

**SOUTHERN ALLEGHENIES
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

RURAL TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

February 13, 2019

9:00 AM

SAP&DC Conference Room

Altoona, PA

ACTION SUMMARY

The following are the major actions taken by the Rural Transportation Technical Committee (RTTC) at its regular meeting held on February 13, 2019, at the SAP&DC in Altoona, PA.

1. Approved the June 13, 2018, RTTC Meeting Minutes as presented.
2. Recommended approval of the addition of matching funds for the TSMO projects to the FY 2019-2021 TIP.
3. Recommend the RTCC adopt a resolution to rename the section of the four-lane U.S. Route 219 from Somerset Borough to Meyersdale Borough for Commissioner John Vatavik.

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MEETING MINUTES

I. Welcome

The following members were present at the meeting:

- Donald Schwartz, Bedford County Planning Commission
- Rick Suder, Bedford County Planning Commission
- Mary K. Seville, Fulton County Planning Commission via telephone
- Julie Dovey, Fulton County Family Partnership, Inc. via telephone
- Mark Colussy, Huntingdon County Planning Commission
- Robert Reitman, Huntingdon County Business & Industry via telephone
- Brad Zearfoss, Somerset County Planning Commission via telephone
- Josh Boland, Somerset County Economic Development Council via telephone
- Karl King, Rails to Trails of Central PA
- Jeff Eisaman, CLI Transport/Sheetz
- Ron Rabena, Huntingdon County Rail Authority
- Mike Villeneuve, Somerset County Transportation System
- Dave Thomas, Broad Top Township, Bedford County via telephone
- Stew Neff, Warrior's Mark Township, Huntingdon County
- Tom Jones, Berlin Borough, Somerset County
- Vince Greenland, PennDOT District 9-0
- Brandon Carson, SAP&DC
- Brandon Peters, SAP&DC

Others in attendance included:

- Michele Ivory, Senator Judy Ward's Office
- Commissioner Barry Dallara, Bedford County
- David Lybarger, PennDOT District 9-0
- Anne Stich, PennDOT District 9-0

Each participant received a meeting packet that included:

- Agenda
- June 13, 2018 RTTC Meeting Minutes

- County Priorities Lists
- Southern Alleghenies RPO TIP Adjustments
- TSMO Capital Funding Program 2018/19 Submissions
- FY 19-20 PennDOT Multimodal Transportation Fund Awards
- PA Walk Works Route Maps

II. Review and Approval of the June 13, 2018 RTTC Meeting Minutes

Brandon Carson welcomed the committee to the meeting and conducted roll call. A few members attended via conference call due to weather conditions. He asked the committee to review the meeting minutes included in the meeting packet.

With no further discussion, Vince Greenland made a motion to approve the June 13, 2018, RTTC Meeting Minutes as presented. Jeff Eisaman seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Brandon Peters noted that all action items were completed before the November 7, 2018, combined meeting of the RTTC and RTCC. The county project priority lists were submitted to PennDOT in mid-January.

III. FY 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program Update

Anne Stich reviewed the anticipated schedule for the FY 2021-2024 TIP update. The county priorities were submitted to PennDOT last month. PennDOT District 9 is still waiting for the general procedural guidance from Central Office so this anticipated schedule is based on what the timeline would typically be and is subject to change. The Draft FY 2021-2024 TIP will be due in December 2019. There is a March 4, 2019, meeting scheduled to kick off the PennDOT Connects outreach, which will run through May. At this meeting, the Counties and the RPO will review the process and have some training on the PennDOT Connects system. The meetings with the counties will be scheduled mid-March to mid-April. PennDOT will conduct their District Visioning Field Views June thru August. The candidate local bridge and non-asset management projects lists will be reviewed in August and September with the selections being made in October. Following that, the Draft TIP will be developed and submitted to Central Office in December.

Brandon Carson gave a brief explanation of what the TIP is and the RPO's role in its development to the new committee members.

IV. FY 2019-2021 TIP Modifications and Amendments

David Lybarger reviewed the FY 2019-2021 TIP modifications with the committee answering any questions they had. There was one amendment requiring approval. At the June meeting, the RTTC recommended the submission two applications for Transportation

System Maintenance & Operation (TSMO) funding. We are happy to announce that both of these projects were approved for funding. A 50% match was required for these projects. This action is to provide the match for these projects on the TIP. The match was provided from de-obligations that were moved into the Southern Alleghenies RPO line item on the FY 2019-2021 TIP. Vince Greenland reviewed the TSMO projects with the committee.

With no further discussion, Mark Colussy made a motion to recommend approval of the addition of the matching funds for the TSMO projects to the FY 2019-2021 TIP. Donald Schwartz seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

V. Breezewood Truck Issue

Brandon Carson reminded the committee that this issue was discussed briefly at the combined November meeting. At that meeting, Tom Prestash gave a presentation on the concerns. The issue is that trucks not aware of the restrictions on Rt. 30 are looking for somewhere to turn around, causing accidents and property damage. Changes to the signage has been made on the turnpike to try and make it less confusing, but the turn arounds continue. The latest was a few weeks ago when a truck got stuck in the front yard of a residence trying to turn around and ended up blocking the entire road. Michele Ivory, from Representative Eichelberger's office in November, and Representative Ward's Office now, has been discussing this with their constituents in Wells Township, Fulton County. Brandon thanked her for being here. This has been an ongoing problem and the RPO has received letters from Senator Topper and Senator Eichelberger regarding the issue. Brandon Peters had a slide presentation showing where the turn arounds are occurring. This is certainly a safety concern and would like to know if the committee would like to recommend that the RTCC look at what the next steps should be to find a solution. PennDOT added that a resurfacing project will be putting rip-rap in on the left-hand side of Rt. 30 going into Breezewood. Once the rip-rap is in place they will no longer be able to turn around here and the problem will move father down Rt. 30. Commissioner Dallara added that they are becoming frustrated because they have been talking about this for two years and nothing is being done. He added that they are developing the trail in that area to bring people in and increase business in the Breezewood area. Adding rip rap so even a car can't turn around is concerning. Vince responded that PennDOT met in spring and fall of 2017 with the stakeholders to discuss the project. At the spring meeting there were two action items, was there an opportunity to develop a turnaround in that area with parking and update the signing. PennDOT changed the signing and developed two options to develop a turnaround in this area. The trail organizations did not like the locations of the parking, and the Township refused to take ownership of the turnaround once completed so PennDOT did not move forward with the project. The addition of rip rap was discussed at these meetings.

The first step will be to figure out exactly what the problem is. Besides the signage issues, the commercial GPS is more expensive and requires regular updates so many smaller companies and independent contractors use the GPS on their phones, which does not alert the drivers to the truck restrictions. Vince Greenland added that they developed a survey

card asking where the trucks were coming from and what kind of GPS they use but are not sure how to get it to the right people. They could give the cards to first responders and have them fill it out and send it back to PennDOT so they can begin to collect data on how often this is occurring and why it is happening. Tom Prestash is in the process of setting up a meeting with the stakeholders to discuss options moving forward. They could conduct surveys, set up cameras, counters, etc. but this is only going to tell you how many and how often, not why. Vince added that another option PennDOT looked at was updating a road for truck traffic a quarter mile from Breezewood that the trucks could use to circle back around. There was some discussion about internet response to several upcoming events at the trail and the number of vehicles it could bring in. Brandon Carson offered to fund a corridor study using \$50,000 UPWP funds to determine the number of trucks turning around and find a possible solution. Anne Stich recommended applying for supplemental funds also as a good study could cost as much as \$200,000 to \$250,000. The deadline for the supplemental funds is the end of the month so it would have to be done quickly. The committee agreed that the next step would be the stakeholder meeting.

VI. Fulton County/Todd Township Sidewalks

Brandon Carson showed the committee a photo of the recently completed Fulton County Medical Center (FCMC) access road. When this project was initially submitted, the intent was to open the remaining acreage up for senior housing. At that time, FCMC had a partner in place to build the housing. A Transportation Alternatives application was submitted to put in sidewalks, but unfortunately was not funded. PennDOT was able to incorporate grading into the eastern side of the road to aid in future sidewalks. Brandon Peters showed a few slides of the project and explained the importance of having sidewalks for the residents to safely access the businesses in McConnellsburg. Todd Township currently plans to apply for DCED Multi-Modal funding when that program opens in the coming months. The application would be due later this summer. Vince Greenland added that even if the FCMC agrees to maintain the sidewalks, either the Township or the County would need to take ownership of the project if the medical center ever goes away. If funding for the sidewalks is received, there is a resurfacing project coming up on the TIP in the area that the sidewalks could be combined with to streamline the project. Vince added that McConnellsburg Borough would have to be involved in the discussion as there would be a gap in the sidewalk between where the proposed sidewalks end, and the sidewalks begin in the Borough. The Township has a new solicitor and PennDOT offered to meet with the Township again to discuss the benefits of adding sidewalks. It was decided that this should be the next step. SAP&DC staff will reach out to FCMC and see if they can set up the meeting. The cost to extend the sidewalks with the resurfacing project from the bridge to Washabaugh Way would be approximately \$950,000. The sidewalk cost itself would be approximately \$220,000. The cost is high due to drainage issues. The time schedule for resurfacing is FY 2020/21. There was also some discussion about putting trails down through the residential area if the sidewalks fall through. This would require right of way and property owner permission. To incorporate the sidewalks with the resurfacing project, PennDOT would need to know about a funding award this year. Multi-Modal awards will

not be announced until next March. Michele Ivory will ask Representative Judy Ward to submit a letter of support for the project.

VII. Supplemental Planning Resources

Brandon Carson stated that SAP&DC has \$50,000 in unspent UPWP available for something outside of the usual staff time. There is also \$400,000 available in Statewide Planning and Research funds for various types of studies. This may be a good fit for the study in Breezewood as well as the Rt. 453 Corridor study in Huntingdon County. PennDOT asked if they were looking for safety improvements on Rt. 453 or looking to expand or extend. Mark Colussy responded that they are looking for safety enhancements on the two-lane freight corridor. PennDOT added that Blair County has done a few studies on the other end of Rt. 53. The problem is the projects are expensive to complete. Brandon Carson asked if TIP funds can be used for a study and PennDOT replied that they can. PennDOT agreed to discuss it at the county meeting and have some preliminary data from a previous site visit.

VIII. Huntingdon County Rail Authority

Ron Rabena is the chair person for the Huntingdon County Rail Authority. He noted that they are just getting started looking at the possibility of acquiring the Huntingdon Industrial Track also known as the Huntingdon Rail Spur Norfolk that runs along Fairgrounds Road and previously served Warnaco's warehouse. They are looking to do a feasibility study to see if revitalizing the rail line is feasible. There is a bridge over the river there that would need repaired at an estimated cost of \$3.5 M and then another \$1.5 M to Norfolk Southern to reconnect to the line. The lines run adjacent to the 242,000 sq. ft. Warnaco building. The owners of the warehouse funded the engineering survey. HCB&I owns a track of land beside the line that would allow room for expansion. They have one quote for the study and are in the process of getting two more. The building next to the former Warnaco warehouse is the old US Sports building and currently houses K & L Plating. They have a contract coming up and may be able to fill the remaining 100 sq. ft. of that building they are not using with rail-based client manufacturing. At the end of those two buildings is green area that could be used as a transportation loading facility, which would be very useful for farmers and other clients. If there was rail to that building, it would be full today. This rail line could create 80-500 jobs in that building alone. Norfolk Southern wants an appraisal on the line to see what it is worth. The Rail Authority plans to do the feasibility study before the appraisal.

IX. Medical Assistance Transportation Program

Julie Dovey, Fulton County Family Partnership, Inc., informed the committee that this program is through the Department of Human Services for Medicare and Medical Access consumers to provide transportation to their medical appointments. This is shared with the

PennDOT lottery shared rides senior transportation program. The program is locally controlled, so the County Commissioners designate how the rides are done in their area. In June, legislation was passed to explore a brokerage model. This will remove the risk from the state and put it on the broker, saving approximately \$15 M. The concern is that they will lose local control. In December an RFP was issued to move to a statewide brokerage model with three regions: the western part of the state, the eastern part of the state and the central part of the state. A broker could hold two of three regions, but not all three. If not overlaid with PennDOT Lottery programs, that removes 30% of the shared ride trips, which could increase the cost by 30%. The other concern is service access, will the clients see the same type of service that they are currently seeing. On January 29, 2019, the House of Representatives issued a Memorandum to put this on hold and do some more research. Mike Villeneuve, Somerset County Transportation System, added that having multiple funding sources keeps ride cost down. Right now, it is \$1.25 a ride. If you remove 30% of the funding, it may not be cost effective. House Bill 66 was added into the budget at the last minute and no one really knew about it. They signed it into law and the RFA comes out in July of 2020. PA public transit has a really good white paper on this that expresses the concerns. The County Commissioners Assoc. and the PA Human Services Administrators have said that a closer look needs to be taken before charging down this road. None of the current shared ride providers or transportation providers have been contacted so they are not planning to use the current forms of transportation. This is going to hurt the people who need to use it. Brandon Carson asked if they have contacted their legislators and commissioners and they have. The Senate is working to push it back until they have a better idea of how it will work. Brandon asked Mike and Julie to call in to the RTCC meeting next Wednesday at 10 AM to discuss the issue with the four rural county commissioners. They agreed. The local representatives have been notified and invited to the meeting as well.

X. Other business

Commissioner John P. Vatauk

Brandon informed the committee that Commissioner Vatauk was diagnosed with cancer and passed rather quickly. It has been suggested that a portion of U.S.Rt. 219 be renamed in honor of him. Vince Greenland did some homework on the subject and Rt. 219 is currently the Flight 93 Memorial Highway. Brandon asked if the committee would like to recommend the RTCC adopt a resolution to rename the section of four-lane U.S. Route 219 from Somerset Borough to Meyersdale Borough be renamed for Commissioner John Vatauk.

With no further discussion, Ron Rabena made a motion to recommend the RTCC adopt a resolution to rename the section of four-lane U.S. Route 219 from Somerset Borough to Meyersdale Borough for Commissioner John Vatauk. Tom Jones seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

PennDOT Multimodal Transportation Fund Award

Brandon Peters congratulated Huntingdon County and Mt. Union Borough for the Multimodal award of \$1.2 M for improvements on Pennsylvania Avenue to reconstruct some of the wall and a few additional components of the project.

PA WalkWorks Routes

The PA WalkWorks program is a Department of Health initiative. The RPO was recently awarded two routes. These are the first PA WalkWorks routes in the RPO. The program is intended to promote active transportation and health lifestyles. The two applicants in the RPO were Mt. Union Borough and Windber Borough. SAP&DC staff worked closely with them to establish the routes. Brandon Peters showed a map with the routes to the committee. This program does not cost the municipality anything. Mt. Union will be holding the kick off for their route at the June Community Days. Windber Borough's route is at the recreational park. Brandon added that they would like to see more of these in the RPO. PennDOT asked if the Mt. Union route had sidewalks. Brandon responded that it does. Anne Stich asked if SAP&DC has GIS files for these routes. Brandon responded that we do not at the present time but are in the process of hiring a GIS staff person. Once they are in place, they will have them create the files and send them to her.

Brandon Carson welcomed the new members to the meeting and noted that the committee will talk more with them at the next meeting.

XI. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned 12:05 PM.

<p><u>NOTE:</u> The next meeting of the RTTC is scheduled for May 8, 2019, at the SAP&DC beginning at 9:00 AM.</p>

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February 13, 2019**

ACTION ITEMS

Date Issued	Action Items	By Whom	Due Date
February 13, 2019	Set up a meeting with Todd Township, their new solicitor, and PennDOT to discuss the benefits of adding sidewalks from the FCMC to the neighboring businesses.	SAP&DC staff	No Date Given
February 13, 2019	Ask Representative Judy Ward to submit a letter of support for the Multi-Modal application to add sidewalks at the Fulton County Medical Center to the neighboring businesses.	Michele Ivory, Representative Ward's Office	No Date Given
February 13, 2019	Provide some preliminary data from a previous site visit and discuss the possibility of using TIP funds for the Rt. 453 Corridor study in Huntingdon County for safety enhancements on the two-lane freight corridor.	PennDOT	By the Huntingdon County meeting with PennDOT
February 13, 2019	Provide PennDOT with GIS files for the PA WalkWorks routes after the new hire starts and creates the files.	SAP&DC Staff	No Date Given