

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

Meeting Summary

Wednesday, October 1, 2014
MDTA Bay Bridge Police Building

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jack Broderick, Chairman
Nancy Wright
Tracy Schulz

Pat Lynch
Barbara Hitchings
Bill Nevel

OTHER ATTENDEES:

John Narer (SHA)
Rob Rager (SHA)

MDTA STAFF:

Gordon Garrettson
Kerry Brandt
Eric Backes

Patrick Fleming
1st Sgt. Adam Wiatkowski (MDTA Police)

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.

Minutes:

The minutes of the July 30, 2014 meeting were reviewed and approved with amendment. The amendments were:

- Referring to the approval of the previous meeting's minutes, the date was corrected and changed from October 2, 2013 to April 2, 2014.
- The date of an incident on the bridge was corrected. The minutes originally stated that "On 6/1/2014 a passenger vehicle struck a MDTA Police vehicle sitting in the crossover" and the incident date was corrected to 6/11/2014

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

Update on Bridge Activities

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

Operations

Mr. Garrettson said that generally staff has been running two-way operations Monday through Friday during non-rush hour. They have been doing lane closures for repairs from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and will add Friday 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. as volumes drop in the fall.

Most of the winter maintenance work will be done on the Eastbound Span.

Mr. Garrettson said that they are looking to stop doing contraflow operations on Mondays and Tuesdays, with contraflow on Wednesdays eventually being halted as well.

Mr. Garrettson said that from May to September there was a .7% increase in traffic overall compared to last year, but the increases were higher this year during some holiday periods. For Memorial Day, the increase was 4% over last year and the increase was 2% over last year's Labor Day. July 4th traffic was the same as in 2013.

Cleaning and Painting

The project to clean and paint westbound is continuing. The Westbound Bridge is 70% complete and the Eastbound Bridge has 5 out of 9 spans complete. The project should be finished in May 2015 with extra crews being brought in to finish the project.

Wrapping

The project is 70% complete and the Westbound span is 100% done. Currently, the Contractor is taking down temporary scaffolding on Westbound and moving it to Eastbound. The project completion is expected in April 2015, after losing time for lane closures due to weather. There is a 2 year warranty on the wrapping project.

Isolation Points

The isolation points project is complete.

Miscellaneous Repairs

The \$13 million contract for miscellaneous repairs is ongoing.

Toll Booth Replacement and Plaza Concrete Replacement

According to Mr. Garrettson, work on replacing the toll booths and the concrete apron at the toll plaza has started. The right 3 lanes have been closed off and this required all permit loads to be detoured into the facility administration building parking lot. The project will continue with 2 or 3 lanes being closed off at a time moving through all the booths until they are all replaced. Weather permitting, the project should be complete in Spring 2015 before the busy summer traffic season begins.

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.

Safety Enhancements

Following the safety enhancements that were put in place earlier this year ("Your Speed Is" Electronic Signs, Extending the Eastbound 50 mph zone beyond the curve, "40 MPH Curve" Warning Sign, putting up "No tailgating signs", putting up "Congestion Ahead" signs, and requiring headlights with corresponding signs) there has been a 16.9% decrease in collisions.

Between July 3 and August 8 there were 0 collisions and Friday and Saturday collisions were down most of the summer.

Increased enforcement has led to a 35% increase in DUI apprehensions.

Mr. Nevel asked some questions regarding headlight enforcement. Sgt. Watkowski reported that the MDTA Police were doing enforcement of the "Headlights On" rule, but were only issuing warnings at this time. Citations will begin soon. Compliance is good and improving. They are also enforcing the lane change prohibition.

Mr. Nevel also asked about what was happening with switching to All Electronic Tolling (AET) at the Bay Bridge. MDTA staff responded that MDTA is studying AET at all facilities, but that the Bay Bridge would not be one of the first facilities to switch due to the high percentage of cash customers and the operational issues, such as contra flow.

Uninterruptable Power Supply

The project to install an interruptible power supply system is complete and it is up and running

Incidents

On August 16, at 10:57 a.m. there was an incident that resulted in a chain reaction. The lane was cleared by 12:38 p.m., and the roadway was cleared completely by 1:17 p.m. There had been speculation that the vehicle that precipitated the incident had tried to make a u-turn, but in reality the vehicle had been pushed into oncoming traffic.

Ms. Lynch asked if the Annapolis Capital Newspaper gets information from MDTA on incidents. Mr. Garrettson and Sgt. Wiatkowski explained the process by which they relay information on incidents to the media.

Update on SHA Activities that Affect Bridge

Severn River Bridge

Mr. Narer reported that only the planning is funded for adding a 7th lane to the bridge. They have done a preliminary study to handle a 7th lane and are looking at doing an advanced planning study to see how it would be accommodated. He was not sure whether or not an Environmental Impact Study would be needed for the project, more likely just a Categorical Exclusion, and would likely require a Stormwater Management permit.

MDTA is not involved in the planning process for the project.

MD-404

Mr. Narer reported that the dualization project is currently in the Stage 1 stormwater management process. They have started test piles on the Tuckahoe Creek Bridge Reconstruction.

Dover Bridge

Mr. Narer reported that the NTP has been issued. The gas line relocation is underway and should be complete by November 1.

US301/MD-304 Interchange

Mr. Narer reported that the groundbreaking had occurred and the project should be well underway in spring 2015. This will be a 2.5 year project. River Rd will be "Right in/Right out" only in the future.

MD-404 Between US50 and Wye Mills

Mr. Narer reported there will be closures in order to accommodate culvert repair.

Kent Narrows Drawbridge

Mr. Narer reported that bidding will occur this winter for the job to clean and paint the bridge. The project will require that the bridge be closed for 8-12 weeks in order to complete the work because it requires the bridge to be in the open position to reach all the surfaces on the bridge. SHA is looking to do repairs on the bridge and approaches concurrently.

Miscellaneous

Mr. Broderick complimented MDTA and SHA for their work on the CTP Tour presentations.

Mr. Nevel commented that he noticed that they were doing traffic counts on US 50 and that it appears the equipment being used was the more inexpensive equipment.

Other Business

Bridge Run

Mr. Garrettson reported that the November 9 event may start at 7:30 a.m. instead of 8 a.m. to accommodate disabled runners. It is likely the Eastbound Bridge would close earlier than 7 leaving one lane in each direction on the Westbound Bridge center lane used for emergencies in case of break down. It is expected that the Bridge will be reopened to normal traffic patterns between 1 p.m. and 2 p.m.

On October 26 at 6 p.m. there is a public meeting regarding the Run at the Kent Island Senior Center.

Rob Rager from SHA

Mr. Rager reported that SHA will be repaving US 50 and the service road in Spring 2015.

SHA hopes to begin I-97 concrete repair shortly.

Life Cycle Study

Mr. Nevel asked when the Bay Bridge Lifecycle Study would be complete. MDTA staff responded the expected completion is Spring 2015.

Next meeting:

The next meeting of the Bay Bridge Reconstruction Advisory Group will be held on Wednesday, January 7, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned about 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Fleming