

MINUTES OF THE MARYLAND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
June 5, 2024

I. Call to Order

Chair Justin Towles called the Maryland Transportation Commission meeting to order on Wednesday, June 5, 2024, at 10:32 AM via Teams meeting.

II. Roll Call

The following individuals were present:

Justin Towles, Chair
Debra Carter, Member
Debra Farrar-Dyke, Member
Rudolf-Victor De Leon Dinglas, Member
Debra Farrar-Dyke, Member
Barbara Richman-Kahn, Member
George Littrell, Jr., Member
Lisa Weimin Liu, Member
John Lunn, Member
Todd Nock, Member
Rizwan Siddiqi, Member
Gary Simpson, Member
Greg Snook, Member
Mario VillaSanta, Member
MDOT Staff Brittany Brothers
MDOT Staff Nora Corasaniti

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Chair Towles asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the May 1, 2024, meeting. Mr. Siddiqi made a motion to approve the minutes and Ms. Carter seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

IV. Dedications of MDOT Facilities

Chair Towles informed members about upcoming dedications that could be coming down the pipeline, which include Malkus Bridge renaming in Dorchester County, the Capital Gazette victims, and a Korean War Veteran.

Chairman Towles introduced the first dedication request for review. The request is for PFC Brennan Rabain on Greenbelt Road. No local official letter of support was submitted, but the Chair did not want to hold up the review process. He suggested moving forward and making the motion pending the submission of a letter of support from a local official. Ms. Carter offered to reach out and retrieve the local official letter. The Chair asked for a motion to approve this dedication request, pending the submission of the missing letter of support. Mr. Nock made the motion to approve and Mr. Lunn seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Towles introduced the next dedication request for Chief Seavey on River Road in Montgomery County. He noted this dedication request has some complications regarding the location and will need additional coordination with Montgomery County. He asked for a motion to approve this request, pending a location for the sign. Ms. Richman-Kahn made the motion to approve and Mr. Nock seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Towles noted that he attended the dedication ceremony for Mr. Ellis.

V. Retreat Follow-Up & Direction of MTC

Chair Towles led a discussion about the future of MTC and where he sees the Commission going strategically. He suggested the creation of an award that the Commission can give out to civilians that go above and beyond and contribute to the state in a meaningful way. He would like this award to have less criteria than the dedication of facilities requirements. Members asked if a budget would be needed. Mr. Towles feels it will be low cost and doesn't think budget will be an issue if it is something the Commission wants to adopt.

Chair Towles also discussed a shared folder of documents he has put together for the members. Documents include membership directory, dedication process, background information on MTC, and dedication request tracker.

There was also a discussion about the MTC's role and responsibilities moving forward. Chair Towles said he met with MDOT Assistant Secretary McAndrew and Assistant Secretary Bridges. He said he drafted a memo and presented it to them, which outlines where he sees the Commission going. His memo included MTC background information, a summary of current responsibilities, and potential engagement areas (support recovery from Key Bridge collapse; monuments and memorials; innovative solutions to congestion challenges; best practices to avoid catastrophic events and project prioritization support).

Chair Towles mentioned the planning of a Key Bridge memorial and event. He would like to put something together for the 1-year anniversary that recognizes those who lost their lives, their families, first responders, recovery crews, etc. He is in coordination with MDOT Assistant Secretary Greene. He asked the members if they were up for the task, and, if so, to make a motion in support of this effort. He also asked for a second motion to allow the MTC to create subcommittees for dedications/memorial of bridge and project prioritization.

The language for the motion from Chair Towles:

It is the sense of the Maryland Transportation Commission that the Commission will pursue planning a memorial event in conjunction with MDOT's work on a monument to be held on or near the first anniversary of the Key Bridge collapse. This memorial event will aim to honor the victims who lost their lives, the first responders, the response and recovery crews, the people who maintained and protected the bridge for decades and the legacy of the Key Bridge itself. This effort will be coordinated closely with MDOT staff and the Executive Leadership team, the Governor's Office, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Anne Arundel County, The U.S. Park Service, the Baltimore Community Foundation and any other relevant stakeholders.

Chair Towles asked for a motion to move forward with Key Bridge memorial and event planning. Mr. VillaSanta made the motion to move forward. Ms. Carter seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Towles asked for a second motion to give the Chair to create subcommittees and advisory committees as necessary to accomplish the goals and mission of the MTC and MDOT. Ms. Richman-Kahn made the motion to grant the Chair such authority. Mr. Siddiqi seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Towles appointed Mr. Nock as the Chair of the Key Bridge Memorial/Event Subcommittee.

The Chair discussed next steps moving forward. He will be having follow-up meetings with the various MDOT Assistant Secretaries to keep progress moving forward regarding MTC's role and Key Bridge memorial preparations.

Chair Towles mentioned the next meeting will be on July 3. He asked members if they wanted to push it back a week due to holiday. Members agreed to move next meeting to July 10, in person at MDOT TSO.

VI. Adjournment

Chair Towles asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting and reconvene for the next meeting in person, on July 10, 2024. Mr. VillaSanta made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Siddiqi seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned.