



Southeast Corridor Commission
 Meeting Minutes
 April 14, 2021
 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM EST

Roll Call

Julie White conducted a roll call at 10:30 AM on April 14, 2021.

Present

Committee			
State	Commission Member / Proxy	Technical Committee Member	Others
DC	<i>Not Present</i>	<i>Not Present</i>	Carla Longshore
Virginia	Jennifer Mitchell	<i>Not Present</i>	Randy Selleck
North Carolina	Julie White	Eddie McFalls	Jason Orthner, Beau Memory
South Carolina	Brett Rewis	Doug Frate	-
Tennessee	<i>Not Present</i>	Amy Kasonovic	-
Georgia	Meg Pirkle	Ashley Finch	-
Florida	<i>Not Present</i>	Holly Cohen	-

Non-Voting	
FRA	Paul Nissenbaum, Randy Brown, Jessie Gatti, Natalie Williford
Amtrak	Ray Lang
Consultants	Corey Hill (Kimley Horn), Emily Grenzke (Kimley Horn)

Old Business

Julie White welcomed everyone and asked for a motion to approve the January Commission meeting minutes. Motion was moved by Meg Pirkle, seconded by Brent Rewis. Ayes from VA, NC, SC, GA.

New Business

Paul Nissenbaum discussed the American Jobs Plan and the proposed infrastructure investment. Includes four key components:

1. Addresses Amtrak backlog equipment, facilities, stations, seeks to eliminate backlog differed maintenance.
2. Addresses the Northeast Corridor backlog, Connect 2035 Plan.
3. Includes corridor development investment nationally, would provide grant and loan opportunities for corridors across the country.
4. Reviews CRISI program, emphasis on safety and alternative fuels/cleaner power/electrification, and congestion projects where there is shared use infrastructure, and address needs of shortline railroads that have infrastructure needs.

Ray Lang discussed the historic Amtrak routes vs the routes today vs the population projections. Amtrak asking for \$25B over 5 years in reauthorization for corridor development across the country. Laid out vision for how Amtrak would spend \$25B vs \$75B over 15 years and what system would look like. Penetrate unserved market such as Columbus, Ohio; Nashville, Tennessee; Colorado; Phoenix; Las Vegas, etc. Addressed need for meaningful federal program to put billions in play every year to develop corridors across the country. Amtrak vision includes:

- Serve up to 160 more communities, building on the 500+ in the existing network

- Multiple daily trips in 15 more states
- Up to 30+ potential new routes
- Up to 20+ existing routes with more trips
- 20 million more passengers than the 32 million served in FY 2019

Discussion with Paul Nissenbaum about challenging SEC—northeast corridor got with Amtrak and put together capital plan, what is the right way to build out corridor. How can SEC buildout long term, regional based approach to instill collaboration across state lines?

Emily Grenzke presented on the Economic Benefits of Rail Study. Review of the technical report, executive summary, and one-pager. Julie asked for a motion to adopt and publish Economic Benefits of Rail Study documents on the website. Jennifer mad a motion, Meg seconded. Ayes from VA, NC, SC, GA.

Sophy Chen provided update on the draft authorization language. Sophy provided draft language as potential placeholder if it is requested by Hill staffers. Hope to get federal funding, unsure of where, potential for permanent staff, one or two people. Julie discussed what “skin in the game” might look like for each state, formulaic to match federal funds and potential for in-kind contributions. Discussions of state commitments and obligation. Asking for funding per year, for 5-8 years. Looking at potential bill in the fall or later.

Eddie McFalls discussed the Southeast Corridor Implementation Plan task. Mott MacDonald and Kimley Horn will be developing the report. Synthesis of different services and environmental documents and document ROW lessons learned. Eddie also provided a budget update, Implementation Plan is last item to obligate, \$325K, need to be thinking about how to continue work.

State Updates

States presented on new or existing rail initiatives:

- **Washington, DC:** N/A
- **Virginia:** Announcement on March 30 with Sec. Buttigieg, CSX, and Amtrak about TRIV; completing ROW and track procurement now, going to board this week for approval. Starting update for state rail plan with stakeholder outreach beginning in May; VPRR announced hiring of DJ Stadler as Executive Director. VPRR will be staffing up over next few months.
- **North Carolina:** Won an FTA grant for \$900K to do TOD planning along the S-Line corridor. Full local match was provided by the communities along the line that wanted to do potential station area planning. Continuing efforts to acquire the S-Line. Working to identify incremental projects along the Raleigh to Richmond corridor. Coordinating the SOGR grant obligated for new fleet. Continuing work with CSX on CCX facility. Working on developing State Rail Plan
- **South Carolina:** Work underway on upstate express corridor, funded by \$25M BUILD grant that will add rail capacity to NS between Columbia and Inland Port Grier. Targeting for completion of 2023. Palmetto Railways has submitted an INFRA application to construct 23-mile line.
- **Tennessee:** Governor has proposed \$85M to help shortline freight rail community.
- **Georgia:** State rail plan has been submitted to FRA for review and approval. ATL to CLT is under legal review at FRA and hope to see approval soon.
- **Florida:** Gearing up for state rail plan update, initial conversations on strategy and players; working with brightline on ROW coordination.

Scheduling of Next Meeting

The July 14, 10:30 AM meeting date/time was approved.

Additional Agenda Items

N/A

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned by Julie White.

Minutes prepared by: Marston Raue

Minutes submitted by: Meg Pirkle

Approved on: XXX

These minutes will be circulated to Commission nominees, Proxies, Technical Committee members, and other attendees for comments. Any comments received within ten days of distribution will be incorporated into a final version. These meeting minutes will be formally approved at the subsequent Commission meeting.