

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

Meeting Summary

Wednesday, April 1, 2015
MDTA Bay Bridge Police Building

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jack Broderick, Chairman	Nancy Wright
Barbara Hitchings	Tracy Schulz
Delores Green	Barbara Span-Obert
Bill Nevel	Pat Lynch
Nick Deoudes	

OTHER ATTENDEES:

Rob Rager (SHA)	John Narer (SHA)
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MDTA STAFF:

Kevin Weber	Patrick Fleming
Kerry Brandt	Sgt. Edward Wojcik (MDTA Police)
Scott Still	Barry Clothier

Call to Order and Welcome

Chairman Jack Broderick called the meeting of the Bay Bridge Reconstruction Advisory Group (BBRAG) to order at 6:05 p.m. Introductions were made by all in attendance.

Minutes:

The minutes of the January 7, 2015, meeting were reviewed and approved without amendment.

A motion for adoption of the minutes was made by Mr. Shulz and seconded by Ms. Hitchings with all members in concurrence.

Update on Bridge Activities

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

Operations

Closures on the eastbound span have been scheduled for 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Mondays through Thursdays, and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Fridays. These closures are expected to continue until the end of April. Full nighttime closures of the eastbound span are ongoing. The hours of the full closure are 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. Mondays through Fridays and 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. on Saturdays and 12 a.m. to 5 a.m. Sundays. Two-way operations are being implemented during weeknights.

Mr. Still talked about the safety projects that will occur before the beginning of the summer season. The projects include restriping from the toll plaza to the bridge to direct traffic and prevent weaving, reinstalling reflective "pucks" in between the lanes to prevent crossing over, and other minor repairs as a result of winter wear and tear.

Mr. Broderick asked about pot hole repairs. Mr. Scott replied that the on-call contractor has been able to stay on top of the pot holes and are filled quickly.

Mr. Clothier stated that the goal is to finish large projects and that staff will continue to monitor safety improvements made before the 2014 summer season to track how they have helped affect driver behavior positively.

Ms. Hitchings suggested that a sign alerting motorists to turn on headlights be placed before the toll booth, near the overpass, because many people are focused on merging and might not pay attention to road signs.

Ms. Lynch asked what the requirement for headlights. Sgt. Wojcik stated that motorists must have their vehicle's headlights on for the entire length of the bridge.

Ms. Span-Obert asked if the prohibition of changing lanes will stay in effect. Mr. Clothier said that the prohibition will stay in place. (I thought that we couldn't really prohibit bc/ it's a dashed line?)

Cleaning and Painting

The project to clean and paint the westbound span is continuing. The westbound bridge is 99% complete. The project should be finished in May 2015. Scaffolding is being removed and paint is being touched up.

Cable Wrapping and Dehumidification Project

The project is 90% complete and the westbound span is 100% done. The eastbound span dehumidification plant has been installed and is expected to be started in mid-April. The project is expected to be complete in May 2015, following a 64% work day loss due to weather.

Mr. Deodes asked how the westbound dehumidification plant is working now that it has been operational for a period of time. Mr. Weber responded that it is working as designed. When the plant was turned on the humidity was around 70% and is now in the teens.

Mr. Nevel asked if the humidification plant cycles on and off like a furnace. Mr. Weber responded that it is always on and regulates the humidity and temperature.

Ms. Span-Obert asked if we are the first in the country to implement this project. Mr. Weber said, yes, we are the first in the U.S., but it has been implemented in the UK and we are working closely with them. We are also receiving requests for tours and information about the project nationally and internationally.

Miscellaneous Repairs

A new \$18.9 million contract will begin in April. Work under this contract will be identified during the annual inspections.

Toll Booth Replacement and Plaza Concrete Replacement

Toll booth replacement project is complete. The concrete apron replacement has been completed. The approach to the toll plaza from the Sandy Point Over pass to the apron will be milled and replaced.

Traffic Statistics

Mr. Garrettson noted that traffic for the Thanksgiving weekend was down 3% as compared to 2013. On the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, two-way operations was not implemented due to inclement weather. Traffic for the Christmas holiday was down 1%, and peak demand was spread out over more days because the holiday was on a Thursday.

Safety Enhancements

Safety enhancements (additional signage, flashing lights, speed warning signs, etc.) have been completely installed, and there has been a 6% reduction in crashes. It is still too early to tell if it is a direct result of the additional signage.

Overhead Lane Signals

The project to modify the “green arrow” signs to allow for all five lanes to allow traffic in one direction. The use of all lanes in one direction has not been needed, but is a useful tool to have if needed in the future.

Commercial Vehicle Scale Rehabilitation

Reconstruction of the westbound scale began on March 16, 2015, and is expected to be complete in six months. Once the westbound scale is complete, the eastbound scale will begin and is expected to take six months to complete.

Update on SHA Projects

Mr. Narer and Mr. Rager provided an update on SHA’s projects near the Bay Bridge.

SHA’s preliminary resurfacing list for the paving season includes MD 179 south of US 50, parts of East College Parkway (US 50 service road) and several bridge approaches on US 50 in the Annapolis area. This list is always subject to change depending on priority needs.

The Department of General Services will be repairing cables under the Rowe Blvd (MD 70) bridge over College Creek in April and May. This will require single lane closures across the bridge.

SHA plans to install more than five miles of sidewalks in the Annapolis area beginning this summer. Locations include MD 178 and MD 450 near Annapolis Mall, MD 70, MD 435 and MD 450 in front of the USNA.

SHA just awarded a \$6.7 million overhead lighting contract focused on the US 50 corridor in Anne Arundel County.

Repainting of the Kent Narrows Bridge is ongoing and is expected to be complete in mid-May. There is a performance clause to incentivize meeting the completion date.

MD 404 widening is underway and is 25% complete. Phase I is expected to be complete at the end of summer. Planning to complete the widening of MD 404 is underway, but construction funding has not been identified.

The Dover Bridge replacement project is underway. The first piling is complete and the second is underway.

Other Business

Ms. Lynch asked about the possibility of adding a double deck to one or both of the existing bridges to increase capacity. The current substructure won't support the extra weight and structure. Additionally, the MDTA does not have the property to create the approaches to and from the second deck.

Ms. Lynch asked how the lights on the bridge are replaced when they are burnt out. Mr. Still explained that we have a standard operating procedure to monitor the lights and we attempt to replace them as quickly as possible.

Mr. Nevel asked the planning of adding an additional lane on the Severn River Bridge. Mr. Rager said that it is still in planning and they are currently in the process of procuring a design contract. The design consultant will help determine if what is planned is feasible and the completion of planning will include about 30% design.

Mr. Broderick brought up a transportation corridor study between the SHA, Queen Anne's County and Developers to look at the US 50 corridor on Kent Island.

Mr. Fleming discussed the 2015 legislative session. There were a number of bills that were introduced that affected the MDTA, but did not pass. They included bills to require AET at the Bay Bridge, adding a member of the General Assembly to the MDTA Board and the creation of a separate Key Bridge Authority.

The MDTA introduced a bill that would provide us with the ability to be more customer friendly for video tollers. The legislation was passed and allows for the application of the \$50 Civil Penalty 15 days after the due date, not the day after, and allows the MDTA to waive tolls and civil penalties under certain circumstances.

Mr. Nevel asked that the Bay Bridge Life Cycle Cost Analysis be presented at a future meeting. As the result of legislation introduced during the 2013 Legislative Session MDTA agreed to do a study to look at current traffic patterns and determine what system preservation projects will be needed in the future to preserve the existing bridges and when in the future a new crossing will be needed.

Next meeting:

The next meeting of the Bay Bridge Reconstruction Advisory Group will be held on Wednesday, July 8, 2015, at 6 p.m. The meeting was moved to the second Wednesday to allow for discussion of the Fourth of July Holiday traffic.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Fleming