

# Chesapeake Bay Bridge Reconstruction Advisory Group (BBRAG)

## MEETING MINUTES

---

Wednesday, July 10, 2024

Regular Meeting  
OPEN SESSION  
Tracy Schulz, Chair

### **Members in Attendance**

David Arthur  
Jack Broderick  
Peter Bradley  
Nicholas Deoudes  
John Foster (virtual)  
Pat Lynch  
Jim Moran  
Will Pines  
Tracy Schulz  
Donald Schloss  
Steve Wilson

### **Staff in Attendance**

Huriyyah Ahmad  
Tekeste Amare  
Melissa Bogdan  
Kelli Boulware  
Billy Clough  
Amy Daniel  
James Kittleman

### **Others in Attendance**

Sheriff Gary Hofmann, Queen Anne's County  
Todd Mohn, Queen Anne's County  
Steve Cohoon, Queen Anne's County  
Tim Ryan, AECOM  
Daniel Allen  
Lisa Rodvien

### **Members Not in Attendance**

Lynn Farrow\*  
Bruce Gartner\*\*

\*Member Farrow was represented at the meeting by MDOT Federal Infrastructure Strategy Manager, Sean Winkler.

\*\*Member Gartner was represented at the meeting by MDTA Chief Operating Officer, Richard Jaramillo

Charles Kenny  
Kim Millender  
Mary O'Keeffe  
Robert Rager  
John Sales  
James Turner  
Melissa Williams

At 6:05p.m. Chair Tracy Schulz called the meeting of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Reconstruction Advisory Group (BBRAG) to order.

## Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Outgoing BBRAG Chair Schulz stated that per the BBRAG By-Laws, the BBRAG must elect a Chair and Vice-Chair for the upcoming year.

Member Deoudes motioned to nominate Member Schulz for re-election with a second from Member Broderick. Member Schulz was elected Chair with a unanimous vote.

Member Schulz motioned to nominate Member Broderick for re-election with a second from Members Deoudes. Member Broderick was elected Vice-Chair with a unanimous vote.

## Approval – Minutes of April 3, 2024 Meeting

Chair Schulz asked if there were any amendments to the draft minutes of the April 3, 2024 meeting that were distributed to the members with two being put forward.

Member Broderick noted that on page 4, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> last paragraph, 1<sup>st</sup> line, the text that says ‘...started eastern shore...’ should say ‘...stated western shore...’

Representing Member Gartner, MDTA Chief Operating Officer Richard Jaramillo noted that on page 6, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph under ‘New Business’ the text stating that the vote on the motion was unanimous should be corrected to state that Member Gartner abstained from the vote on the motion.

Member Moran motioned to approve the minutes of the April 3 meeting with the noted amendments with a second from Member Schloss. The minutes were approved with a unanimous vote.

## 2024 Annual Report

Chair Schulz stated the report was submitted to the Governor and General Assembly on July 1. He opened the floor to the group for discussion with Member Broderick commending the quality of the report.

## Report – Quarterly Group Activities and Recommendations

Chair Schulz stated that per House Bill 56, the BBRAG must report on the group’s activities since the last meeting and provide any recommendations they have based on those activities.

Chair Schulz reminded BBRAG members to submit their quarterly activity report to Melissa Bogdan for tracking and use in next year’s annual report.

Member Deoudes stated that he has attended various meetings on the eastern shore related to the recent House Bill regarding the planned hospital in Easton. He stated that there are concerns about the ability of EMS to cross the Bay Bridge. Member Deoudes added that the [western shore] ramp closures have helped but long backups remain concerning. He added that he helps communicate to community members that the MDTA is doing all that it can do. He concluded by stating that people tell him that they want enforcement of the lane use controls.

Member Broderick stated that he receives questions and comments from community members and is involved in a number of local organizations. He stated that unfortunately inclement weather forced the cancellation of Kent Island Day but that organizers appreciated SHA delaying the implementation of ramp closures by one day to accommodate the event. Member Broderick added that there was initial skepticism within the community about the effectiveness of the ramp closure pilot but that opinions have become favorable and that continual adjustments are helping. He added that the biggest concern he hears from his community about what the Bay Crossing Tier 2 NEPA study are what will be presented at the upcoming fall meetings and what the bridge will look like. He also stated that there are concerns about progress on the eastbound span deck replacement project progress.

Member Moran stated that Queen Anne's County held a town hall for the eastern shore ramp pilot program that was attended by about 250 people. He added that more education is needed to inform beachgoers about the impact created when they all choose to leave beach areas at the same time. Member Moran stated that he will be at the upcoming Kent Narrows Development Foundation meeting.

Member Wilson shared ongoing concerns about funding for local state roads on the eastern shore and stated that greater public awareness of limitations on funding at the state level is needed. Member Pines provided by way of response that as he stated at recent General Assembly and State Senate budget committee hearings, overall, SHA funding is currently constrained and that eligibility for federal funding is a factor in deciding where to allocate resources for recurring maintenance.

Member Bradley stated that the new traffic signal at Cape St Clare Road and Martins Road has helped with traffic flow.

Member Lynch stated that the Broadneck Council of Communities (BCCC) received a presentation from the Director of the SHA Office of Maintenance of Traffic (OMT) for Anne Arundel County which conveyed the limited funding available for road projects. She added that she receives lots of questions about the eastbound deck replacement project and would appreciate more informational materials on the project to be able to relay to community members.

Member Arthur stated that he continues to engage with the arts community in Annapolis and that they are in the height of festival season with related concerns about traffic backups impacting attendance at events. He added that he continues to share efforts being done by BBRAG, SHA, and MDTA and works to keep awareness up.

## Report – MDTA & MDOT SHA Updates

MDOT SHA Deputy Administrator / Chief Engineer of Operations Terri Soos provided a review of the ramp management pilot on the western shore with maps presented at the recent Queen Anne's County Town Hall and that are posted on the SHA website ([SHA US 50/301 \(Blue Star Memorial Hwy\) Kent Island Traffic Management](#), [SHA US 50/301 Broadneck Peninsula Service Roads](#))

Member Broderick appreciated opening the on-ramp on Shopping Center Road as it allows traffic to avoid travelling through the roundabout. Queen Anne's County Sheriff Hofmann stated that some people trying to merge onto westbound US 50 are doing so via the shoulder, which is causing additional congestion. Ms. Soos stated that SHA has not analyzed traffic on MD 8 but can for the next BBRAG meeting.

Ms. Soos provided an overview of the ramp closure program on the eastern shore. Member Lynch stated that the new traffic signals at MD 179 and Busch's Frontage Road/St. Margaret's Road and MD 179 (St. Margaret's Road) and Old Mill Bottom Road are appreciated.

MDTA Director of Planning and Program Development, Melissa Williams introduced the new Bay Bridge Deputy Administrator, Mr. Billy Clough and introduced Ms. Huriyyah Ahmad as Melissa Bogdan's new assistant.

Ms. Williams provided the BBRAG a status update on the seven active projects at the Bay Bridge in the Capital Program.

Member Broderick inquired about the delays on Mother's Day and Ms. Williams responded that the contractor has switched from using a steel grid transfer slab to using concrete due to issues with vehicles travelling over the steel grid. Mr. Jaramillo stated that the early realization that there were issues is a testament to the team's dedication to quality and safety. Ms. Williams also stated that of all potential workdays on the Bay Bridge, only half provide the opportunity to perform work with the remainder under restrictions due to either inclement weather or heavy traffic volumes.

## Report – Bay Crossing Tier 2 NEPA Study

MDTA Director of Planning and Program Development, Melissa Williams, provided an update for the Bay Crossing Tier 2 NEPA study. The team is preparing for the upcoming public meetings in the fall. A decision has been made to hold one meeting on a Saturday and like last year, one physical meeting will be held in each Queen Anne's and Anne Arundel Counties. Details for each meeting are still being determined. MDTA also attended the recent MD 18 PEL Study meeting and the Queen Anne's County Town Hall. Ms. Williams stated that the team is very grateful for BBRAG members reaching out to their communities. Responding to a question from Member Schulz, Ms. Williams stated that the meetings will present a blend of information presented at previous meetings for members of the public who are not familiar with the project, and new information about aspects such as design and alignment of the proposed crossing. A press release will be issued to announce the meetings.

Ms. Williams stated that feedback from BBRAG members has resulted in invites to thirteen events and groups so far with another dozen or so to be held before September. Member Broderick commended the presentation that Project Manager Heather Lowe gave in March was very detailed and beneficial.

## Unfinished Business

Chair Schulz stated that there was no unfinished business outstanding and opened the floor to the group with none being brought forward.

## New Business

### **Automated Lane Control System Enforcement**

MDTA Chief Operating Officer, Richard Jaramillo provided an overview of current enforcement efforts for lane use control on the eastern shore stating that on July 3rd and 4<sup>th</sup>, a multi-agency high visibility enforcement operation was conducted targeting closed lane violations from 7am to 3pm. During the event, 191 vehicles were stopped, 74 citations were issued, and 163 warnings were given. Officers also handed out informational pamphlets to describe the overhead signals.

Responding to a question from Member Schulz, Mr. Jaramillo stated that the MDTA has been in contact with agencies in Virginia and other organizations and vendors and are working on additional changes such as lighting and signage for the Automated Lane Closure System (ALCS) to reduce the number of vehicles striking the gates.

Member Moran stated that he has not personally seen lane use control enforcement and would like to know why truck-mounted attenuators cannot be employed to prevent vehicles from travelling in closed lanes. Mr. Jaramillo responded that safety is always a priority and that an attenuator or police officer cannot safely be placed in a travel lane without additional safety measures and procedures to prevent a crash. He added that enforcement is ongoing and that MDTA has data demonstrating as such. Member Moran requested a copy of the data.

Member Lynch stated that camera enforcement would be an ideal solution to the resource limits of police officers. Member Moran stated that legislation is needed at the state level to implement automated enforcement cameras.

Queen Anne's County Sheriff Hofmann stated that enforcement is in place within the lane use control segment of US 50. He added that education is important as many people say that they do not understand the red 'X' signal and what it means. Queen Anne's County Sheriff's Office tries to educate violators but that violations are creating road rage opportunities with people tightening up their following space and others driving on the shoulder. Queen Anne's County Sheriff's Office will try placing a patrol car with lights.

Sheriff Hofmann requested that MDTA and SHA public information officers share the schedule for when lane closures will take place and will end, stating that it will help with better use of Sheriff's Office resources. He added that his Office is in favor of camera-based automated enforcement.

## Public Comments

No comments were received.

---

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 2, 2024, at 6:00p.m.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting of the BBRAG was made by Member Moran at 7:32p.m.

ATTACHMENTS: