

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

Meeting Summary

Wednesday, October 7, 2015
MDTA Bay Bridge Administration Building

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jack Broderick, Chairman	Nancy Wright
Barbara Hitchings	Tracy Schulz
Bill Nevel	Pat Lynch
Nick Deoudes	

OTHER ATTENDEES:

Hilary Gonzales (SHA)
Sparrow Rogers (10K Across the Bay)

MDTA STAFF:

Tim Cooke	Mike Rice
John Sales	Michele Gross
Melissa Williams	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 July 7, 2015, meeting were reviewed and approved with amendment. The amendment was to include a statement that the BBRAG has asked that the group receive an update from the MDTA about the Bay Bridge Life Cycle Cost Analysis (BBLCCA) at the January 6, 2016 meeting. Mr. Nevel expressed disappointment that the presentation to BBRAG would be delayed until January.

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

Update on Bridge Activities

Mr. Rice and Mr. Clothier, filling in for Mr. Garrettson, updated the group on bridge projects and other newsworthy information.

Cleaning and Painting

Phase IV of the project to clean and paint the westbound span has a Notice to Proceed (NTP) of February 2016.

Cable Wrapping and Dehumidification Project

The project is 99% complete and the westbound span is 100% done. Completion is expected to occur by mid-October.

Miscellaneous Repairs

A new \$18.9 million contract will begin in April 2016. Work under this contract will be identified during the annual inspections.

Overhead Lane Signals

Update on the overhead signal lights. The project will be completed under an on-call contract to install the LED lights.

Mr. Rice and Mr. Clothier also discussed one major incident that occurred at the Bridge over Labor Day weekend.

Saturday September 5, 2015

All lanes on the eastbound bridge were blocked due to a blow out from the main transformer generator that handles all power for the bridge. Mr. Clothier spoke about the issues in trying to isolate where the power line was damaged and how individuals had to walk the entire length of the bridge on the catwalk to find the exact location. This was accomplished in about 2-3 hours. It took about two hours for the backup generator to arrive. Mr. Deoudes felt the MDTA came across as incompetent. Mr. Broderick heard the same complaints that Mr. Deoudes heard and said the entire day was shot, with backups occurring eastbound until evening. Mr. Rice spoke about the extra transformer and how it helped speed up the very slow process of returning power to the bridge. Mr. Broderick felt there wasn't a sufficient public relations effort during or after the event. Mr. Sales talked about the extensive social media coverage on the day of the outage. Ms. Hitchings asked about preparation in case this happens again. Mr. Broderick asked about a digitalized system so that the time spent walking the length of the bridge would not be necessary. Mr. Rice said with a structure as old as the Bay Bridge, the newer technology cannot be implemented. Ms. Hitchings asked what bridges across the country have access to the more modern technology. Mr. Broderick said that the outage was a black eye for the area, especially with it being Labor Day weekend. Mr. Rice spoke about a written response being drafted to local elected officials, with the Queen Anne's County Commissioner also due to receive a copy. Ms. Hitchings suggested an op-ed piece by MDTA in the Capital editorial page and reiterated how better public relations was needed. Mr. Deoudes also spoke about the summer traffic in general with Sunday evening and Monday morning traffic being much heavier over the summer, in addition to the regular Friday evening and Saturday morning issues.

Future of the Bay Bridge

Discussion on the future of the Bay Bridge was led by Mr. Broderick. Mr. Broderick asked what needed to be done to start on a long term study. Mr. Deoudes spoke about former Senator E.J. Pipkin talking about how it would take 20 years to get NEPA requirements. Mr. Nevel said that it is important to get the NEPA process started so that all of the alternatives are considered. Mr. Broderick expressed his hope that Governor Hogan and Secretary Rahn were looking into getting this process started. Mr. Nevel spoke about testifying with Senator Hershey and meeting with former MDTA Administrator Bruce Gartner, and said that Mr. Gartner stated the money is there for the NEPA study. Mr. Nevel also spoke about the problems being with the approach roads and the environmental issues that go along with a project this big. Mr. Cooke also reconfirmed that there would be a Bay Bridge Life Cycle Cost Analysis Overview presentation given at the January 2016 meeting.

Update on SHA Projects

Ms. Gonzales provided an update on SHA's projects near the Bay Bridge.

SHA will continue to repave along Rt. 50 to repair "bumps" in the roadway during the summer months.

Lighting contract on Rt. 50 from MD 424 to the Severn River Bridge with an anticipated completion date of winter 2016.

Major resurfacing job begins in the spring to resurface eastbound 50 during the overnight hours. SHA will resurface one interchange at a time (Route 2, Bay Dale, etc.). There will be overnight delays if traveling in this area.

Community Meetings will be held for public input into the Severn River Bridge project which is scheduled to begin fall 2017.

A public meeting will be held on November 10 for the Route 404 improvements.

10K Across the Bay

Sparrow Rogers gave an update on the upcoming 10K Across the Bay. 23,400 people have been registered with a sellout of 25,000 expected. Coordination continues to ensure that this year's race is even more successful than the 2014 race.

Other Business

Ms. Hitchings requested that a Sandy Point State Park representative be invited to the April 2016 meeting to discuss access issues. Mr. Nevel spoke about the presentation from the Baltimore Metro Long Range Plan Life Cycle Study draft that should be completed by the end of October. Federal funding for the NEPA process was discussed with Melissa Williams explaining the various steps in the NEPA process.

Amendments:

Amendment from Pat Lynch and Bill Nevel expressing disappointment that the Bay Bridge Life Cycle Cost Analysis was not presented at the July or October meetings. The presentation is scheduled for the January 2016 meeting due to the report being reviewed by the Secretary's office.

Amendment from Bill Nevel noting that the Baltimore Metropolitan Planning organization is doing a 40-year advanced planning document with comments closing in mid-October.

Next meeting:

The next meeting of the Bay Bridge Reconstruction Advisory Group will be held on Wednesday, January 6, 2016 at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Cooke