow for additional time. There would be a significant impact to the timed connections made at the Staunton Hub, causing passengers to miss connections to other routes and adding longer wait times. There were no safety issues regarding the clinic location or drop-off or pick-up of passengers. Ms. Newbrough reviewed the current ways to access the stop, including the use of BRITE Access or walking from the current closest bus stops, 0.9 mile and 1 mile away, along Middlebrook Road or Montgomery Avenue, which lack pedestrian amenities. The Veterans Clinic approximated that 100 passengers would utilize the stop, and Ms. Newbrough added that BRITE does not have any data to support the frequency or usage of the stop. Ms. Newbrough stated that this additional stop would create a negative impact on the route, thus requiring a public hearing.

Ms. Cynthia Page inquired as to whether there was any data on the BRITE Access usage. Ms. Newbrough answered that it could be obtained, and of her knowledge there were at least five regular riders who utilize the service to access the stop. Ms. Newbrough specified that BRITE Access is based on eligibility since the service is for passengers with disabilities.



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Ms. Newbrough indicated staff's recommendation of denying the request due to negative impact it would place on the Staunton West Loop's timely and seamless transfers with other BRITE routes and the number of passengers impacted by the change in route. However, BRITE staff is available to work with clinic staff to review other transportation opportunities and ideas to best serve the veterans. Discussion ensued regarding different transportation opportunities, including increased use of BRITE Access, volunteer drivers (currently there are no volunteer drivers for the clinic), and outreach and education. Consensus was reached that the first step would be to do outreach and education at the clinic to the staff and providers and letting them know what transportation options are available.

Ms. Whetzel moved, seconded by Ms. Page, to accept the staff recommendation presented and to move forward with education for individuals and staff at the Veterans Clinic. Motion carried unanimously.

- Demo Driver Assistance Project: Ms. Newbrough reminded committee members of the Demo Driver Assistance Project, in which BRITE was selected by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) to receive three Mobile Eye Shield Plus technologies to be placed on the Staunton Downtown Trolley, 250 Connector, and Waynesboro Circulator. At the previous meeting, it had been reported that installation was delayed, but now all devices have been installed. Currently, the devices are in "stealth" mode – it is not alerting the driver, but is reporting data. Next steps will include scheduling a training for drivers and staff.

Mr. Russ Neyman inquired about the cost of the devices. Ms. Gourley indicated that each device cost \$10,000, but the cost of all three were covered 100% by a state grant.

- Waynesboro Bus Stops & Shelter: Ms. Newbrough indicated, and Mr. Luke Juday confirmed, that Waynesboro received and installed the new bus stop signs; Ms. Thompson and Ms. Jeannie Puffenbarger will be verifying the locations for accuracy later in the week. The shelter for the Waynesboro Public Library was delivered to VRT, along with four other shelters. All shelters were packaged together, and VRT staff is working to disassemble them for Waynesboro Public Works to pick up. In the past, deliveries have been made with individualized packaging, but the bulk packaging style was not anticipated.

Discussion ensued regarding delivery logistics, in particular the transportation of the glass panels. Ms. Julie Markowitz suggested employing a local glass company to deliver the glass, as to reduce liability in transporting it from Fishersville to Waynesboro. BRITE staff will research delivery logistics and confer with Waynesboro.

- VRT Employee of the Year – BRITE Driver: Ms. Newbrough proudly announced that VRT's Employee of the Year was BRITE driver, Mr. Rich Cooper. Mr. Cooper has been with VRT for 15 years and drives the Saturday Night Trolley. His other employment is with the City of Staunton as a mechanic.



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#### Other Business:

- Chair Rodgers introduced the new CSPDC Transportation Planner, Mr. Zach Beard. Mr. Beard introduced himself to the committee and provided them with his background and what programs he would be working with at the CSPDC.
- Ms. Gourley previously mentioned the partial federal government shutdown, and provided further details on the effects. FTA is shutdown, project managers are not available, and money is not available to be drawn down. Ms. Gourley indicated that currently this is not an issue for BRITE, but if the shutdown persists it will become an issue. If that does occur, staff will call a meeting to discuss potential options. Ms. Gourley added that the shutdown affects DRPT since they also draw down money from FTA.

Mr. Juday inquired about the amount of time before the shutdown became an issue, and Ms. Gourley indicated a timeframe of 60-90 days. Ms. Gourley added that the shutdown affects all other agencies, not just BRITE. Ms. Whetzel inquired about recouping costs once the shutdown was over, and Ms. Gourley confirmed that the reimbursements will be made.

- Ms. Thompson indicated that new brochures were available and being delivered. To help with the delivery process, Ms. Thompson would distribute some to committee members to take back to their respective offices. All brochures have been edited, and older copies can be disposed of.
- Ms. Markowitz announced the availability of window displays in the lobby of the Stonewall Jackson Hotel in Staunton. The Staunton Downtown Development Association (SDDA) were given two displays to invite local businesses to advertise in, and Ms. Markowitz suggested that BRITE look into reserving the space and would be available to further discuss this opportunity.

#### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the BTAC, the meeting concluded at 3:22 PM.

The next meeting will be held at the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission office on Wednesday, March 13, 2019 at 2:30 PM.



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**BRITE Transit Advisory Committee Meeting Summary  
March 13, 2019, 2:30 p.m.**

Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission  
112 MacTanly Place  
Staunton, VA 24401

	Name	Organization
✓	Steve Rosenberg	City of Staunton
	Jennifer Whetzel	County of Augusta
	Luke Juday	City of Waynesboro
✓	Karen Clark	Augusta Health
✓	Russell Neyman	Wilson Workforce & Rehabilitation Center
✓	Julie Markowitz	Staunton Downtown Development Association
✓	Terry Rodgers	Shenandoah Valley Social Services
	Cynthia Page	Blue Ridge Community College
✓	Becky Messer	Transit Service Rider
✓	Susan Newbrough	Virginia Regional Transit
✓	Steve Hennessee	Department of Rail and Public Transportation

	Name	Organization
✓	Nancy Gourley	CSPDC
✓	Devon Thompson	CSPDC
	Bonnie Riedesel	CSPDC

**Call to Order**

The meeting of the BRITE Transit Advisory Committee (BTAC) was called to order at 2:33 PM by Ms. Terry Rodgers, Chairperson.

**Public Comment**

Chair Rodgers opened the floor for public comment. There were no public comments.

**Approve Minutes**

Chair Rodgers presented the minutes from the January 9, 2019 BTAC meeting.

Ms. Karen Clark moved, seconded by Mr. Steve Rosenberg, to approve the minutes of the January 9, 2019 meeting, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.



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## **Business**

250 Connector Route Study Update: Ms. Nancy Gourley reminded the committee of the 250 Connector Route Study that is underway with Kimley-Horn. The route is pressed for time, sometimes presenting reliability issues, and it is critical that it remains on schedule since other routes are tied to the connections with the 250 Connector at the hubs. Rider surveys were completed in December, and alternatives will be presented to and reviewed by staff this week. Of those alternatives, two will be finalized and presented to the working group on March 27, 2019. Last minute edits and comments will then be made prior to the first public meeting on April 10, 2019 at Staunton City Council Chambers (116 W Beverley St, Staunton), which will be led by the consultant. If the impacts from these alternatives are significant, additional meetings may be held in Fishersville and Waynesboro, which would be led by the CSPDC. Ms. Gourley indicated that alternatives may consist of shortening or splitting the route.

Ms. Becky Messer indicated that most stops served by this route are vital, and Ms. Gourley agreed that all destinations and stops are popular, thus making it difficult to cut any service unless it was to be served by another route. Ms. Gourley indicated that there is some redundancy in parts of the route that could be eliminated.

2019 Triennial Review Update: Ms. Gourley indicated that the timeline for the Triennial Review continues to be pushed back due to the government shutdown at the beginning of the year. The new date to submit materials has been scheduled for April. At that time, a reviewer will be assigned and documents submitted, and a date for the onsite review would be scheduled.

Ms. Clark made an inquiry regarding the status of available operating funds in the case of another government shutdown. Ms. Gourley indicated that once the government re-opened after the last shutdown, all reimbursement requests went in and were fulfilled. The regular schedule of reimbursements is being maintained, so, if the government were to shutdown again the contingency reserve of operating funds would still be available. Ms. Gourley indicated that after the shutdown, FTA put all their resources into addressing reimbursements.

New Rider Member of BTAC Update: Ms. Devon Thompson indicated that it was originally planned to have a new rider member in place for this meeting, but due to unforeseen circumstances the BTAC sub-committee members were unable to meet with the candidate prior to this meeting. The sub-committee plans on meeting with the candidate prior to the May BTAC meeting.

BRITE Punch Card Update: Ms. Thompson announced that the BRITE farecards were implemented on March 4, 2019. Ms. Susan Newbrough forwarded the tracking report to Ms. Thompson, and after one week of implementation 165 farecards have been sold – 132 \$5 farecards and 33 \$3 farecards. Ms. Thompson passed around the BRITE farecards for the committee members to see the final product, since only a prototype was available at the last meeting. Ms. Newbrough indicated that positive feedback was coming from both riders and





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drivers. On the first day of selling the farecards drivers were provided with five of each of the farecards, and they were selling out quickly and their stocks had to be replenished multiple times throughout the day.

Ms. Clark inquired about the printing of the farecards, and Ms. Thompson indicated that Mid Valley Press printed the cards, which included the UV coating on one side.

Contractor Update: Ms. Newbrough discussed various items with the committee:

- Service: Ms. Newbrough indicated that the service is running well overall. There was no service on February 20, 2019 due to inclement weather.
- Demo Driver Assistance Project: Ms. Newbrough reminded committee members of the Demo Driver Assistance Project, in which BRITE was selected by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) to receive three Mobile Eye Shield Plus technologies to be placed on the Staunton Downtown Trolley, 250 Connector, and Waynesboro Circulator. These devices were installed in late November 2018 and placed in stealth mode, during which there were no alerts but data reports were generated. The devices went live in January 2019, and in February 2019 an overview and training took place with Ms. Newbrough and her Operations Supervisor, Ms. Jeannie Puffenbarger. Ms. Newbrough passed around and talked through informational posters that illustrate what the drivers see from their viewpoint as well as some of the functionalities of the devices (see attached). Ms. Newbrough and Ms. Thompson recently participated in a telematics training webinar with Rosco Vision to review the data reports that are available through the system. Such data includes hot zone mapping, speeding, and different types of alerts.

Ms. Messer inquired as to whether or not the bus drivers were aware of alerts and how they felt about the new system. Ms. Newbrough indicated that drivers are aware of the system, and if an event occurs while driving they are notified on one of the three monitors on the bus. Ms. Newbrough also noted that some of the drivers have mixed feelings about being monitored; but, this is not a camera system, and this is a support system that monitors safety and the potential for vehicular and pedestrian incidents. Mr. Russ Neyman had a few clarification inquiries regarding the system's display on the buses, which Ms. Newbrough addressed accordingly. Ms. Gourley inquired about the speed limit indicator being enabled. Ms. Newbrough indicated that it is enabled and reports can be tailored to show speed limit information in a variety of forms. Ms. Newbrough added that some testing is being done regarding the posted speed limit variable – in some instances the system is not catching speed limit changes. Rosco Vision indicated that information and data can be formatted to better reflect the service area. For instance, Staunton streets are narrower than bus widths, so the notification for lane departure has been modified within historic downtown Staunton. Thus, speed limit information can be altered to be correct in all service areas.



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Ms. Newbrough indicated that more information should be available at the next meeting, with the possibility of doing a demonstration of the data received for the BTAC members.

Ridership Statistics Presentation: Ms. Gourley indicated that ridership data had been requested. Ms. Cindi Johnson, CSPDC, and Ms. Gourley assembled a comprehensive report on ridership data, and Ms. Gourley presented said report (see attached). The presentation covered data such as:

- Total passenger trips by Fiscal Year (2017, 2018, and through January of 2019)
- Average trip profile by fare collection
- Average fixed route trips by day
- Average paratransit trips by day
- Total passenger trips and average trips by day broken down by individual routes (BRCC Shuttles North & South, Stuarts Draft Link, Staunton Downtown Trolley & Saturday Night Trolley, Waynesboro Circulator, 250 Connector, Staunton North & West Loops, and BRITE Access)

Ms. Gourley also provided information on the routes' service areas and operating hours, and provided data analysis, speaking to any trends that were found. Ms. Gourley addressed the various inquiries as they were made throughout the presentation.

Mr. Rosenberg inquired as to whether any ridership goals had been identified. Ms. Gourley indicated that there are ridership projections in the Transit Development Plan (TDP), but ridership has been fairly flat the past three years. There is a general trend that transit ridership is decreasing – so, level ridership is positive news. Ms. Gourley added that generally when the economy is doing well transit ridership declines. Mr. Rosenberg also inquired as to how the ridership data compared to the projected ridership, and Ms. Gourley indicated that current statistics are about on par with the projections.

Mr. Steven Hennessee indicated that DRPT will be using performance based data in the operating formula for fund allocations, and BRITE's data was easily reconciled. Mr. Hennessee complimented Ms. Johnson's thorough work.

Ms. Gourley indicated that the presentation would be electronically mailed to BTAC members, and they could distribute and share the data accordingly. Ms. Gourley noted that, if requested, the data could be provided in different formats.

Other Business:

- Ms. Gourley announced that new BRITE promotional materials have been purchased – pens, chapstick, chip clips, and hand sanitizer. These promotional items are distributed at the various outreach events and fairs BRITE participates in.
- Ms. Thompson announced that new Virginia Breeze brochures had been printed and were available for BTAC members. Ms. Gourley noted that additional pick-up and drop-off times had been added for Friday



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and Sunday evenings. Mr. Rosenberg made an inquiry regarding the development of an additional route, to which Mr. Hennessee and Ms. Gourley indicated that DRPT staff was looking into new routes and public surveys previously administered indicated a need for connecting Lynchburg to Richmond and the Route 29 Corridor.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the BTAC, the meeting concluded at 3:12 PM.

The next meeting will be held at the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission office on Wednesday, May 8, 2019 at 2:30 PM.



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**BRITE Transit Advisory Committee Meeting Summary  
May 8, 2019, 2:30 p.m.**

Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission  
112 MacTanly Place  
Staunton, VA 24401

	Name	Organization
✓	Steve Rosenberg	City of Staunton
✓	Jennifer Whetzel	County of Augusta
✓	Luke Juday	City of Waynesboro
	Karen Clark	Augusta Health
✓	Russell Neyman	Wilson Workforce & Rehabilitation Center
✓	Julie Markowitz	Staunton Downtown Development Association
✓	Terry Rodgers	Shenandoah Valley Social Services
✓	Cynthia Page	Blue Ridge Community College
✓	Becky Messer	Transit Service Rider
✓	Susan Newbrough	Virginia Regional Transit
	Steve Hennessee	Department of Rail and Public Transportation

	Name	Organization
✓	Nancy Gourley	CSPDC
✓	Devon Thompson	CSPDC
	Bonnie Riedesel	CSPDC
✓	Paul Terry, Transit Rider	
✓	Steve Wilson, Virginia Regional Transit	

**Call to Order**

The meeting of the BRITE Transit Advisory Committee (BTAC) was called to order at 2:30 PM by Ms. Terry Rodgers, Chairperson.

Two introductions were made. Ms. Susan Newbrough introduced Mr. Steve Wilson, the new Safety and Fleet Specialist for Virginia Regional Transit (VRT). Chair Rodgers introduced Mr. Paul Terry, the new transit service rider member of the committee.

**Public Comment**

Chair Rodgers opened the floor for public comment. There were no public comments.



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### **Approve Minutes**

Chair Rodgers presented the minutes from the March 13, 2019 BTAC meeting.

Mr. Luke Juday moved, seconded by Mr. Russell Neyman, to approve the minutes of the March 13, 2019 meeting, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Business**

250 Connector Route Study Update: Ms. Nancy Gourley provided an update on the 250 Connector Route Study. Ms. Gourley indicated that the route study has been on-going since late November 2018. In December 2018, rider surveys were completed, and after evaluating the data the consultant has proposed two alternatives for the route – splitting or shortening the route. In April 2019, two public meetings were hosted in Staunton and Waynesboro. Attendance wasn't high, thus there was little feedback gained. Information and public comment cards were made available on the buses in the month of April. Additionally, a driver roundtable was hosted and insightful feedback was received from the drivers on the proposed alternatives. Drivers know the service and know riders' needs.

Alternative 1 proposed shortening the route. This alternative introduced the idea of starting a new route in Staunton, the South Loop, which would run from the Staunton Hub/Lewis Street to Staunton Walmart via Greenville Avenue. That particular segment of the route would be taken off the current 250 Connector route, and the 250 Connector would be able to travel directly from the Staunton Hub/Lewis Street to Staunton Walmart without having to cover Greenville Avenue stops. An additional modification included relocating the Waynesboro Hub from the Waynesboro Walmart to Downtown Waynesboro – this was proposed in both Alternative 1 and 2. The exact location of the Downtown Waynesboro Hub will be determined in the future in conjunction with City of Waynesboro staff .

Alternative 2 proposed splitting the route. This alternative introduced the idea of having a Staunton 250 Connector and a Waynesboro 250 Connector, and both buses would hub and transfer at Augusta Health. One of the challenges with this idea was that Augusta Health is not the half-way point of the current 250 Connector route – the actual halfway point is nearer the intersection of Route 250 and Sangers Lane and Rowe Road. This could create some timing issues with the schedule.

A comparison of the two alternatives, including cost, reliability, productivity, convenience, and safety, was completed. Ms. Gourley indicated that one of the main differences between the two alternatives was that Alternative 1 called for an additional bus and route, which was a significant budget impact.

Neither alternative is appropriate at this time, so staff worked with the consultant to develop a phased approach incorporating ideas from both alternatives to attain immediate benefits (this phased approach will be added to the consultant's final report). This phased approach would allow for near- and long-term improvements to be made, as needed. Some long-term projects would allow time for additional infrastructure and funds to be



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available; for example, the alternative that proposed an additional bus route to serve the new developments at Frontier Center and Staunton Crossing would be better suited when both locations are fully developed. Some near-term improvements that would be made have already been projected and budgeted in the five-year plan. In the coming fiscal years:

- Discontinue the 250 Connector traveling on Barterbrook Road in Staunton and the Staunton Mall would be accessed via Greenville Avenue.
- Extend afternoon/evening service hours on the Stuarts Draft Link to match the schedule of the Waynesboro Circulator.
- Change Valley View Senior Apartments from a regular stop to a CALL stop. Ridership numbers show there is not enough demand to have the bus stop every single time, and this would help with timing on the 250 Connector.
- Add two service hours per day on the two BRITE Access paratransit buses, and have them support the 250 Connector route during high capacity times for the route.

Mr. Neyman inquired as to whether or not those changes would use existing drivers to operate or need additional drivers. Ms. Newbrough answered that it would be dependent upon when the changes would be implemented and the number of hours that would be added, but most likely, a few additional drivers would need to be hired to cover most of those changes. Mr. Paul Terry inquired about potential route changes to the Waynesboro Circulator and Stuarts Draft Link. Mr. Terry indicated currently the Waynesboro Circulator leaves the Waynesboro Hub and travels to the Waynesboro Town Center and suggested that the Stuarts Draft Link travel to the Waynesboro Town Center. Ms. Newbrough indicated that this potential change had been suggested, and Ms. Gourley noted she would address this later on in the presentation.

Ms. Gourley outlined potential phase two, long-term improvements:

- Relocate the Waynesboro Hub from Waynesboro Walmart to Downtown Waynesboro. There would need to be concurrence with the City of Waynesboro as well as a determined accessible location and added infrastructure, like bus shelters. This change would also constitute changing the existing route.
- Serve Waynesboro Town Center, Waynesboro Walmart, and Lew Dewitt Boulevard with the Stuarts Draft Link, which would mean the Link route would no longer serve the Augusta Health campus. Stuarts Draft Link riders would transfer to the 250 Connector to travel to the hospital. The drivers noted the redundancy of the Stuarts Draft Link and the 250 Connector serving the Augusta Health campus.
- Change the Stuarts Draft Retirement Community stop from a regular stop to a CALL stop. This has not been a heavily used stop.
- Serve Medical Park Drive at Augusta Health with the 250 Connector, across from the campus and off of Lifecore Drive. This stop would be preceded or followed by the stop at the Medical Office Building (MOB). Augusta Health indicated that a shelter could be installed at a determined location along the Drive. Calls for drop-offs and pick-ups are requested currently.



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- Remove Greenville Avenue from the 250 Connector route. Instead of having a new South Loop route as the proposed alternative, use the Staunton Downtown Trolley. Currently, the Staunton Downtown Trolley is the only route in the system that operates on a half hour headway, and if it were to serve Greenville Avenue it would then operate on an hour headway.
- Start service on the Staunton Downtown Trolley earlier, if used to cover Greenville Avenue. Currently service begins at 10 AM on the Staunton Downtown Trolley, but it would need to be changed to match the 250 Connector schedule.
- Serve more of the Frontier Center and Staunton Crossing developments once they have been built out to their extent.

Mr. Steve Rosenberg sought clarification and inquired about the changes to the Staunton Downtown Trolley. This would mean patrons in the historic downtown area would wait twice as long for service, and Mr. Rosenberg was unsure if this would be consistent with the original intent of the Staunton Downtown Trolley and voiced his concerns. Ms. Julie Markowitz indicated she may have access to origin history on the Staunton Downtown Trolley that could be shared and reviewed. Ms. Gourley indicated that all of these changes are proposed ideas, and more discussion would be needed to move forward with any decision. Ms. Jennifer Whetzel sought additional clarification of the phased improvements to the 250 Connector. The route itself will see minimal modifications initially with changes to other routes providing support to the 250 Connector. Ms. Newbrough confirmed and indicated that more paratransit vehicles would be a large help to the 250 Connector, as there are many calls for route deviations. Proposed changes outlined would work towards adding more time into the 250 Connector, and in the future more improvements could be evaluated for the route.

In discussing phased improvements to the 250 Connector, Ms. Gourley also indicated two additional service changes, not part of the 250 Connector study:

- Add Saturday service for the Waynesboro Circulator and Staunton North & West Loops.
- Add service hours to the Blue Ridge Community College Shuttles on Friday evening – ridership numbers indicate passengers don't use the Shuttles on Fridays because they are not able to get home from work.

Bus Shelters Update: Ms. Devon Thompson updated the committee on the status of bus shelter installations within the service area. Ms. Thompson indicated that the Waynesboro Public Library shelter was installed in April, thanks to the coordinated efforts of VRT, Waynesboro Public Works, and Staunton Glass and Mirror. The next installation has been scheduled at Augusta County Library. Augusta County maintenance staff has picked up the shelter from the BRITE Transit Facility, and efforts will be coordinated with Staunton Glass and Mirror again for the transportation and installation of the safety glass. Lastly, the Bridgewater shelters have been recommended for funding, and once approved the shelters will be ordered in the Summer and should arrive around Fall/Winter.

2019 Triennial Review Update: Ms. Gourley indicated that the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) had executed the contracts with the consultants that would be conducting the comprehensive reviews. The Central Shenandoah



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Planning District Commission's (CSPDC) deadline for documentation submission was May 3, 2019. To prepare, staff will attend a two-day workshop at the end of June in Richmond, VA. The onsite review has been tentatively scheduled for the end of September 2019.

Contractor Update: Ms. Newbrough discussed various items with the committee:

- Service: Ms. Newbrough indicated that the service is running well overall, and there was an increase in ridership in April.
- Community Transportation Association of Virginia's Annual ROADEO: Ms. Newbrough announced that VRT participated in the Community Transportation Association of Virginia's (CTAV) Annual ROADEO on April 13, 2019. Drivers from all over the state participated in this ROADEO, and VRT's two representatives were BRITE drivers. Both drivers won awards – one placed 5<sup>th</sup> and the other placed 10<sup>th</sup> in the entire ROADEO (out of 35 participants).
- Demo Driver Assistance Project: Ms. Newbrough reminded committee members of the Demo Driver Assistance Project, in which BRITE was selected by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) to receive three Mobile Eye Shield Plus technologies to be placed on the Staunton Downtown Trolley, 250 Connector, and Waynesboro Circulator. The devices went live in January 2019.

Ms. Newbrough reviewed device capabilities and demonstrated the data-collecting software. Devices alert drivers of warnings with display and audio alerts. The devices and software highlights various information on the vehicles and driving patterns, such as when the engine is cut off, which warnings were activated, vehicle speed, trip replay, and high risk and hot spot area detection. Data reports can be scheduled and created for each of the vehicles. Staff is awaiting direction as to whether or not this data needs to be reported to DRPT.

Ms. Becky Messer inquired as to whether or not the system has been beneficial. Ms. Newbrough indicated that it has been, and cited an example of monitoring vehicle speeds. Ms. Cynthia Page inquired if there had been any surprises in the data obtained, and Ms. Newbrough answered that so far there have been no surprises. Ms. Newbrough also indicated that staff is working with MobileEye to obtain specific definitions on the alerts as to better understand and use the data. For example, an alert will indicate hard braking, but staff currently does not have a definition as to what constitutes a hard brake. Mr. Juday clarified that the device detects every pedestrian that crosses the bus's path and inquired as to whether or not this data could be disseminated and used for sidewalk and crosswalk planning, and Ms. Newbrough agreed that it could possibly be used in that capacity.

Ms. Newbrough indicated that there had been an earlier issue regarding the placement of the devices on the buses' windshields. The Virginia State Police cited that there are state guidelines prohibiting objects





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installed three inches below the top of a windshield (L3 line), and the devices are placed lower on the windshield. BRITE was not the only transit system in the state questioned for this, and DRPT worked with the State Police to receive a waiver allowing for the placement of the device.

- Farecard Update: Ms. Newbrough reported BRITE farecards sales made since March 2019, when they were introduced. Ms. Newbrough indicated that drivers have found the implementation of the farecards to be beneficial and has led to less passengers not paying. In March, 327 farecards were sold, collecting about \$1,500 in fare revenue, and farecards were used for about 1,900 trips. In April, 318 farecards were sold, collecting about \$1,400 in fare revenue, and farecards were used for about 2,700 trips. Ms. Newbrough indicated that the farecards are proving to be very popular; among the different fare media that are tracked, the farecards are some of the most used. The farecards are most used on the 250 Connector and Waynesboro Circulator routes.

Ms. Jennifer Whetzel inquired about clarification on one of the earlier statements on the farecards and passenger payments, to which Ms. Newbrough clarified that occasionally passengers claim they don't have exact change, and it seems this is happening with less frequency with the farecards being available.

- Preston Yancey Fire Department Visit: Ms. Newbrough indicated that BRITE hosted firefighters from the Preston L. Yancey Fire Department in Fishersville at the transit facility. The firefighters who were in attendance started with a brief introduction, and proposed opportunities for bus fire safety trainings with the drivers and staff. The visit also included a tour of the facility to provide a fire safety assessment – assessing access management in case of an emergency at the facility. A few items were identified through this assessment, such as:
  - The addition of larger or more fire extinguishers in the shop. Ms. Newbrough indicated that maintenance had added two additional extinguishers since the visit.
  - The installation of a Knox box at the front exterior of the building for after hours emergency access. Ms. Newbrough indicated that a Knox box had been ordered.
  - The provision of a master key and code available only to the fire department. Ms. Newbrough indicated that a master key was being obtained, and the master key and key code would be secured in the Knox box.

Firefighters were also provided with blueprints of the facility so a safety exit map could be created. They will be in touch once those diagrams have been created.

#### Other Business:

- No other business was announced.



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**Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the BTAC, the meeting concluded at 3:20 PM.

The next meeting will be held at the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission office on Wednesday, July 10, 2019 at 2:30 PM.



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**BRITE Transit Advisory Committee Meeting Summary  
September 11, 2019, 2:30 p.m.**

Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission  
112 MacTanly Place  
Staunton, VA 24401

	Name	Organization
✓	Steve Rosenberg	City of Staunton
✓	Jennifer Whetzel	County of Augusta
✓	Luke Juday	City of Waynesboro
	Karen Clark	Augusta Health
✓	Russell Neyman	Wilson Workforce & Rehabilitation Center
✓	Julie Markowitz	Staunton Downtown Development Association
✓	Terry Rodgers	Shenandoah Valley Social Services
	Cynthia Page	Blue Ridge Community College
✓	Becky Messer	Transit Service Rider
✓	Paul Terry	Transit Service Rider
✓	Susan Newbrough	Virginia Regional Transit
✓	Steve Hennessee	Department of Rail and Public Transportation

	Name	Organization
✓	Nancy Gourley	CSPDC
✓	Aidan Quirke	CSPDC
✓	Devon Thompson	CSPDC
	Bonnie Riedesel	CSPDC
✓	Ann Cundy, CSPDC	
✓	Kira Johnson, City of Waynesboro	
✓	Robert Nutt, Valley Feed	

**Call to Order**

The meeting of the BRITE Transit Advisory Committee (BTAC) was called to order at 2:34 PM by Ms. Terry Rodgers, Chairperson.

**Public Comment**

Chair Rodgers opened the floor for public comment. Mr. Robert Nutt, Valley Feed, introduced himself to the committee, and indicated that he was in attendance to learn.



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### **Approve Minutes**

Chair Rodgers presented the minutes from the May 8, 2019 BTAC meeting.

Ms. Becky Messer moved, seconded by Mr. Luke Juday, to approve the minutes of the May 8, 2019 meeting, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Business**

Introduction of New Transit Program Manager: Ms. Nancy Gourley introduced Mr. Aidan Quirke to the committee. Ms. Gourley indicated that she would be retiring at the end of the calendar year, and Mr. Quirke has been hired to be the new Transit Program Manager at the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (CSPDC). Mr. Quirke was previously employed as a Transit Planner in Savannah, Georgia, and prior to that he graduated from Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) and interned with the Greater Richmond Transit Company (GRTC). Mr. Quirke began working at the CSPDC in late July. Mr. Quirke indicated that he was happy to be in Staunton working at the CSPDC and is excited to work with the BTAC.

250 Connector Route Study Presentation: Mr. Tyler Beduhn presented the 250 Connector Bus Route Evaluation and Recommendations. The 250 Connector is a critical route for the BRITE system, and provides connections between Staunton and Waynesboro, as well as connects with other system routes. Currently, it faces reliability challenges – it is a long route that can be impacted by traffic delays, route deviations, and mobility device loading. Bus stop safety and potential opportunities to serve new development along the corridor were also noted during the study. The presentation was a comprehensive overview that included information on the following (see presentation attached):

- Project scope, goals, and process;
- Customer survey summary;
- Origin-destination travel patterns;
- On-time performance;
- Customer priorities;
- Service improvement needs;
- Alternatives analysis; and
- Final recommendations (phases 1, 2, and 3).

The final recommendations were broken into three phases. The First Phase included more direct service to the Staunton Mall; converting Valley View Senior Apartments to a Call Stop; extending BRITE Access hours; and extending Blue Ridge Community College Shuttle(s) hours on Fridays. The Second Phase included implementing a South Loop (contingent upon funding and reevaluation of reliability after phase one); more direct travel between Downtown Staunton and Walmart; adding a new Waynesboro Downtown Hub; adjusting the Stuarts Draft Link route to serve the Waynesboro Town Center, Walmart, and Lew Dewitt Boulevard; continuing to implement bus stop safety improvements at high-priority locations; and relocating bus stops from US 250 to Frontier Center



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(contingent on road extension). The Third Phase included extending service into US 250 developments; extending Stuarts Draft Link service hours; and continuing to implement bus stop safety improvements.

Ms. Whetzel inquired as to whether funding for the Second Phase would be requested in Fiscal Year (FY) 2021, and Ms. Gourley indicated that funding would be requested in FY 2022, which would allow for two years to evaluate the incremental steps taken in the First Phase.

Mr. Beduhn noted that some of the recommendations had been implemented since completion of the study. Ms. Newbrough indicated that in August and the beginning of September, Valley View Senior Apartments had been made a Call Stop (an extensive time saver for the route); additional hours were added to BRITE Access (decrease number of deviations made on the route); and direct travel on Greenville Avenue in Staunton (no longer travel Barterbrook Road). These changes have helped the route some, but it continues to be a busy route. Mr. Steve Rosenberg inquired about the timing and logistics of the Valley View Senior Apartments bus stop becoming a Call Stop, and Ms. Newbrough explained how the built-in timing has changed and the effect timed stops have on keeping the route running as timely as possible. If there is a domino effect from running behind schedule resources will be pooled to help get the route back on schedule.

Fare Increase and Service Reduction Policy: Ms. Gourley introduced the topic of the Fare Increase and Service Reduction Policy. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requires that all recipients of federal transit funds have a written policy that describes the public meeting and comment process on increases to the fare structure and on major service reductions. Ms. Gourley indicated that neither of these events – a fare increase or major service reduction – has occurred since the CSPDC has managed the transit service. Per FTA guidelines, recipients are responsible for defining what constitutes a major service reduction, and the policy must include how a public meeting would be hosted and how the results of the public meeting would be considered in the process of changing fares and service. Due to the regional nature of the transit service, the draft BRITE policy includes flexibility of location and participants based on the potential impacts of the proposed change. Ms. Gourley indicated that input on the policy would be appreciated from the BTAC, and that the policy should be adopted by the BTAC today, either with changes or as is.

Ms. Devon Thompson briefly reviewed the draft policy and its components. Ms. Thompson indicated that policy procedure defined BRITE's fare increase as any increase to a fare price per unit of service. Service reduction was defined as any reduction that exceeds 10 percent of the total service hours currently provided or elimination of a route. Advertising and public engagement avenues were outlined. Public meetings will be advertised thirty days in advance of the meeting, and notifications will be posted on all revenue service vehicles; posted on BRITE and CSPDC websites and BRITE social media pages; published in local newspapers; and said notifications will include a notice of the provision of sign language or non-English language interpreters that could be made available upon request. Meeting locations and times were defined. Public meetings will be conducted in the area(s) where the change will have an impact, either Staunton, Waynesboro, or parts of Augusta County. Public meetings will be



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hosted at locations and times that are accessible by transit routes, and meeting times will be during the day and evening to accommodate various work schedules of the public. All meetings are open to the public, and BTAC and Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (SAWMPO) representatives will be encouraged to attend. Ms. Thompson indicated that exceptions to the policy were identified, such as seasonal variations like the Staunton Downtown Trolley winter hours. It was also noted that periodic surveys would be conducted outside of any service reduction or fare increase to obtain passenger feedback.

Ms. Ann Cundy suggested the SAWMPO be listed as one of the websites where public meeting notifications were advertised. Ms. Gourley inquired as to whether the jurisdiction websites (Staunton, Augusta County, and Waynesboro) should also be listed as an additional location for advertisement. Ms. Whetzel indicated it could be logistically difficult to assure accountability for those outside of BRITE and the CSPDC. Ms. Whetzel inquired as to whether the activities, advertising, engagement, and meeting times and locations, listed in the policy were required. Ms. Gourley answered that they are not required – the requirement is to have a meeting and opportunity for public feedback and to consider the comment – but, the notification avenues listed are common practice for all BRITE changes or public meetings.

Mr. Juday moved, seconded by Ms. Whetzel, to approve the policy, with the addition of the SAWMPO website advertisement, as suggested by Ms. Cundy. Motion carried unanimously.

2019 Triennial Review Update: Ms. Gourley indicated that the FTA Triennial Review is a comprehensive review of 21 areas of compliance that occurs every three years. The Review is conducted by consultants under contract to the FTA, and the CSPDC will be going through their second review. In May 2019, all required documents were submitted. In June 2019, staff participated in the Triennial Review Workshop in Richmond that prepares attendees for the Triennial Review. Ms. Gourley indicated that reviewers have completed their examination of the submitted documents, and will be onsite September 26 and 27, 2019 to review and interview staff on eight of the 21 compliance areas and tour the transit facility. Prior to their departure, an exit interview will be conducted in which findings will be summarized.

Afton Express Update: Ms. Gourley indicated that the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) has taken the lead on the next level of planning for the proposed transit service that would connect Staunton, Waynesboro, and Augusta County to Charlottesville. DRPT has retained the services of Kimley-Horn to reaffirm some of the data from the original feasibility study that was completed in 2017, and then will develop a service plan, budget, peer comparison, and performance measures. Ms. Gourley indicated that the initial chapter of background information and history has been drafted. A conference call was held with CSPDC staff, DRPT, and the consultant recently to discuss progress thus far and the structure and operations of nine potential peer transit services that might be used in the peer review. Stakeholders have been identified for this planning and the initial meeting of the group will be held on September 23, 2019 at the BRITE Transit Facility. The consultant will also



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make a presentation at the Joint Meeting of the SAWMPO and Charlottesville-Albemarle Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) on October 1, 2019.

Ms. Messer inquired as to whether there would be any public involvement or input in this planning process. Ms. Gourley indicated that during the original feasibility study there was an extensive survey completed that garnered over 600 responses. There isn't a lot of public input scheduled for this particular scope of work, but StreetLight data will be used in the analysis. Ms. Cundy clarified potential demand will be determined through StreetLight data, which indicates where commute trips begin and end.

Contractor Update: Ms. Newbrough discussed various items with the committee:

- Proposed Waynesboro Circulator Change: Ms. Newbrough presented on a proposed change to the Waynesboro Circulator. A safety concern along Port Republic Road has been identified, and staff has proposed a recommendation to remedy the challenge. The presentation included the following information (presentation attached):
  - Introductory information on the Waynesboro Circulator route – days and times of operation, ridership, and accident tracking;
  - Service area information on Port Republic Road (where the change would occur), including Google Map street views;
  - Bus video showing the challenging situation along Port Republic Road; and
  - Proposed change to the route – to move the route path from Port Republic Road to Bridge Street to Florence Avenue to Bridge Street.

Ms. Newbrough indicated that the change to Florence Avenue would include the addition of three new bus stops on Florence Avenue. The bus stops would be located at the intersections of Florence Avenue and Gum Street; Florence Avenue and Fontaine Street; and Florence Avenue and Hemlock Street. There is currently one stop along Port Republic Road, the Rosenwald Community Center, and the new stop at Florence Ave / Fontaine St would be the closest to the community center (one block away). Ms. Newbrough showed a map that compared the current route with the proposed route.

There was consensus among the BTAC members that this was a logical solution to the challenge. Mr. Juday noted that Florence Avenue is more of an arterial road than Port Republic Road. Mr. Paul Terry inquired as to whether there would be any changes to the timing of the route, and Ms. Newbrough answered that there would be no changes to the route timing. Mr. Steven Hennessee inquired into how this change would be implemented with the new policy discussed previously, and Ms. Gourley answered that this change is not a major service reduction, so it would not be applicable. The notification for the change would go through the regular channels that all changes go through – social media, website, press release, and postings on vehicles. Ms. Newbrough indicated that there is usually a two week to a month period before the changes are implemented to give drivers time to be debriefed so they can explain the changes



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to passengers. Mr. Juday also suggested the change notification should emphasize that the change is being made due to safety concerns since Port Republic Road is a historic district and a historically African-American neighborhood. Ms. Gourley inquired as to whether there would be Title VI implications, and Mr. Juday indicated that it should not be. But, it was noted, that most residents on Port Republic will have no objection to the bus not travelling along the road.

Ms. Newbrough proposed mid-October to initiate the change. Ms. Gourley noted some of the work that needs to be done to implement the change, like making new bus stop signs and changing the website, and suggested the beginning of November.

- 250 Connector & BRCC Shuttles Service Change: Ms. Newbrough indicated that changes had been initiated on the 250 Connector, as previously mentioned, and BRCC Shuttles. The BRCC Shuttles hours were extended on Fridays – the BRCC South Shuttle ends at 7:30 p.m. (previously 5:30 p.m.) and the BRCC North Shuttle ends at 8 p.m. (previously 6:00 p.m.). Ms. Newbrough indicated that she is compiling a report on ridership during the first month of the change.
- Farecard Update: Ms. Newbrough reported that farecard sales and usage continue to do well. Approximately \$1,400 in sales have been reported in the past few months, and they are still well received.

#### Other Business:

- CSPDC 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration: Ms. Gourley announced that the CSPDC is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with a special event on September 17<sup>th</sup>, from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., at the Frontier Culture Museum. Ms. Gourley and Chair Rodgers will be making a joint presentation on BRITE at the event.
- Try Transit Week: Ms. Thompson announced that Try Transit Week will take place September 16<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>. Posters were printed and made available to BTAC members to distribute. Ms. Gourley indicated that all rides on all BRITE routes would be free on Wednesday, September 18<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the BTAC, the meeting concluded at 3:21 PM.

It was proposed that the next meeting would be held at the BRITE Transit Facility on Wednesday, November 13, 2019 at an earlier time, with lunch served. There was consensus among the committee to make this change.





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**BRITE Transit Advisory Committee Meeting Summary  
November 13, 2019, 1:30 p.m.**

Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission  
112 MacTanly Place  
Staunton, VA 24401

	Name	Organization
✓	Steve Rosenberg	City of Staunton
✓	Jennifer Whetzel	County of Augusta
✓	Luke Juday	City of Waynesboro
✓	Karen Clark	Augusta Health
✓	Russell Neyman	Wilson Workforce & Rehabilitation Center
	Julie Markowitz	Staunton Downtown Development Association
✓	Terry Rodgers	Shenandoah Valley Social Services
	Cynthia Page	Blue Ridge Community College
✓	Becky Messer	Transit Service Rider
✓	Paul Terry	Transit Service Rider
✓	Susan Newbrough	Virginia Regional Transit
✓	Steve Hennessee	Department of Rail and Public Transportation

	Name	Organization
✓	Nancy Gourley	CSPDC
✓	Aidan Quirke	CSPDC
✓	Devon Thompson	CSPDC
✓	Bonnie Riedesel	CSPDC
✓	Kira Johnson, City of Waynesboro	
✓	Steve Wilson, VRT	
✓	Bob Nutt, Valley Feed	
✓	Beth Daisey, SWAN & SAW Democratic Committee	
✓	Sheila Ahmadi, SWAN & SAW Democratic Committee	

**Call to Order**

The meeting of the BRITE Transit Advisory Committee (BTAC) was called to order at 1:32 PM by Ms. Terry Rodgers, Chairperson.

**Public Comment**

Chair Rodgers opened the floor for public comment. Ms. Beth Daisey, Strong Women’s Action Network (SWAN), introduced herself to the committee. Ms. Daisey informed the committee about SWAN’s background. Furthermore, Ms. Daisey indicated that the idea and purpose of attending the BTAC meeting was to discuss and develop various ways the action group could get involved and offer support to community organizations with job access and transportation. Ms. Daisey introduced Ms. Sheila Ahmadi to the committee. Ms. Ahmadi indicated that through personal interviews a list was compiled of identified needs concerning job access and transportation,



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which she shared with the committee. SWAN proposed researching the transportation challenges further by contacting several local companies to determine obstacles, as well as research formal and informal systems of transportation that could involve collaborating with the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (CSPDC) and BRITE.

Chair Rodgers indicated that one important issue is funding. Route expansions are made when possible, and additional funding, that is not readily available, is needed to implement these expansions. Discussion ensued regarding other potential monetary contributions, employment transportation, and transportation gaps and barriers. Various BTAC members offered additional and contextual information and viable alternatives regarding the claims and information provided by the action group. It was further noted that public transportation's mandate is to serve the locations where the most people want to go at the same time.

Ms. Bonnie Riedesel provided the action group with information about the CSPDC's Rideshare program – a commuter matching and assistance program. Ms. Ahmadi indicated that she met with CSPDC staff previously and information on the program was provided. Ms. Riedesel indicated that this program could be promoted to the organizations Ms. Ahmadi mentioned to provide awareness of the resource. Ms. Riedesel also shared that other employer services could be offered – such as commuter mapping of employees. A suggestion was made to have further conversations at another time to discuss alternative strategies that could help address the issues the action group identified, as well as coordinate and share information and resources of Rideshare.

### **Approve Minutes**

Chair Rodgers presented the minutes from the September 11, 2019 BTAC meeting. Chair Rodgers noted one correction to the minutes on page 4 – after the motion was moved there was an unanimous vote to approve the policy.

Mr. Luke Juday moved, seconded by Ms. Becky Messer, to approve the minutes of the September 11, 2019 meeting, with the noted correction. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Business**

Saturday Service Implementation: Mr. Aidan Quirke announced that Saturday service would be implemented on the Staunton North & West Loops and the Waynesboro Circulator beginning in January 2020. There was positive feedback and consensus from committee members. Mr. Steve Hennessee inquired on the specific date of implementation, and Ms. Susan Newbrough indicated that it would be the first Saturday in January, January 4, 2020.

FY 2021 Budget: Mr. Quirke indicated that staff is in the process of developing the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 budget. The total budget would be close to the same amount as the previous fiscal year – around \$2.5-2.6 million. Mr.



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Quirke announced that the CSPDC would be asking financial partners for a 2 percent increase for local match. Mr. Quirke indicated that he would be glad to further discuss this with partners if questions or concerns arose.

2019 Triennial Review Update: Ms. Gourley indicated that the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Triennial Review is a comprehensive review of 21 areas of compliance that occurs every three years. The Review is conducted by consultants under contract to the FTA, and the CSPDC recently completed their second review (the first was completed in 2016). In May 2019, documents pertaining to the 21 areas of compliance were sent to the reviewers. An onsite visit was conducted in September 2019, and eight of those areas were further reviewed. In addition to reviewing the eight areas, during the two-day onsite visit a tour of the BRITE Transit Facility was conducted as well as discussion on how the facility was managed.

From the eight areas reviewed, deficiencies were found in three areas – two were related to financial processes and one was related to Title VI language. The financial findings were related to financial processes due to the resignation of the Fiscal Officer in August 2019. The findings indicated a matter of not having all of the knowledge needed to answer the questions being asked. The Title VI finding dealt with specific language in the Title VI statement in which too many classes of persons were being protected and this was corrected onsite. Commendation was received for contractor and facility oversight practices. Reviewers also asked to use the BRITE processes as examples of best practices. Staff is working on correcting the findings, and they should be rectified by the end of the year. A new Director of Finance has been hired at the CSPDC, which will help in closing out the financial findings. Ms. Gourley noted that overall it was a successful review.

Mr. Steven Hennessee clarified that for the Title VI finding, there was specific language as to what the Title VI statement should cover, and that the other classes of persons being protected could be included with language elsewhere, just not under the Title VI section. Per an inquiry, it was clarified that Title VI pertained to non-discrimination and civil rights. Mr. Juday inquired about the financial findings, to which Ms. Riedesel indicated that the processes in place to draw down funds was the main purpose of the findings. Ms. Riedesel noted that it is rare for any review to not have a single finding, and having just three findings was commendable.

Afton Express Update: Ms. Gourley reviewed the background information for this project. The Afton Express is service contemplated between Staunton, Waynesboro, and Augusta County and Charlottesville. The service would primarily serve commuters, but also serve those with medical needs. Ms. Gourley indicated that the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) has taken the lead on the next level of planning for the proposed transit service and has retained the services of Kimley-Horn to reaffirm the need and data from the original feasibility study, as well as develop a service plan, budget, peer comparison, and performance measures. A stakeholder meeting was hosted in September 2019, with an additional meeting planned this month. During the next meeting, the consultant will review the work that has been completed thus far and facilitate a discussion on the funding formula for the local match funds. Currently, it is a very active project.



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Ms. Karen Clark inquired about employment opportunities in the Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro (SAW) region versus the Charlottesville-Albemarle region. Ms. Gourley referenced the original study where a public survey was conducted, and over 600 responses were collected and it demonstrated the amount of commuting there is between the two regions. Ms. Riedesel also noted that this information reflected those that already make the commute across Afton Mountain to the University of Virginia (UVA). UVA is one of the project stakeholders, and was able to identify 1,800 of their employees that live in the SAW region. Mr. Juday indicated that it will benefit the SAW region to have access to more sources of income, which could contribute to housing stock and the community. Ms. Gourley also noted that StreetLight data – autonomized cell phone data that tracks origins and destinations – was used to reaffirm commuting data from the original study. Mr. Juday sought clarification on the final figure that would make up the local match funds, and Ms. Gourley indicated that the number – which was dependent upon the State and Federal contributions – would be finalized by the next stakeholder meeting.

Ms. Gourley indicated the operation schedule would include a three-hour window in the morning and a three-hour window in the evening. Potential stop locations would include UVA (University and Medical Center) and Downtown Charlottesville, and connect to Charlottesville Area Transit (CAT). Ms. Messer inquired as to whether or not the route would include stops at the bus and train stations in Charlottesville, and Ms. Gourley indicated that the route goes by the stations and can stop if it is requested.

Contractor Update: Ms. Susan Newbrough discussed various items with the committee:

- Inclement Weather Notification Policy: Ms. Newbrough has been working to update the contact information for the inclement weather plan. All committee members were provided with a copy of the current policy and instructed to let Ms. Newbrough know of any additional changes. A final copy will be sent out to all partners.
- Waynesboro Circulator Change: Ms. Newbrough reminded committee members of her presentation at the September meeting regarding the Waynesboro Circulator route that traveled along Port Republic Road and the proposed change to Florence Avenue. The change occurred Monday, November 4, 2019. The transition was successful – there were no issues or complaints, and the drivers are happy and comfortable with the change.
- Free Election Day Rides: Ms. Newbrough indicated that on Election Day, Tuesday, November 5, 2019, BRITE again offered free rides to all passengers on all routes. Many of the routes serve several of the polling locations in the region. In 2018, BRITE provided 1,179 passenger trips on Election Day, and in 2019, BRITE provided 1,186 passenger trips on Election Day. Overall, Ms. Newbrough felt the initiative was successful.

Mr. Steve Rosenberg inquired as to whether or not staff had considered offering free rides for local city elections in Staunton (May) and Waynesboro (June). Ms. Riedesel noted that free rides have only been



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offered for federal and state elections, and not local elections. Ms. Riedesel and Mr. Quirke indicated that this was something that could be up for further discussion. Mr. Juday suggested that the routes serving the respective locality with the election could be free. Mr. Rosenberg expressed his interest in further conversations to hear the history of the decision for cost-free service for federal and state elections. Mr. Quirke indicated that there is no cost-free Election Day service policy, but maybe one could be created to promote clarity and transparency.

- Holiday Service Hours: Ms. Newbrough reported on the 2019 Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's holiday schedule:
  - Thanksgiving
    - Wednesday, November 27: BRCC Shuttles will operate on Friday schedule (service concluding at 7:30PM and 8:00PM)
    - Thursday, November 28 (Thanksgiving): No service
    - Friday, November 29: Regular service
  - Christmas
    - Tuesday, December 24: All services will conclude at 6:30PM
    - Wednesday, December 25: No service
    - Thursday, December 26: Regular service
  - New Year's
    - Tuesday, December 31: All services will conclude at 6:30PM
    - Wednesday, January 1: No service
    - Thursday, December 2: Regular service

#### Other Business:

- Holiday Parades: Ms. Devon Thompson announced that BRITE would again be participating in local Christmas parades:
  - Staunton – Monday, December 2
  - Waynesboro – Saturday, December 7
  - Bridgewater – Saturday, December 7
  - Stuarts Draft – Saturday, December 14
- Ms. Gourley's Last Meeting: Mr. Rosenberg indicated that this would be Ms. Gourley's last BTAC meeting, and wanted to acknowledge her contributions. Ms. Gourley was the founding transit manager for BRITE, and what we see operating today in the region is largely thanks to Ms. Gourley. Mr. Rosenberg expressed that he has enjoyed working with Ms. Gourley and has valued her professionalism and dedication, and expressed well wishes for Ms. Gourley's retirement. The committee concurred with Mr. Rosenberg's sentiments with a round of applause.



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- 2020 Meeting Calendar: Chair Rodgers announced the meeting calendar for 2020:
  - January 8
  - March 11
  - May 13
  - July 8
  - September 9
  - November 11 – *due to the Veterans Day holiday this meeting was rescheduled to November 10 at 1:30 p.m.*

There were no objections to the dates and times of the meetings listed.

#### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the BTAC, the meeting concluded at 2:15 PM.