

WASHINGTON METRORAIL SAFETY COMMISSION

Date: Tuesday, May 12, 2020

Location: This meeting was conducted remotely as a publicly-streamed video conference

MINUTES

Agenda Item#	Items
Attendance	Commissioners present: Members: Chair Christopher Hart, Commissioners Robert Bobb, Debra Farrar-Dyke, John Contestabile, Greg Hull. Alternate Members: Michael Rush, Suhair Al Khatib. All WMSC Staff and members of the public also present.
1.	Call to Order. WMSC Chair Hart, called the meeting to order. Roll call was taken by Allison Fultz, WMSC General Counsel, and a quorum was achieved.
2.	Safety Message. David Mayer, WMSC CEO, outlined social distancing guidelines due to current public health emergency.
3.	<p>Approval of the minutes of the March 12, 2020 meeting: Debra Farrar-Dyke, WMSC Secretary/Treasurer: A motion was made to approve the minutes of the March 12, 2020 public meeting. The motion was seconded.</p> <p><u>ACTION:</u> The minutes of the March 12, 2020 meeting were unanimously approved. General Counsel Allison Fultz conducted the roll call vote.</p>
4.	Public Comments. Chair Hart invited comments from members of the public who had joined the webinar audience. There were no public comments.
5.	<p>Chair’s Remarks. Chair Hart welcomed attendees to the public meeting. He provided an overview of the remainder of the agenda, which included information about an NTSB action that confirms the significant role the WMSC has achieved in providing the safety oversight and enforcement authority of WMATA Metrorail. He also mentioned the pandemic procedures that have been put in place by WMATA, and how the WMSC is adjusting its safety oversight during this time. Additionally, Chair Hart said the WMSC would describe new additional ROCC findings on safety concerns and staff would present a resolution seeking the approval of the Commissioners for the WMSC FY 2021 operating budget.</p>
6.	<p>CEO’s Remarks. Dr. David Mayer, WMSC CEO, highlighted the significant role that WMSC has played in oversight of the Metrorail system in the 14 months since the FTA certification, and the closure of a related NTSB recommendation.</p> <p>Dr. Mayer announced receipt of the FTA Federal Fiscal Year 2018 grant award received on May 1, 2020 totaling \$3.6 million and updated the Commissioners on continuing safety oversight activities during the current public health emergency using resourceful techniques to ensure</p>

	<p>effectiveness of safety oversight. Additionally, Dr. Mayer also noted that the WMSC is monitoring changes to Metrorail’s summer shutdown plans. Upon return to normal operations, WMSC headquarters will be moving to 750 First Street Northeast.</p> <p>Dr. Mayer introduced three new WMSC staff members: Mr. Richard David, Program Specialist, Mr. Adam Quigley Program Specialist, and Mr. Max Smith, Communications Director.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>COVID-19 Response: Sharmila Samarasinghe, WMSC COO: Ms. Samarasinghe provided details of Metrorail’s evolving plans to address the current pandemic and Metrorail’s plans for a gradual restoration of normal operations. Metrorail does not project a return to normal service levels until well into next year. To continue to conduct its mandate of investigating various safety events while still complying with required social distancing safety measures, WMSC has developed a protocol for use in the event of a Metrorail accident or other serious event that can limit the need for close contact with Metrorail personnel. Additionally, Ms. Samarasinghe reported that FTA has effectively extended the deadline for public transit operators such as WMATA to establish and certify their Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans (PTASP) from July 20, 2020 to the end of this calendar year. Commissioner Contestabile inquired about WMATA’s PTASP plan and its approval process. The WMSC must approve WMATA’s PTASP before WMATA certifies it as final.</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Corrective Action Plans: David Mayer, WMSC CEO; Sharmila Samarasinghe, WMSC COO Ms. Samarasinghe noted that the WMSC has issued four sets of findings since becoming certified as the State Safety Oversight Agency for Metrorail. Today, the WMSC issued its fifth set of findings for additional safety issues in the ROCC that must be corrected.</p> <p>Dr. Mayer described the three findings issued today as addressing the most serious safety concerns at the ROCC. The WMSC is requiring urgent action. to rectify the following significant deficiencies: (a) premature third-rail power restoration, (b) remote manipulation of control of control center consoles without coordinating train movement plans, and (c) rail controllers not having the necessary tools and training to operate emergency ventilation fans. Metrorail now has 30 days to propose Corrective Action Plans for these new findings.</p> <p>Ms. Samarasinghe then described Metrorail’s progress on addressing other previously-issued findings including those following the October 7, 2019, collision near Farragut West station. Metrorail was also required to propose CAPs for the WMSC’s 16 findings related to the track audit. Metrorail has proposed some effective solutions, but there are eight remaining findings for which Metrorail’s proposed CAPs were not sufficient to address the corresponding findings. Metrorail has since proposed revised CAPs and the WMSC is now reviewing these proposals. Overall there are currently 54 open CAPs, and more will be added once the WMSC determines the proposed CAPs are acceptable.</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Update on Silver Line Oversight: Sharmila Samarasinghe, WMSC COO, Tanmaya Sahoo, WMSC Subject Matter Expert Traction Power</p> <p>Ms. Samarasinghe provided an update on the progress of the Phase 2 of the Silver Line project. Once Metrorail completes its pre-revenue testing and completes its safety certification verification responsibilities, the WMSC will evaluate WMATA’s decision-making process and concur, or not,</p>

	<p>with WMATA’s conclusions. The WMSC will make such determinations based on the WMSC’s independent inspections and examinations of the project, along with the final WMATA Safety Certification Verification Report.</p> <p>Mr. Sahoo described some of the ways that the WMSC has been conducting oversight and carrying out independent inspections since 2018 and tracking these activities.</p> <p>Commissioners Rush and Hull asked questions regarding service life of the equipment and stray current. The questions were answered by Mr. Sahoo and Dr. Mayer.</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>Resolutions:</p> <p>Dr. Mayer outlined the WMSC FY2021 work plan and budget via resolution R-2020-03. He explained that the work plan sets forth the WMSC’s financial plan for the upcoming fiscal year, which starts on July 1. It establishes an overall budget of \$5.7 million for the WMSC, of which the largest share (almost 60%) goes to pay salaries and benefits for the staff. The document also now accurately reflects the new office space lease cost.</p> <p>Chair Hart Introduced the second resolution, R-2020-04, which would authorize the CEO to issue and maintain, as needed, the new WMSC investigative protocol as a directive and order. He also introduced the resolution R-2020-05 seeking approval to proceed with a furniture procurement for the WMSC’s new office space.</p> <p>Resolutions were seconded and unanimously approved via roll call votes conducted by General Counsel Allison Fultz.</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Adjourn Christopher Hart, WMSC Chair:</p> <p>The Chair invited everyone to submit safety concerns or to otherwise get in touch through the WMSC’s public website, social media channels, or by mail.</p> <p>He noted that the next WMSC public meeting of the Commissioners is scheduled for Thursday, June 18, 2020. The meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote.</p>