



Welcome to Transit Talk!

This is John Lewis, CEO of GRTC Transit System and Welcome to another edition of Transit Talk.

This has certainly been an interesting transition into the year 2010. We have had quite a bit going on in terms of our labor agreement with our Amalgamated Transit Union, the transition from our Davis Avenue location to our new facility at Belt Boulevard. With that, has come quite a bit of rumor and other stories, whether through media or through the grapevine, about our bus routes. I would like to take an opportunity to dispel some of those rumors and lay out some of the facts.

One, our contract with our transit union expired on September 30, 2009, and we have been without a contract since October 1st. GRTC executive staff have been in negotiations with our union since August of 2009 and have laid out a very clear agenda for moving forward in these tough economic times. Governments throughout the state of Virginia are running on tough times right now as a result of the challenges put forward by our economy. GRTC is not immune to those challenges. As local governments here in Richmond and Richmond region, whether the city of Richmond, Chesterfield county, Henrico county, are struggling with reduced resources as the result of the economy. We are also feeling the effects of that pinch. And as a result we have been unable to provide any of our GRTC employees with increased wages or benefits going into 2010.

Our goal going into contract negotiations was to be able to hold the line on salaries and benefits, but at the same time, not have to lay off any of our GRTC family. That was our goal going into negotiations and that remains our goal for moving forward.

Now many of you may have heard rumors over the media in regard to the potential for a labor action, a strike that may occur. As of this moment we are still in negotiations with the union. We are back at the table with a Federal mediator, and transit service at GRTC will continue as normal.

In the event that our labor negotiations breakdown once again and labor action is inevitable we will do our best to provide you with our methods of alternative transportation and our methods for continuing continuity of operations.

Thank you for listening to another edition of Transit Talk. This is John Lewis, thank you for your time.