

**Friendship Heights
Transportation Management District
Advisory Committee
January 11, 2022**

Voting Members

Robert Banach	Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights
Barbara Condos (Chair)	Town of Somerset
Afua Ofori	Polinger Co./Large Employer
Ahkeia Payne	GEICO
Elizabeth Demetra Harris	Friendship Heights Village

Non-Voting Members

Peter Fosselman	B-CC Services Center
Iftin Thompson	M-NCPPC

TMD Staff

Jim Carlson	MCDOT/Transportation Policy-Commuter Services
Nakengi Byrd	MCDOT/Transportation Policy-Commuter Services

Absent

Sandra L. Brecher	MCDOT/Transportation Policy-Commuter Services
Chief John Fitzgerald	Chevy Chase Village Police
John Mertens (Vice Chair)	Friendship Heights Village

Guests

Chris Brown	MC Department of General Services
Calvin Jones	MCDOT Fleet Management
Gary Erenrich	MCDOT
Bob Joiner	The Agenda News
Julia Vaughn	TMD Outreach
Julian Mansfield	Friendship Heights Village
David Proctor	TMD Outreach

Item 1 & 2 – Introductions/Agenda Review

Item 3 – Ride On Zero Emissions Transition: Division Chief of Fleet Management **Calvin Jones** explained that in addition to the Ride On Reimagined project, Ride On is also undergoing zero emission transition of its bus fleet to help the County’s climate goal of 100% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2035. Fleet Management is tasked with the responsibility of purchasing, servicing, and cleaning all county vehicles and introduced four electric buses into service last year. Ten more zero emission buses are on order for Spring/Summer delivery and there is an RFP for an additional 56 buses, all of which will operate out of the Silver Spring Bus depot. The depot will be equipped with a microgrid charging system and battery back-up to supply electrical demand for bus operations.

Christopher Brown, who oversees grid implementation and construction, explained that the microgrid uses two megawatts of solar energy panels located on the canopy for onsite generation with a 4 1/2-hour storage battery. Phased construction of the grid began in November 2021 and is designed for resiliency against drastic fluctuations from climate change. He reported that there has been construction delays due to weather and Covid – however, the modular construction provides for expansion and parts are being tested working with Pepco as part of the process.

Mr. Jones reported that although other technologies are being evaluated, they are in the preliminary stages only. Other discussion:

- As zero emissions technology progresses, the range of travel for buses increases
- Discussion regarding how a public-private partnership helps ensure the project is not subject to budgetary constraints, such as hiring freezes, and can afford the cutting edge of technology expertise-Schneider Electric is a partner
- The renewal energy profile of the microgrid is resilient due to its modular construction and ability to support 100% of the depot demands, including its fleet of 70 buses w/ room for expansion providing system back up in an eco-friendly way
- Most of the larger buses take three hours to charge, depending on energy used and what is already in battery back up
- The grid can switch between hydrogen and electric - can run on “island mode” if the larger grid goes out
- Grid is equipped with a sound box to reduce noise
- Jim Carlson discussed the electric vehicle group buy pilot launch - details on the County’s Climate Action Plan page
- The timing regarding the Climate Action Plan and carbon reducing equipment may be off due to manufacturing delays for items such as catalytic converters & microchips, causing reluctance in signing EV pledge

Item 4 – Metro Update: **Gary Erenrich** reported that the Shady Grove and Rockville stations will reopen Sunday, January 16th instead of December’s date due to the removal of trains out of Shady Grove cold storage yard to replace the faulty 7000 series cars. The Shady Grove and Rockville stations were closed due to replacement of the canopy at Rockville station and construction delayed due to uncovering the protected tracks to allow for removal of the replacement trains. Also reported:

- The newly designed bus shelters are on order for Rockville station and will not be in place when the station reopens January 16th
- During the station closures between Twinbrook and Shady Grove stations, shuttle service carried 5,000 passengers a day
- Metro is running service on a modified Saturday schedule due to reduction in ridership and availability of bus operators from Covid – continuing weekday service on high ridership routes to reduce crowding
- 12–15-minute train service, extended late night hours till 1:00 am on weekends
- FY23 budget policies on website - public hearing on February 9th in College Park; completing online survey encouraged – opportunity to submit testimony at end of survey
- Buses are surpassing rail in increased ridership-goal of reaching 53% of pre-pandemic ridership for FY23

- Discussion regarding what will happen to Metro operations when Federal funding runs out - a \$500 million budget gap is projected for FY24 and the additional cost of the opening of Potomac Yard station and Phase 2 completion of the Silver Line

Item 5 – Employer Outreach Update: Julia Vaughn reported:

- Employers TDM plans due February 1st
- Seeking nominations for Council of Governments (COG) Employer Recognition Awards, June 28
- Weekly e-blast notifying employers of transportation related events and encouraging participation in on-site Commuter Information Day events

Item 6 – Updates:

- The County’s biennial Residential Survey going on till January 17th – 39 question survey on the general quality of life regarding using County facilities and programs
- Ride On driver shortage – information links in press release
- At home Covid test kits distributed at libraries 11am-2pm M-Sat.
- CSS survey may be delayed due to the inability to track travel patterns disrupted by Covid

Julian Mansfield announced that new trees will be planted in boxes along Willard- the weeds have been cleared.

Adjourn- Next meeting TBA