

WASHINGTON METRORAIL SAFETY COMMISSION

Date: Tuesday, October 20, 2020

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

MINUTES

Agenda Item #	Items
<b>Attendance</b>	Commissioners present: Members: Chair Christopher Hart, Commissioners Robert Bobb, Debra Farrar-Dyke, John Contestabile, Greg Hull, Michael Rush Alternate Commissioners: Suhair Al Khatib and Victoria Wassmer. No Alternate Commissioners voted. WMSC Staff and members of the public were also present.
1.	<b>Call to Order.</b> Hart, called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. Roll call was taken by Brackett Smith, Attorney-Advisor and Government Relations Lead sitting in for WMSC General Counsel Allison Fultz, and a quorum was achieved.
2.	<b>Safety Message.</b> Richard David, Program Specialist focusing on safety, and David Mayer, WSMC Chief Executive Officer, reminded attendees to get their flu shot, take Covid-19 precautions when celebrating Halloween, and to check household safety devices to ensure they are in working order.
3.	<b>Approval of the minutes of the September 22, 2020 meeting.</b> Debra Farrar-Dyke, WMSC Secretary/Treasurer:  Farrar-Dyke moved a motion to approve the minutes of the September 22, 2020 public meeting. Hart seconded the motion.  <u>ACTION:</u> The minutes of the September 22, 2020 meeting were unanimously approved. General Counsel Allison Fultz conducted the roll call vote.
4.	<b>Public Comments.</b> Hart invited comments from members of the public who had joined the webinar audience. There were no public comments.
5.	<b>Chair’s Remarks.</b> Hart gave a remembrance of late WMSC Commissioner Mark Rosenker, who passed away on September 26, 2020. Hart spoke of Rosenker’s career and their friendship. Mayer added additional words in memory of Rosenker.
6.	<b>CEO’s Remarks.</b> Mayer

	<p>Mayer updated the commissioners on the status of the October 9, 2020, train decoupling between the Union Station and NoMa-Gallaudet U stations. He discussed the WMSC’s response, noting investigators were on scene and had determined customers were evacuated through side doors rather than the bulkhead doors as required by Metrorail procedures. The WMSC is also examining the actions that led to customers remaining on the rail cars for an extended period, the decision-making process regarding third rail power, and Metrorail’s compliance with its emergency response protocols, and the adequacy of those protocols.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p><b>Safety Investigations.</b> Bruce Walker, Subject Matter Expert for Operations; Adam Quigley, Program Specialist; JeMayne Walker, Subject Matter Expert for Track and Structures.</p> <p>Report W-0049 covered a February 4, 2020 smoke event at L’Enfant Plaza Station where a train carrying customers was sent through the station to perform a track inspection despite the presence of smoke. The event began when Automatic Train Control Maintenance (ATC) personnel attempted to cut a lock off a former employee’s locker in the Train Control Room. The ATC personnel used a grinder, which caused sparks to enter computer equipment. The sparks ignited a filter associated with a cooling fan that was part of the computer equipment. The fan spread an increasing amount of smoke in the train control room. The crew should have used a bolt cutter to remove the lock. The supervisor involved did not conduct a job safety briefing and did not have hot-works training. The investigation also found there were no work instructions for removing a lock. At the same time, the Rail Operation Control Center (ROCC) instructed Train 309 at Gallery Place to perform a track inspection to L’Enfant Plaza on Track 2 without instructing the train operator to offload prior to proceeding through the reported smoke on the roadway. The train operator was not told to look for smoke, but only to check for anything unusual. This is a violation of track inspection procedures and Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) 6 governing smoke on the roadway. SOP 6 requires the ROCC to instruct a train operator to offload a train and perform a track inspection if there is a report of smoke. As a corrective action for the ROCC, WMATA cited only a directive that they said was issued several months earlier due to our findings regarding chaos and dysfunction in the ROCC during unplanned emergencies. WMATA could only provide evidence that SOME ROCC employees received that lessons learned document. Although the corrective action falls short for this event, the WMSC will ensure that Metrorail incorporates steps to prevent a similar situation in the future into broader Corrective Action Plans proposed as part of Metrorail’s required actions stemming from the 25 ROCC-related findings the WMSC has issued over the past year.</p> <p>Bobb moved to approve Report W-0049, with Rush seconding it. By voice vote, the Board unanimously voted to adopt the motion to approve Report W-0049.</p> <p>Report W-0050 covered a July 11, 2020, situation with improper roadway worker protection on the Blue, Orange, and Silver Line tracks between Rosslyn and Foggy Bottom stations. The workers initially entered the roadway under Advance Mobile Flagging protection. This is the basic level of protection required for work crews, which involves a flagger standing on a station platform verbally warning each train to expect workers ahead, to follow safety procedures when approaching a work crew, and to be ready to slow or stop. Although that level of protection was appropriate for part of this segment, Metrorail’s Roadway Worker Protection Chapter of the MSRPH and the related Track Access Guide highlight a more dangerous area part-way between Rosslyn and Foggy Bottom where additional safety measures are required for approximately a</p>

	<p>quarter-mile. The Roadway-Worker-In-Charge was retrained on Roadway Worker Protection procedures. WMATA’s Safety Department (SAFE) also issued internal recommendations that WMATA install signage on the roadway to indicate where Foul Time protection is required and recommended that an individual in each Track and Structures crew be specifically tasked with identifying hot spots.</p> <p>Hull moved to approve Report W-0050, with Rush seconding it. By voice vote, the Board unanimously voted to adopt the motion to approve Report W-0050.</p> <p>Report W-0051 covered an August 5, 2020, event where a WMATA contractor, with Kiewit, suffered a broken leg at the West Falls Church Station. A work crew was moving water-filled barriers that had not been completely emptied as they should have been for any lifting or other movement. The work crew also double-stacked the barriers, when the barriers should not have been stacked. The barriers should have been lifted with a choke hitch, but were instead lifted with a basket. The crew also did not leave appropriate space for themselves just in case the barriers fell. This crew working on the Orange Line summer shutdown project did not properly plan their work, and Metrorail did not properly oversee contractor work plans. Kiewit also did not follow WMATA’s Drug and Alcohol Policy regarding post incident testing, and Metrorail did not ensure compliance with that policy to ensure all involved workers were tested. The company conducted a safety stand-down regarding lifting and rigging work, and incorporated information from this event into daily safety briefings. SAFE’s investigations team recommended that its team conduct daily surveys of construction projects to ensure proper oversight of contractors and to verify contractor work plans. SAFE also says it will be responsible for construction contractor compliance with drug and alcohol testing requirements.</p> <p>Rush moved to approve Report W-0051, with Contestabile seconding it. By voice vote, the Board unanimously voted to adopt the motion to approve Report W-0051.</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p><b>Adjourn.</b> Christopher Hart, WMSC Chair</p> <p>Hart noted that the next WMSC public meeting of the Board is scheduled for Tuesday, November 10, 2020.</p> <p>Farrar-Dyke moved the motion to adjourn, with Rush seconding it. By voice vote, the Board unanimously voted adjourn at 1:10 p.m.</p>