

**Maryland Transportation Authority  
Bay Bridge Reconstruction Advisory Group**

Meeting Summary

Wednesday, July 30 2014  
**MDTA Bay Bridge Police Building**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Jack Broderick, Chairman  
Nancy Wright  
Tracy Schulz

Pat Lynch  
Barbara Hitchings

**OTHER ATTENDEES:**

Sparrow Rogers (Chesapeake Bay Bridge Run, LLC)  
Blake Rogers (Sparrow's son)

**MDTA STAFF:**

Gordon Garretson  
John Sales  
Eric Backes

Patrick Fleming  
Sgt. Ed Wojcik (MDTA Police)  
Bruce Gartner (Arrived late)

**Call to Order and Welcome**

Chairman Jack Broderick called the meeting of the Bay Bridge Reconstruction Advisory Group (BBRAG) to order at 6:15 p.m. Introductions were made by all in attendance and all were invited to eat dinner.

**Minutes:**

The minutes of the April 2, 2014 meeting were approved with amendment. The amendments were:

- Change "During the Winter there were 24 snow events and 9 wind events that caused closures. March 12 was the most significant event," to not include the part about the wind events that caused closures because Mr. Garretson wasn't sure about that exact number of closures.
- Change "Mr. Garretson responded that a cigarette was the cause of the fire and this event resulted in the hiring of a construction safety coordinator for the bridge," to say that a cigarette was "most likely the cause of the fire" because the investigation was not 100% conclusive.

The amendments were approved unanimously. A motion for adoption of the amended minutes was made by Ms. Hitchings and seconded by Ms. Lynch with all members in concurrence.

**Preliminary Comments by Chair and Members**

Mr. Broderick made comments regarding the increasing traffic as summer gets into full swing. He remarked that on the whole, MDTA does a good job of reacting to traffic issues and that its system for addressing the issues works.

Mr. Schulz made a comment regarding the previous weekend's issue at the Ocean City Drawbridge and asked if there was any noticeable change in traffic due to it. Mr. Garretson said yes there was, it was a bit reduced during the problem going westbound, but traffic resumed once it was cleared up.

**Update on Bridge Activities**

Mr. Garretson, Bay Bridge Administrator, updated the group on projects on the bridge and other newsworthy information.

### Cleaning

Phase III of the Westbound cleaning is 47% complete. 3 spans are complete on both sides. The project should be fully complete by May 2015.

### Wrapping

Project is 65% complete with Westbound (WB) span 99% done. On WB the Contractor just needs to wrap the spans that go from piers to islands. Currently, the Contractor is taking down scaffolding on WB and will start on Eastbound after Labor Day. The project completion is expected March 2015, after losing 64% of available time for lane closures. There is a 2 year warranty on the wrapping project.

### Traffic Control Replacement

Traffic Control Replacement project is almost done. Work is being done on punch list items at this point.

### Isolation Points

The project is expected to finish at the end of August. This requires a complete electric and bridge shut down to switch over to the new system.

### Miscellaneous Repairs

The \$12 million contract for these repairs has risen to \$13.2 million as a result of inspections.

### Toll Booth Replacement and Plaza Concrete Replacement

According to Mr. Garretson, work on replacing the toll booths and the concrete apron at the toll plaza will commence in October. Once the project begins, 2 or 3 toll booths will be put out of service at a time. Weather permitting, the project should be complete in Spring 2015 before the busy summer traffic season begins.

### Operations

Mr. Garretson said that generally they have been running two-way operations every day except for Sunday.

They do not schedule closures on Friday. In order to facilitate pavement repairs and other maintenance work, Monday through Wednesday 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. they do lane closures. From 9:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m., they will close an entire span and have the other span run two-way.

When there are lane closures on the eastbound span, they do see that traffic slows to get around the equipment and sometimes they can get traffic backing up to as far as Exit 31.

On Sundays they see heavier traffic westbound but it seems to be more spread out than the eastbound heavy periods.

## Traffic Statistics

Regarding overall traffic, in May we were basically flat compared to 2013. In June, traffic was down .5% from 2013, and was up 2% from 2013 in July. These are similar to the trends from last year compared to 2012.

## Incidents

On 5/18/2014 there was a tractor trailer fire on the Eastbound span. A truck carrying peat moss burnt completely and there was an oil spill. There was spalling on the bridge due to the fire. This caused a longer closure. Kent Island Fire Department extinguished the fire and did an excellent job handling the situation.

On 6/11/2014 a passenger vehicle struck a MDTA Police vehicle sitting in the crossover resulting in serious injuries for both drivers. The MDTA officer is back on duty. Alcohol consumption by the passenger vehicle driver was the cause. The incident caused a large backup both ways, including 9 miles on the Eastbound span.

Mr. Gartner said that MDTA's Commercial Vehicle Safety Unit is in the process of acquiring new equipment that will speed the process of taking measurements and other tasks that need to occur following incidents. This will speed the reopening of the road in the future.

## Bay Bridge Safety Improvements

Mr. Garretson reported that all the safety improvements are up and running, although there are still some "punch list" items to complete. These include activation of the "Congestion Ahead" sign lights on the westbound span. They have observed that behavior of motorists has changed for what they perceive to be the better since the enhancements were put in place.

## Presentation to Queen Anne's County Board of Commissioners Regarding Inclement Weather Lane Closures

Mr. Gartner spoke about the presentation that was given to the Queen Anne's County Board of Commissioners regarding two-way operations during inclement weather. Commissioner Moran believes that we should conduct two-way operations during inclement weather. MDTA has evaluated the situation but the evidence does not lend itself to doing so. Mr. Gartner explained why we do not do two-way operations when it is raining. Mr. Garretson said that during periods of rain he is always in contact with Mr. Gartner and with Derek Jones, MDTA's Chief of Operations, to make the call as to whether to cease two-way operations.

## Bridge Run

Sparrow Rogers from Chesapeake Bay Bridge Run, LLC was present to speak to the group regarding the November 9, 2014 Across The Bay 10k. According to Ms. Rogers, work on preparing for the event has been ongoing. Safety and security during the event has been their number one focus.

The race will take place on November 9, 2014 from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. A total of 20,000 runners will be taking part. The event has already sold out.

They are currently doing a traffic and transportation survey of the participants to find out where they are coming from and what preparations may need to be made based on that information. They will be

utilizing 350 shuttles during the event. As of now, there will be a total of 5 parking areas utilized and they will evaluate whether more parking and shuttles are needed.

Also being worked on is the medical and emergency strategy for the race. Around 100 medical personnel will be utilized during the race and positioned on both shores of the Bridge. They will be positioning police every .2 miles and there will be undercover police dispersed among the participants as well. There will be ambulances stationed at the beginning of the approach to the Bridge, ready to be used in case of an on Bridge emergency. The medical team leaders are going to be the same ones that are used by the Boston Marathon.

From August until the day of the race, there are plans to have more small group meetings with Mr. Garretson and race organizers to iron out the details and coordination for the run.

Ms. Rogers said that all 50 states and 14 different countries will be represented among the runners.

The course for the race has not been finalized but they have arranged for use of the marina footbridge that will allow for getting the runners off of US 50 at an earlier point than if they used other routes. The race will start near Northrup-Grumman on the Western shore, cross the Bridge, and end in the Kent Island business district.

\$596,000 has been pledged for local charities.

They have rented out Navy–Marine Corps Memorial Stadium for Friday and Saturday to hold a Pre-Race Expo, Packet Pick-Up and Kids Run. Pre-screening of all runners will take place at parking lots before boarding shuttles that will take them to the starting area.

For security and practicality reasons, there will be no spectators allowed near the Bridge.

They have made plans to make this race cupless. Runners will either need to bring their own water containers or use reusable silicon collapsible cups.

The Bay Bridge Police facility will be central command for the race. There will be a remote command center on the Eastern Shore.

This date was selected because of the likelihood of mild weather and lack of conflict with other area events.

Warming tents will be provided for the runners.

Cameras will be activated on the Bridge and people will be able to view the run through them.

Ms. Hitchings asked if people will be able to park on the service roads near the Bridge. Mr. Garretson said no.

There will be extensive press coverage from local media.

Spectators will be able to view at various locations but not at or near the Bridge.

Information about the run can be found at the official website: <http://www.bridgerace.com/>

## **Other Business**

## Annual Report

Mr. Fleming said that he was asked to bring copies of the 2013 MDTA Annual Report. They were made available to any member or other attendee who wanted one.

## Drive Over Service

Mr. Fleming let the Group know that MDTA has a bidder to provide the Drive-Over service. This agreement should be finalized shortly.

## **Miscellaneous Closing Comments**

Mr. Gartner and Mr. Broderick thanked everyone for their service and for bringing food and/or beverages.

## **Next meeting:**

The next meeting of the Bay Bridge Reconstruction Advisory Group will be held on Wednesday, October 1, 2014 at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned about 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Fleming