

Virginia Passenger Rail Authority Board Members



Chair - Jennifer Mitchell, of Richmond, Director of the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) – Jennifer Mitchell has been the Director of the Department of Rail and Public Transportation since 2014. In her time with DRPT, Ms. Mitchell has led several high priority transportation initiatives for the Commonwealth, including the \$3.7 billion agreement with CSX to construct the Long Bridge and dramatically expand passenger rail in the Commonwealth. She also serves as a member of the Commonwealth Transportation Board and as a board member on several transit agencies across the Commonwealth. Jennifer has over 25 years of experience in the transportation industry, where she has specialized in the planning and implementation of public transit projects, with a particular emphasis on developing strategic financial plans and advancing major projects through planning, design, and construction. She has a Bachelor in City Planning from the University of Virginia and a Masters in Regional Planning from the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill.



The Honorable Sharon Bulova, of Fairfax County, Former Chairman, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors – Sharon Bulova is a retired chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors in Virginia. An original and longest-standing member of the VRE Operations Board, she worked diligently in the 1980s to establish the rail service, helping VRE overcome funding shortfalls, indemnification hurdles and oppositions from private railroads. She continued to advocate for commuter rail service as a supervisor and a member of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission. In 2004 she was appointed by Governor Mark Warner to chair the Governor’s Commission on Rail Enhancement for the 21st Century. Her efforts over the last 30-plus years have contributed greatly to the quality of life and economic vitality of the region and the Commonwealth of Virginia.



Deborah Butler Painter, of Norfolk, Retired Executive, Norfolk Southern Corporation – Ms. Painter retired in October 2015 as the executive vice president of planning and chief information officer of Norfolk Southern Corporation. She joined Norfolk Southern in 1978 and served in positions of increasing responsibility in operations until being named assistant vice president transportation customer service in 2000 and vice president customer services in 2002, a position she held until her appointment as executive vice president in 2007. She has been a director of CMS Energy and Consumers Energy since January 2015. She has extensive experience in operations, leadership, customer service, sustainability and environment, safety, regulatory environment, strategic planning, and information technology.



Victor Cardwell, of Salem, Principal, Woods Rogers PLC - Victor Cardwell is Co-Chair of Woods Rogers Labor PLC and the Chairman of the Woods Rogers Board of Directors. He practices labor and employment law throughout the U.S., focusing on diversity, the Fair Labor Standards Act, and labor/management relations—including union-organizing campaigns and union-avoidance techniques, and workplace violence. He has significant experience before state and federal courts and administrative agencies. He provides legal representations to various organizations within the transportation and rail industries. Victor is Chair of the Board of Governors of the Virginia Bar Association and the Virginia State Bar's Board of Governors for its Diversity Conference. He also was named to the Roanoke Law Foundation Fellows Program in 2018. He lends legal counsel to many Roanoke-area nonprofit organizations and has served on numerous boards.



Patricia Doersch, of Falls Church, Partner, Squire Patton Boggs
- Patricia Doersch is a partner at Squire Patton Boggs (US) LLP. She practices exclusively in the transportation and infrastructure sectors, specializing in public transportation funding and finance and transportation safety compliance. She regularly assists transit agencies, bus and railcar manufacturers, and other transportation stakeholders in advancing ambitious capital programs and addressing complex regulatory requirements. She knows the transformative impacts that public transportation investments bring to the communities they serve. As such, she welcomes the opportunity to help expand passenger rail service in the Commonwealth.



The Honorable Jay Fiset, of Arlington, Managing Partner, DMV Strategic Advisors and former Arlington County Supervisor - Jay Fiset is currently the Managing Principal of DMV Strategic Advisors, LLC which assists businesses and local governments to advance policies that are consistent with the region's adopted vision. He served on the Arlington County Board from 1998 to 2017. Mr. Fiset was actively involved in regional bodies, many focused on transportation and the environment. He served as Chair of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments and of its Climate, Energy and Environment Policy Committee. He served as Chair and longtime member of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission, which is part-owner of the Virginia Railway Express. He served on the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority and Vice Chair of the region's Transportation Planning Board - where he also chaired the Long Range Planning Task Force. He was the President and Executive Committee member of the Virginia Municipal League.



Roderick "Rod" Hall, of Woodbridge, Government Affairs Advisory, K&L Gates - Roderick Hall is a Government Affairs Advisor in the Public Policy Practice Group of an international legal advisory service firm. He is the current Chairman of the Virginia Aviation Authority Board of Directors and a former appointee of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Hall previously served as a policy advisor to a senior member of the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee's - Railroad Subcommittee within the U.S. House of Representatives. He hopes to help VPRA establish a world class passenger rail system across the Commonwealth to include high speed rail.



Charles "Wick" Moorman, of Charlottesville, Retired Chairman and CEO Officer, Norfolk Southern Corporation - Wick Moorman is currently a senior advisor to Amtrak, where he previously served as president and CEO from August 2016 until January 2018. Prior to that and until 2015, Moorman was CEO (from 2005) and chairman (from 2006) of Norfolk Southern Corporation. From 1975 to 2005, he held various positions in operations, information technology, and human resources at Norfolk Southern Corporation. He serves as a director of Chevron Corporation and previously served as a director of Duke Energy Corporation and Norfolk Southern Corporation.



Cynthia Moses-Nedd, of Prince William County, Chief of Staff, Office of Wildland Fire, United States Department of the Interior - Cynthia Moses-Nedd is the Liaison to State and Local Government for the Department of Interior - Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and brings nearly 30 years of experience to the board. A graduate of Yeshiva University's Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, she uses her law background, analytical and interpersonal skills to negotiate, mediate and foster collaborative partnerships. Her legislative experience has sharpened her political acumen and enables her to provide sound recommendations based on analysis of a full range of factors.



The Honorable Paul Nichols, of Woodbridge, Principal, Nichols Zauzig Attorneys - Paul Nichols is a Principal and founder of Nichols Zauzig, a law firm with offices in Prince William County and Stafford County. His clients have included high profile corporate executives, political figures, athletes and numerous business owners with a variety of valuation issues. His legal practice concentrates on family law, as well as related matters such as protective orders and criminal defense. He was named by peers as a Best Lawyers in America®, selected as a Washington D.C. and Virginia area Super Lawyer®, which is limited to no more than 5% of the attorneys in those regions, and also recognized as a Top Lawyer by Washingtonian Magazine and Northern Virginia Magazine in the area of Family Law. Nichols was elected to the Virginia General Assembly House of Delegates in 2008 and served through 2010.



Hossein Sadid, of Richmond, CFO of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts – Hossein Sadid joined the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Foundation as their CFO and the Deputy Director for Finance and Administration in November 2014. Prior to joining the Museum, he served as vice president for business and finance/treasurer at the University of Richmond from 2009 to 2013. In 2019 he was appointed by Governor Northam to the Commonwealth’s Debt Capacity Advisory Committee. Over the past three decades, Sadid has been an advocate of community interests and diversity, receiving the Hispanic Business Association Annual Award, the Medal of Freedom Award from the Cleveland Chapter of the NAACP, the Governor’s Supplier Diversity Initiative award, the Northeastern Neighborhood Development Corporation Keystone Award for Outstanding Business leadership, the Consortium of African American Organizations Business Development Award, and the President’s Council Trailblazer Award.



James Spore, of Virginia Beach, CEO of Reinvent Hampton Roads - James Spore became the first president and chief executive officer of Reinvent Hampton Roads in 2016, following 24 years of service as city manager of the City of Virginia Beach. During his tenure as city manager, Virginia Beach won accolades as a Best Place to Live in America, one of the top five Best Managed Cities in the Nation, and the U.S. Senate Medallion of Excellence for Productivity and Quality. He has served on numerous regional boards and has been an active member of the American Planning Association, the American Society for Public Administration, the Alliance for Innovation, and the International City Management Association (ICMA). He continues to inspire regional cooperation as he leads Reinvent Hampton Roads, an outgrowth of a community leadership initiative of the Hampton Roads Community Foundation.



Mariia Zimmerman, of Richmond, President and CEO of MZ Strategies – Mariia Zimmerman is Founder and Principal of MZ Strategies, LLC - an urban planning and policy firm located in Richmond, serving clients across the country. Zimmerman brings deep experience leading a wide range of projects in transportation and planning with a focus on transit’s role in supporting community development. She held senior positions within federal government, including at the US Department of Transportation, and with national transportation non-profit organizations before starting her own firm. She has a keen understanding of national passenger rail and federal transit policies, regulations, procurement processes and funding programs.



Ex-Officio, Non-Voting Member - Rich Dalton, of Richmond , CEO of VRE - A seasoned rail-operations veteran, Dalton has been with VRE for 11 years as deputy CEO and chief operating officer until becoming acting CEO in late 2019 and officially CEO in 2020. Among his accomplishments, Dalton led VRE’s multi-year effort to implement positive train control (PTC), a federally mandated safety technology. In April 2019, VRE became the nation’s sixth rail system to operate under PTC. Before joining VRE, Dalton spent 19 years in private industry with a global leader in passenger and freight rail. He is a military veteran, having served as a petty officer in the U.S. Navy. Dalton holds bachelor and master’s degrees in business administration from Sam Houston State University.



Ex-Officio, Non-Voting Member - Bruno Maestri, Amtrak Vice President of Government Affairs and Corporate Communications

- Maestri is Vice President of Government Affairs and Corporate Communications for Amtrak, headquartered in Washington, D. C. He joined Amtrak in 2019 after retiring from a 24-year career at Norfolk Southern Corporation. He served as VP of Government Relations from 2005 until his retirement where he led federal legislative affairs, state and community affairs, and coordinated federal regulatory affairs. He was appointed to the Commonwealth of Virginia Rail Advisory Board by then Governor Tim Kaine in 2009, serving four years. Prior to this, Mr. Maestri was Chief Environmental Officer for Norfolk Southern from 1995 through 1998. During this time, he was appointed by then Governor Allen to the Commonwealth of Virginia Commission on Environmental Stewardship. Prior to joining Norfolk Southern, Mr. Maestri was in private practice for over 18 years, first with Versar, Inc. as a Senior Vice President and then with ATEC as Vice President for Consulting Services.