

APTA Streetcar Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

Hilton Hotel, Baltimore, MD
401 W. Pratt Street, Baltimore, MD 21201

Sunday June 11, 2017
11:30 am – 1:00 pm

Paul Grether, AICP - Chair
Timothy R. Borchers - Vice Chair
James D. Schantz - Secretary

Agenda

1. Welcome & Introductions

Paul Grether

Chair Paul Grether called the meeting to order at 11:30 am and expressed the Subcommittee's thanks to Norm Jester of Herzog Transit Services for sponsoring lunch. A very large number of participants were present, one of the largest groups ever to attend Subcommittee meeting.

The meeting marked Paul Grether's last as Chair, as after three years in the role he elected to step down. Vice Chair Tim Borchers will ascend to the office of Chair in accordance with APTA bylaws. This leaves a vacancy for the office of Vice Chair which allows the Secretary to fill that position. However, Secretary Jim Schantz elected to remain in the Secretary position. APTA made an announcement that they are seeking to fill the Vice Chair position and requested nominations. Three persons responded – Stephen Bonina, Erick Sitiko, and Jason Waldron. Eligible to vote were all who are on the Subcommittee's email list (one vote per firm/agency). Final ballots were collected during the meeting, so results could be announced at the end of the meeting.

2. Previous Meeting Minutes

Jim Schantz

Cincinnati, March 29, 2017. Minutes of this meeting were distributed in advance. The meeting was an all-day affair so the minutes were correspondingly long and included a useful Alstom table on the tradeoffs of off-wire technologies. All presentations from the meeting are now on the Subcommittee's website. As there were no objections, the minutes were considered to be adopted.

3. Updates

- **Light Rail Technical Forum**

Tom Furmaniak

The forum had met earlier in the day and heard an update on a key regional project, the Purple Line in suburban DC. The project has faced many hurdles that threatened its continuation. Only one court challenge remains so there is optimism the project will move forward. CAF is supplying the first five-section articulated car delivered to any U.S. property. Another presentation covered the Siemens vehicle designed for the extended Charlotte streetcar, but also capable of operating and carrying passengers on the system's light rail line. Across the continent, many light rail openings are scheduled for the coming five years. All presentations from the session are on the Forum's website.

- **Light Rail & Streetcar Conf. Oct. 21–23, 2018, Jersey City, NJ**

Tom Furmaniak/Charles Joseph

Planning is advancing for this conference, with session tracks, host hotel, registration fees, and dates now fixed. Presentation abstracts will be solicited in September.

- **Community Streetcar Coalition**

Jeff Boothe

The next annual Streetcar Summit will be in New Orleans in spring 2018 and plans call for joining the meeting with the Streetcar Subcommittee, as was done in Cincinnati in March. The 2019 meeting is likely to be in Tucson. The coalition has been monitoring and reporting to members developments relating to federal funding under the new administration, both for the current and subsequent years. Projects with

Full Funding Agreements in place or close to completion are likely to continue to receive funding. Continuation of Federal Capital Investment Grants in future administration budgets is less certain, but the capital grants program is very popular with members of Congress, so there is some reason for optimism.

- **Streetcar Subcommittee 2017 Meeting, Cincinnati, OH March** **Paul Grether**
 Paul Grether reported on the joint Streetcar Subcommittee and Community Streetcar Coalition in Cincinnati in March. The meetings went quite well enabling participants to attend two sessions on one trip, saving travel funds. Presentations on overseas developments were very a prime theme of the meeting.
- **Website updates** **Jim Schantz**
 The Subcommittee's site at www.heritagetrolley.org and www.streetcarcommittee.org continues to be updated regularly with news and other resources that could be of use to groups planning or implementing modern or heritage streetcar systems. The latest draft of the off-wire status paper and the level boarding white paper are among recent postings in the Technical section.
- **2017 APTA Rail Conference Streetcar Sessions**

 - **Streetcars – New Systems with New Technologies** **Jim Graebner**
 Tuesday June 13, 2017 2:30 pm – 4:00 pm Key Ballroom 9&10, 2nd Floor
 - **Streetcars – Challenges of Construction in a City Environment** **Tim Borchers**
 Tuesday June 13, 2017 4:15 pm – 5:45 pm Key Ballroom 9&10, 2nd Floor
- **Work Program Update:** **John Smatlak**
Safety Presentation is currently under development, stressing need for a system wide approach to safety, and drawing on best practices worldwide as they continue to evolve. A baseline checklist is worthwhile for each system, while monitoring new developments via a safety management system. Streetcars share many safety needs with light rail but there are streetcar specific needs relating to a higher percentage of street running, including improved operator visibility, covering couplers, and optimizing supplemental lighting. A new French standard provides valuable insights in the area of trying to avoid hitting pedestrian's heads in an accident and preventing pedestrians hit from going under the car, among others. Another category of evolving safety capabilities is in driver assist, similar to technologies being added to automobiles. A third area relates to speed and signal enforcement. In other developments, U.S. and European crashworthiness standards are continue to converge. Another area worthy of investigation is researching where streetcar safety efforts overlap bus safety standards. Volunteers are welcome to continue work in this fast changing field.

4. Presentations

Memphis Trolley Relaunch

Gerry Rosenthal, Interim CEO, MATA

Interim CEO Gerry Rosenthal reported on efforts to handle the first-ever relaunch of a heritage trolley system, following the two serious on board fires the system experienced in 2014. These events led to the system being shut down for an overhaul. The system had three lines totaling seven miles and carried 1.5 million riders at its peak. Current plans call for the Main Street line to re-open later this year, and then the other two lines in subsequent years. Six cars are planned to be available for Main Street. Safety is the first priority and a cultural shift is underway to ensure that safe working practices permeate the organization from the top down. New staff is being recruited in a variety of areas. Some of the car renewal work is being done in Memphis and some at Gomaco in Iowa. The cars will have new wiring, new wheels and axles, and an overhauled propulsion system, accompanied by redundant braking systems. Belgian blocks are being relayed along the route and work is underway to recertify the system at the state and federal levels.

5. System Updates (planned, construction, existing)

All

Detroit Streetcar – the Q-Line had its Grand Opening on May 12. The six Brookville articulated cars operate 60% off-wire, powered by on board batteries. All is going well with heavy ridership during the free-fare initial months.

Atlanta – Making good progress on punch list of changes required by Georgia and Federal agencies
Washington – The streetcar has been in service since February 2016. Ridership is twice the projected level and still growing. No fares are collected. Ridership is predominantly regular riders, not those attracted by the novelty of the line. Four cars run daily on a 12 minute headway. Maintenance and operation have recently moved from temporary accommodations into their new building. Expansions are being planned at each end of the route. However \$60 million was recently cut from of the expansion budget. Three more cars are required and funding is being sought for procurements related to the expansions.

6. Officer changes

Charles Joseph

A certificate and pen were presented to Paul Grether by Charles Joseph of APTA as a token of thanks for his service as Subcommittee chair. After a close election, Eric Sitiko, Operations Manager at the Tucson Sun Link modern streetcar was announced as the newly elected Vice Chair of the Subcommittee. Thanks were extended to the candidates for running.

7. Next Meeting

Streetcar Subcommittee meeting Atlanta, GA Sunday October 8, 2017

8. Adjournment

Chair Paul Grether declared the meeting adjourned at 12:59 pm.

- Minutes prepared by Jim Schantz

Lunch sponsored by

