

# **Maryland Transportation Authority**

## **Bay Bridge Reconstruction Advisory Group**

### Meeting Summary

Wednesday, March 30, 2016

### **MDTA Bay Bridge Administration Building**

#### **Members Present**

Jack Broderick, Chairman  
Barbara Hitchings  
Nick Deoudes  
Nancy Wright  
Tracy Schultz  
Pat Lynch  
Barbara Span-Obert  
Bill Nevel

#### **MDTA Staff**

Kerry Brandt  
Tim Cooke  
Ricky DeGraffenreid  
Gordon Garrettson  
Mike Rice

#### **Other Attendees**

Bob Rager (SHA)  
Hilary Gonzales (SHA)

#### **Call to Order and Welcome**

Chairman Jack Broderick called the meeting of the Bay Bridge Reconstruction Advisory Group (BBRAG) to order at 6:06 pm. Introductions were made by all in attendance. Mr. Broderick welcomed Mr. Ricky DeGraffenreid, who is taking over for the departing Mr. Garrettson. Mr. Rice officially introduced Mr. DeGraffenreid to the group. Minutes from the January 6 meeting were reviewed and approved with no corrections needed.

#### **Construction**

Mr. Garrettson and Mr. Rice spoke about upcoming system preservation construction for the Bay Bridge. Cleaning and Painting Phase IV has an NTP for July. The Cable wrapping with dehumidification is 99% completed, with only punch list items left. Marksman will have an \$18.9 million dollar contract for

miscellaneous repairs, which includes configuration the lane signals so all five lanes can be used eastbound and westbound when needed. Weigh station scales are being replaced eastbound and westbound. Eastbound is going well and the goal is to have this completed prior to summer.

## **Operations**

Mr. Garrettson and Mr. Rice spoke about operations. Monday through Thursday day work has been occurring from 9 am – 2:30 pm. Friday's remain 9 am – 1 pm. Thursday's are starting to build more traffic as we approach Spring and the 9 am – 1 pm timeframe will begin for that day shortly.

Mr. Rice discussed traffic numbers. In 2015, there was a 2% increase that occurred mostly in the summer. Saturday's were slightly down, Friday's were level, and Thursday saw a 4% increase. Ms. Lynch asked for specifics about how traffic is counted. Mr. Rice explained the system with the toll lanes eastbound giving 100% accurate information. Westbound has a counter that gives an 85-90% accuracy rate.

## **Sandy Point State Park Issues**

Mr. Garrettson said that he sat down with SHA, MSP, and the Park Service to discuss how to handle the issue of cars hanging around when the park is at capacity. No parking signs outside the park so police can enforce were discussed as well as flex poles along shoulders. Long term adjustments for opening and closing of park could possibly occur with advanced reservations. Ms. Span-Obert asked if DMS signing could be used farther west on US 50 to place messages if the park is at capacity.

Ms. Lynch had a question about 511 and how it works not only for traffic but for the area near Sandy Point. Ms. Gonzales explained the system and said SHA is looking at a potential traffic circle but coordination from multiple jurisdictions is needed to move forward and being worked on at the present time. A reservation system is being studied by the park. Ms. Hitchings raised concerns about people parking along Whitehall and East College Parkway while waiting to get into the Park. It was requested that a Sandy State Park representative attend the July meeting.

Mr. Broderick brought up a list of upcoming activities that could impact bridge traffic.

- April 16 – Ride for the Cure
- May 21 – Kent Island Day
- June 1 – Special Olympics
- June 4 – Ride Across Maryland
- June 12 – Chesapeake Swim
- November 6 – 10k Across the Bay

## **SHA**

Western Shore

#### MD 424 – Severn River Bridge

- LED lights will be installed on US 50 Westbound
- Mr. Broderick asked if the lane width would remain the same. The Bridge is being redesigned to accommodate one wide bridge
- New cabinets almost read for the US Naval Academy bridge
  - o Materials arrive next week with approximately one month for installation. Completion date is approximately July 1

#### Repair on MD 179/St. Margaret's Road

- During work there will be a detour, with Meta Valley Road being closed
- Pipe will be fixed on Friday, April 8 at 9 pm through Monday April 11 at 5 am

#### Continued patching efforts on St. Margaret's Road for three weeks

- Milling and grinding will take place from 9 pm – 5 am for approximately 30 days
  - o Very loud work
  - o Paving will be conducted at night
  - o

#### Work on SHA roadway from Severn River Bridge to Bay Bridge will begin in April 2016

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- Ms. Lynch asked if Ms. Gonzales will email her the community notification flyers so she can pass out to her group

#### Eastern Shore

US 50 at Kent Narrows paving will begin at night in April from the bridge to the split

Work on SHA roadway from Kent Narrows to Queenstown will begin in April 2017

Work being completed on Coastal Highway from Delaware Line to 62<sup>nd</sup> Street with a completion date of Memorial Day

Work on US 404 from US 50 to Denton Bypass (9 miles) will begin late summer

- \$100 million contract
- Project is a top priority of the Governor
- Thanksgiving 2017 is estimate completion date

#### Mid Shore

#### Upcoming Work

- Chestertown 213 Drawbridge
  - o MD 213 will have significant traffic impacts for this construction
  - o Full closure of the bridge from 7/18 – 8/14
  - o Urging trucks to use alternate routes
  - o On-going coordination with Chestertown Emergency Services during construction

## **Other Business**

There was discussion regarding where NEPA and SB56 legislation bill stood. Mr. Nevel and Ms. Lynch testified with other elected officials for the bill. Mr. Nevel talked about the length of time as EIS would take. Mr. Deoudes said that a letter from this group should be sent to the committee. Ms. Lynch said that the EIS could be paid for with just summer time Bay Bridge tolls. She also met with Milt Chaffee, the Executive Director at the MDTA and hopes to meet with the Governor. Mr. Broderick mentioned concern about the MDTA keeping funding around and acknowledged bond issues that could make funding an issue. He stated he was not comfortable advocating for the funding because of the complicated bond situation that the MDTA is under. The group agreed on a letter to be submitted to the legislature in support of the bill. Discussion continued for ten more minutes with a variety of NEPA related issues being discussed.

Mr. Broderick read a letter to Mr. Garrettson, thanking him for his service at the Bay Bridge and that the group appreciated all of his work over the years. Gifts from BBRAG members were handed out to Mr. Garrettson as a token of appreciation.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:39 pm.

## **Post Meeting**

Jim Harkness, the MDTA's Deputy Director - Traffic, Highway and ITS/Electrical, provided annual traffic data for the official meeting minutes.

For 2015, Thursdays were up 2%, Fridays were up almost 2%, and Saturdays were down by less than 1%. For 2015 as a whole, there was a 2.5% increase in AADT.

The AADT in 2007; 2011; and 2015 were 74,358; 72,178; and 71,708 respectively. This shows a negative growth rate of 3.56%.

## **Attachments**

BBRAG Letter to Gordy Garrettson

***Bay Bridge Reconstruction Advisory Group  
(BBRAG)  
c/o Maryland Transportation Authority  
Baltimore, Maryland 21224***

April 2016

Mr. Gordy Garrettson,

On the occasion of your retirement from the Maryland Transportation Authority, the members of the Bay Bridge Reconstruction Advisory Group (BBRAG), an appointed group of concerned citizens representing communities of Bay Bridge users from both sides of the Bay, express our wholehearted appreciation and gratitude for a job well done. It has been a privilege to have worked with you over the past five plus years during a time of increasing challenges for the Bay Bridge.

As you know, the Bay Bridge is one of the most important and challenging assets of critical infrastructure in the state, requiring constant monitoring, leadership and adjustment, sometimes on a minute to minute basis. You have always been up to the task, always keeping public safety paramount. You have been accessible, responsive, and willing to go the extra mile to ensure positive communication with the community, with a direct, personable, and confidence inspiring manner. Your leadership has been especially effective during the times of critical incidents and during construction and maintenance requirements - working to balance the critical demands of emergency personnel, engineers, and contractors with the needs of the daily and seasonal users of the Bridge. Likewise your role in the planning and execution of the challenging "10 K Across the Bay" helped to make it a stunning success.

You have been an outstanding representative of the State of Maryland in performing one of the most difficult jobs in Maryland.

Gordy, please accept our thanks and congratulations on your retirement and our best wishes for a fulfilling and successful future.

Sincerely,

  
Jack Broderick  
Chair, BBRAG