

**SOUTHERN ALLEGHENIES
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

RURAL TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

February 5, 2020

9:00 AM

PennDOT District 9-0

Hollidaysburg, PA

ACTION SUMMARY

The following are the major actions taken by the Rural Transportation Technical Committee (RTTC) at its regular meeting held on February 5, 2020, PennDOT District 9-0 in Hollidaysburg, PA.

1. Approved the December 4, 2019, RTTC meeting minutes as presented.
2. Recommended adoption of the thresholds within the MOU and to maintain the Planning Partners threshold of \$2M.

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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
- Julie Dovey, Fulton County Family Partnership
- Mark Colussy, Huntingdon County Planning Commission
- Brad Zearfoss, Somerset County Planning Commission
- Josh Boland, Somerset County Economic Development Council
- Don Hedge, Broad Top Township
- Stewart Neff, Warriors Mark Township
- Jeff Eisaman, CLI Transport
- Karl King, Rails to Trails of Central PA
- Michael Villeneuve, Somerset County Transportation
- Ron Rabena, Huntingdon County Rail Authority
- Frank Hampton, PennDOT Central Office
- Vince Greenland, PennDOT District 9-0
- Brandon Carson, SAP&DC
- Brandon Peters, SAP&DC

Others in attendance included:

- Michele Ivory, Senator Judy Ward
- Tonya Clark, Senator Langerholc
- Dave Lybarger, PennDOT District 9-0
- Anne Stich, PennDOT District 9-0
- Zach Lee, SAP&DC
- Matthew Bjorkman, SAP&DC
- Janice Streightiff, SAP&DC

Each participant received a meeting packet that included:

- Agenda
- December 4, 2020 Rural Transportation Technical Committee
- Southern Alleghenies RPO TIP Adjustments
- 2021 Program Development Schedule
- Corridor N Completion Analysis & Impact Study Information Sharing Session
- Johnstown Urban Industrial Park Connector Street Map
- PennDOT District 9 Transportation Outreach Meetings
- U.S. 219 Economic Impact Map

II. Review and Approval of the December 4, 2019 RTTC Meeting Minutes

Brandon Carson welcomed the committee to the meeting and Brandon Peters conducted roll call. Brandon asked the committee to review the December 4, 2019, meeting minutes included in the meeting packet. There were a few action items. Anne Stich reached out again to the local stakeholders and asked that surveys be completed when there are truck turnaround issues. Since that time, they have received about three or four. The number of issues and reasons listed on the survey are in line with the study. The increase may have been that they got stuck rather than just turning around drawing more attention to it. PennDOT will get a copy of the final report from the study out to the committee. The other action item was to provide an update on the gas tax and continuing decline in funding. PennDOT provided that information to staff.

With no further discussion, Mark Colussy made a motion to approve the December 4, 2019, meeting minutes as presented. Karl King seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

III. Corridor N U.S. 219 Study Update

Brandon noted that the study got underway last week. Justin Scott from Metro Analytics was on the phone to give the committee an update. Last Friday they began with the Legislative Breakfast in the morning, the Greater Cumberland Meeting in Meyersdale was next, where they had a great discussion with people who have a long history with the project, and finally the stakeholder sessions in the afternoon. He introduced Justin who told the group a little bit about himself and his background, which included planning and grant writing. He noted that the feedback received to date has been very positive and asked that if anyone knows of anyone they should be in contact with to please let Brandon know. The study is expected to last through mid-May and Metro Analytics plans to get out and get an understanding of the corridor and complete the study with a scope focused on the qualitative aspect.

Critical Rural Freight Corridor Discussion

Brandon Peters reminded the committee that back in 2016 this group selected and submitted their selections for Critical Rural Freight Corridor designation. They were

approved by FHWA in 2018. Brandon reviewed the approved corridors with the committee. These corridors provide first and last mile connectivity to primary freight corridors. There was 272 miles of Critical Rural Freight Corridors available across the state and the RPO received 62.5 miles. Maryland has designated their portion of the proposed Route 219 a Critical Freight Corridor. It would greatly help a USDOT INFRA application if the RPO designated the remaining 5.5 miles of Route 219 on the Pennsylvania side. The mileage would have to be removed somewhere else as we still would still only have 62.5 miles designated in the RPO. Brandon Peters plans to discuss this with the Somerset County Commissioners and have a recommendation at the upcoming RTCC meeting.

IV. FY 2019-2022 TIP Modifications and Amendments

Dave Lybarger reviewed the FY 2019-2022 TIP Modifications and Amendments with the committee answering any questions they had. There were no amendments requiring a vote.

V. FY 2021-2024 Draft TIP

Review of Development Schedule

Brandon Peters informed the committee that he and Matthew Bjorkman will be attending the Environmental Justice Methodology meeting tomorrow to begin the process. He reviewed the development schedule with the committee answering any questions they had. A Draft FY 2021-2024 TIP will be presented at the next meeting. Following that it will be put out for the public comment period and public meetings will be held in each of the four rural counties. They would like to try and hold them in areas identified in the Environmental Justice process this time. The public meetings will be coordinated with the County Planning Directors. The FY 2021-2024 TIP will be approved at the July 22, 2020, RTCC meeting and be submitted before the July 31, 2020, deadline.

Environmental Justice

Matthew Bjorkman reviewed the Environmental Justice guidelines with the committee. He reviewed the maps he put together showing the identified areas for low income and minority populations. This information will be finalized following the training tomorrow and incorporated into the FY 2021-2024 TIP development.

Modifications and Amendments Memorandum of Understanding

Brandon Peters began by noting that not much has changed in term of the thresholds set by the state of Pennsylvania. He discussed the things that trigger an amendment rather than a modification including, exceeding the \$2M threshold and adding or removing a project. He noted that the amendments are few. Brandon Carson asked Frank Hampton if our amendments are in line with the other MPOs and RPOs. He replied that the RPO averages 1% and most fall within 1-2%. He also added that the 2% have more because of the size of the projects in their region. Brandon mentioned that one of the other planning organizations lowered the threshold for amendments. Frank added that FHWA sets the minimum; an RPO/MPO can be more restrictive if they desire. Brandon Peters asked what the value is

for the \$2M threshold. PennDOT responded that it is the time it takes to process a modification vs an amendment. It only takes one day to process a modification but much longer for an amendment. They also noted that both of the MPOs in District 9 also use the \$2M threshold. Brandon Carson added that they just felt the lower threshold would help to keep the committee more engaged and asked the committee for feedback. The planners felt that with the new outreach and PennDOT Connects program they are sufficiently informed and did not feel the need to raise the threshold.

With no further discussion, Mary K. Seville made a motion to recommend adoption of the thresholds within the MOU and to maintain the Planning Partners threshold of \$2M. Frank Hampton seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

VI. 2019 Year End Trail Usage Report

Matt Bjorkman put together a report on this year's trail usage, which staff will be doing annually now as part of the UPWP. He reviewed the locations of the trail counters and the data collected. These counts bolster grant applications for multimodal, set-asides, etc. If there are different ways the committee would like to see the information, please let Matt know. Matt will send the report out to the committee members following the meeting. Frank recommended DCNR be provided this information as well.

VII. Huntingdon County Rail Authority Feasibility Study

Brandon Carson turned it over to Ron Rabena who informed the committee that the study is now complete. Stone Consulting did a good job on the study and determined that the rail could be a marginal operation but would require a lot of work. There is a bridge that needs replaced at a cost of \$2.5 to \$3M as well as a broken switch that Norfolk Southern wants over \$1M to fix. The projected revenue of the rail line is \$42,000 per year. The Huntingdon County Rail Authority (HCRA) and the Huntingdon County Commissioners met with the developers to discuss the status of the project. They have also submitted a Capital Assistance Request, through RACP, but will still need to come up with the 30% match. Michele Ivory clarified that the line item is in the budget and HCRA can submit an application when that funding opens up. They are still trying to come up with an accurate number of carloads and will be going back to a potential client to get more information on that. There was some discussion about possible matching funds. Norfolk Southern has agreed to service the line if the project is completed.

VIII. Other Business

Supplemental Traffic Count Requests

Brandon Peters noted that every year SAP&DC asks the County Planners if there are any additional Traffic Counts they would like to request in their counties. SAP&DC has five

new traffic counters to deploy for the counts. He asked the counties to submit a prioritized list of counts to SAP&DC by the end of March.

Transportation Alternatives Set-Asides

As this committee remembers, PennDOT did not have a round of Transportation Alternatives Set-Asides in 2019. Staff has not officially been notified that there will be a round this year, but have been told to prepare. He recommended they start to think about potential projects. Mark Colussy asked if the committee received an answer to the letter submitted requesting the RPO be permitted to select their own projects. Brandon replied that no response has been received. He reminded the committee that the RPO does provide input and that by applying to the statewide funds, the amount of the individual award can be higher. Only RPOs/MPOs with a population over 200,000 pick their own projects; and these RPOs/MPOs can apply for the Statewide funds as well,

PennDOT Multimodal Applications

Five applications were submitted within the RPO and staff provided comment to PennDOT Central Office. Brandon reviewed the five projects with the committee.

JRA Access Road Award

The Johnstown Urban Industrial Park Connector Street application was submitted in November of 2019 and approved the end of December. This project will impact the downtown Johnstown area by connecting it to 80 acres of developable land. Phase one of the project was funded through PennDOT Multimodal funds; this application was for phase two. SAP&DC staff is starting to pull together projects for the next ARC funding cycle. No match is required, these projects can be 100% federal funds. Contact SAP&DC staff with any possible projects.

PennDOT Outreach Meeting Schedule

Brandon reviewed the PennDOT Outreach Meeting Schedule. PennDOT does a great job providing information at these meetings and it is highly recommended everyone who can attends.

2020 LTAP Schedule

Brandon reviewed the 2020 LTAP schedule. Not all of Blair County's courses have been scheduled yet. There is a new Active Transportation course this year. It is expected to be well attended as there has been a lot of support in the region for putting these groups together. County Planners are eligible to take this course if they would like to. The Speed Management LTAP course is open to law enforcement as well as the road crews also. Once all the courses have been scheduled, they will be available on the LTAP website.

Other Business

Brandon noted that this was Mark Colussy's last meeting as he has taken a new position in Mifflin County. The committee thanked him for his participation and wished him luck in his new position.

Frank Hampton noted that the PennDOT Public Participation Plan is out for public comment until March 11, 2020.

IX. Adjournment

Mark Colussy made a motion to adjourn at 11:08 AM.

NOTE: The next meeting of the RTTC is scheduled for April 22, 2020, at the SAP&DC beginning at 9:00 AM.

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 RURAL TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE
 February 5, 2020**

ACTION ITEMS

Date Issued	Action Items	By Whom	Due Date
February 5, 2020	Provide a copy of the Breezewood Fright Safety Study report to the committee members.	PennDOT	Following the completion of the study
February 5, 2020	Send the 2019 Trail Usage Report out to the committee members.	Matt Bjorkman	Following the meeting
February 5, 2020	Submit a prioritized list of requested traffic counts to SAP&DC.	County Planners	By the end of March