

**SOUTHERN ALLEGHENIES  
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

**RURAL TRANSPORTATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE**

**February 20, 2019**

**10:00 AM**

**SAP&DC Conference Room**

**Altoona, PA**

**ACTION SUMMARY**

The following are the major actions taken by the Rural Transportation Coordinating Committee (RTCC) at its regular meeting held on February 20, 2019, at the SAP&DC in Altoona, PA.

1. Approved the November 7, 2019, meeting minutes as presented.
2. Approved the addition of the matching funds for the TSMO projects to the FY 2019-2021 TIP.
3. Approved the RPO submitting a position paper voicing its disapproval of HB 1677 to Lindsay Mauldin at DHS and the local legislators.
4. Approved the RPO submitting a resolution to the local legislators requesting the section of four-lane U.S. Route 219 from Somerset Borough to Meyersdale Borough be renamed for Commissioner John P. Vataavuk.

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**MEETING MINUTES**

**I. Welcome**

The following members were present at the meeting:

- Tom Prestash, PennDOT District 9
- Steve Howsare, SAP&DC
- Brandon Carson, SAP&DC
- Brandon Peters, SAP&DC

The following members attended via conference call:

- Commissioner Barry Dallara, Bedford County
- Commissioner Rodney McCray, Fulton County
- Commissioner Jeff Thomas, Huntingdon County
- Commissioner Gerald Walker, Somerset County
- Frank Hampton, PennDOT Central Office

Others in attendance included:

- Vince Greenland, PennDOT District 9
- David Lybarger, PennDOT District 9
- Anne Stich, PennDOT District 9
- Dhrau Patel, PennDOT District 9

Others in attendance via conference call included:

- Mike Villeneuve, Somerset County Transportation System
- Julie Dovey, Fulton County Family Partnership, Inc.
- Janice Streightiff, SAP&DC

Each participant received a meeting packet that included:

- Agenda
- November 7, 2018 Combined RTTC & RTCC Meeting Minutes
- FY 2021-2024 TIP Anticipated Schedule
- County Priority Lists
- Southern Alleghenies RPO TIP Adjustments
- FY 2019-2020 PennDOT Multimodal Transportation Fund Awards
- PA WalkWorks Route Maps

## **II. Review and Approval of the November 7, 2019, Meeting Minutes**

Tom Prestash welcomed the committee to the meeting and Brandon Carson conducted roll call. Tom asked the committee to review the November 7, 2019, meeting minutes included in the meeting packet.

With no further discussion, Steve Howsare made a motion to approve the November 7, 2019, meeting minutes as presented. Frank Hampton seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **III. FY 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program Update**

Anne Stich reviewed the anticipated FY 2021-2024 TIP update schedule. Now that PennDOT has received the county priorities, they wanted to keep everyone up to date on the timeline. This schedule is subject to change as they have not yet received the financial guidance from Central Office, but rather is based on previous years schedules. PennDOT received the county priorities by the end of January. They reviewed the list and decided what data they will need to collect. March – April timeframe, potentially April 30<sup>th</sup>, the counties will come in to District 9's office to review the projects. Between now and May PennDOT will conduct its outreach on the asset management priorities. This would not include local bridges or larger projects. The field views will be June to August to gather the information needed to begin to put the TIP together. 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.

## **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 a previous meeting, this committee 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 FY 2019-2021 TIP. The match was made available from de-obligations that were moved into the Southern Alleghenies RPO line item on the FY 2019-2021 TIP.

With no further discussion, Commissioner Rodney McCray made a motion to approve the addition of the matching funds for the TSMO projects to the FY 2019-2021 TIP. Brandon Carson seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **V. Breezewood Truck Issue**

Tom Prestash noted that the committee has discussed this on several occasions. Trucks for whatever reason, are missing the truck restriction on Route 30 and then looking for somewhere to turn around. There was a lengthy discussion on the topic at the RTTC

meeting and PennDOT has set up a meeting on the subject on February 27<sup>th</sup> in the basement of the Bedford County Maintenance Shed. Tom listed the stakeholders who have been invited to the meeting and asked the committee if there was anyone not on the list they felt should be there. PennDOT has been looking at several options and will be able to provide more information at the meeting. Brandon Carson added that there was no formal action taken at RTTC meeting, they just wanted to bring the committee up to date on the issue. He and Brandon Peters visited a site a few weeks ago where a truck turned around in someone's front yard and got stuck, causing property damage. It also caused a safety issue as Rt. 915 north was closed for a while because the truck was sitting across the highway. Vince Greenland noted that part of the discussion at the RTTC was trying to determine what is causing the issue. Is it trucks heading east on Rt. 30 and getting lost trying to get on the turnpike; is it people coming from the turnpike getting confused at the interchange; or is it truck drivers using GPS on their phones rather than commercial GPS, which is telling them to take Rt. 30 and then seeing the truck restriction once they are on there. There is also a language barrier with some drivers not being able to speak or read English. The potential truck turn arounds Tom mentioned will cost \$1-2 M. The RTTC was struggling with trying to figure out how often this is occurring and exactly what is happening. At that meeting they discussed the possibility of doing a study to identify the problem and better understand how to fix it. Vince spoke with a few traffic consultants and thinks they can do a study to identify the problem within the \$50,000 range the committee was looking for. These funds are available in the Southern Alleghenies UPWP due to unused wages. They can then look at the cost to rectify the problem and see if it is worth the investment. Tom noted that PennDOT is also going to look at the 102 restriction and see if it is still valid. They will also need to look at potential locations for the truck turnaround. PennDOT has updated signs and added inlays in the pavement; there are a multitude of things happening. PennDOT will lay out the steps at the meeting on February 27<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Barry Dallara and Donald Schwartz are working on a few items for the meeting as well. The heads of the PA Truckers Organization have been invited to the meeting as they should be able to shed some light on why this is happening.

## **VI. Supplemental Studies**

Brandon Carson informed the committee there are two studies to discuss. They have been approached by Huntingdon County about a potential feasibility study for a rail line that the Huntingdon County Rail Authority is considering acquiring. The line will need some improvements but would make the nearby facilities more attractive to businesses, creating jobs. There are planning funds available to do the study. They would like the study to see if the project is feasible before moving forward.

The second study is also in Huntingdon County. There has been some discussion with the infrastructure committee there about a Corridor study on Rt. 453 and Rt. 522. Commissioner Thomas noted that they would like the ability to connect Rt. 22 to I-99 and believe that Rt. 453 is the best option. This would help with the area business parks.

Also, on Rt. 522 they were looking more at the Fulton County end than Huntingdon County. They were looking at the road from Mount Union to the point where Burnt Cabins connects to the turnpike. Tom suggested PennDOT and the Commissioners sit down and

put a scope together and present it to the committee. PennDOT does have a current widening project on Rt. 453 due to falling rock. He can update them on that project as well. Commissioner Thomas asked if there has been any movement on the attempt to put Rt. 453 on the Federal Highway System. Tom said there has been no movement on that. Frank Hampton will look into it and see where that is at. He believes that when those requests were submitted there were too many. Commissioner Thomas said he thought they tentatively approved Rt. 453. Anne Stich noted that they did but provided a list of roads they wanted the RPO to remove. The RPO did not want to remove those roads. Frank will check and get back to committee. Brandon Peters added that they submitted that as a critical freight corridor as well. Frank said he will check on that as well.

## **VII. 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. Bids are due March 5<sup>th</sup>. 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 this program took the pressure off the ambulances, who provided the service before. This change could very well burden the ambulance system again. The Medical Assistance Transportation Program has been being run on a county level and has been working well. The change will affect the people using the service the most. It will affect the agencies as well, but it will affect the people the most. Commissioner Thomas recommended the RPO put together a position paper voicing our disapproval of HB 1677 and submit it to Lindsay Mauldin at DHS and the local legislators.

With no further discussion, Commissioner Gerald Walker made a motion that the RPO submit a position paper voicing our disapproval of HB 1677 to Lindsay Mauldin at DHS and the local legislators. Commissioner Rodney McCray seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

SAP&DC staff will draft the position paper and get it out to the committee for approval. They will also put together a list of recipients. If there is anyone the committee would like added to that list, let Brandon Carson or Brandon Peters know. Tom gave the contact

information for Lindsay Mauldin in case anyone needed to contact her for specifics. Her number is 717-783-4726.

## **VIII. Other Business**

### Commissioner John P. Vatajuk

Tom informed the committee of Commissioner John Vatajuk's passing. He was a great supporter of transportation and was very involved in the Southern Alleghenies RPO. The RTTC has recommended re-naming the new portion of Route 219 in honor of him. This cannot be done by PennDOT and would require legislation.

With no further discussion, Commissioner Jeff Thomas made a motion that the RPO submit a resolution to the local legislators requesting the section of four-lane U.S. Route 219 from Somerset Borough to Meyersdale Borough be renamed for Commissioner John P. Vatajuk. Steve Howsare seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Commissioner Gerald Walker thanked the group for taking this action. He noted that Somerset County has already discussed this with some of the legislators, so it is on their radar.

### Fulton County Sidewalk Project

Tom informed the committee that a Transportation Alternatives application was submitted to put in sidewalks at the Fulton County Medical Center (FCMC), but unfortunately was not funded. The RPO may reapply for that funding. Brandon Peters showed the committee some pictures of what the project entailed. When the access road was constructed, PennDOT graded the right side of the road to make it ready for sidewalks. He noted that the FCMC has a lot of new capacity with the Center for Advanced Medicine, the infusion department and urgent care facility to name a few. With all of these new developments, there is a need for pedestrian access. He noted that the first part of the access road was completed by FCMC with Phase II being funded by ARC. The proposed sidewalk project would connect to the medical facility. FCMC would then provide sidewalks to the senior living facilities and cottages to be built in the future. The project they are looking to apply for Multimodal funding or TA Set asides would be the sidewalks down to Route 30 and along Route 30 to the McConnellsburg Borough line. At the RTTC meeting there was some discussion about reducing the cost. Vince Greenland added that the bridge on Route 30 there will be being replaced in 2021. They looked at what it would cost to add sidewalks to that project. He said that if you put sidewalks and curbing along Route 30 there will be drainage issues that will drive up the cost. He also noted that they would have to include sidewalks from the bridge to the McConnellsburg Borough line if they combined it with this project, which would also add to the cost. This would also require a sponsor, and when they approached Todd Township before beginning the access road, they had a lot of concerns with liability. One of the things they told PennDOT then was that they were not interested in sidewalks. PennDOT and SAP&DC staff are going to go back down and talk to them about the advantages of sidewalks, but there may be an issue with sponsorship. PennDOT cannot move forward with the sidewalks without sponsorship. This would also be a major red flag when applying for multimodal funds and the application would be thrown out. Someone asked if the County could be the sponsor. Fulton County

representatives said the commissioners have not addressed that. FCMC has agreed to maintain any potential improvements. If the sidewalks on Route 30 are cost prohibitive, the RTTC also discussed making improvements to an old path that goes down through the field and residential area with gravel, etc. The FCMC has agreed to maintain and clear the sidewalks. PennDOT would still need an agreement with a public entity or township to maintain the sidewalks. Tom also noted that he has a call in to PennDOT Central Office to get some constructive feedback on the TAP application that was declined. If the RPO reapplies, the application needs to be updated and any feedback they could provide would be helpful. Brandon Peters added that the DCED's Multimodal applications open March 1<sup>st</sup> and close July 31<sup>st</sup>. One of the benefits of DCED Multimodal grant is that they can wave the match. Brandon Carson agreed to reach out to Commissioner McCray to discuss reaching out to the Township. The commissioner will reach out to the Township before PennDOT and SAP&DC staff meet with them. Brandon will let Commissioner McCray know when they plan to go down.

#### PennDOT Multimodal Transportation Fund Awards

Brandon Peters congratulated Huntingdon County and Mount Union Borough for receiving \$1.2 M in multimodal funds for improvements on Pennsylvania Avenue to reconstruct some of the wall and a few additional components of the project. Commissioner Thomas added that this was a hard project to fund but will be very helpful to the residents of Mount Union. Thank you to all involved.

#### PA WalkWorks Routes

Brandon Peters informed the committee that this was just an FYI on something the RPO is now working on. The PA WalkWorks program is a Department of Health initiative. Huntingdon did something similar a few years ago with a downtown walking program. There are several hundred routes across the state, but none in the RPO. The RPO applied and was awarded two routes; one in Mount Union and one in Windber. The award provides the signage and marketing materials. The proposed routes will now be sent to the Department of Health for confirmation. This will promote active transportation in the region. If there are other routes that are of interest to the RPO, please let Brandon know. There will be additional rounds of the program that the RPO can apply for. Brandon showed examples of the marketing material.

## **IX. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 11:09 AM.

<p><b>NOTE:</b> The next meeting of the RTCC is scheduled for May 29, 2019, at the SAP&amp;DC beginning at 10:00 AM.</p>
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February 20, 2019**

**ACTION ITEMS**

<b>Date Issued</b>	<b>Action Items</b>	<b>By Whom</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
February 20, 2019	Put a scope together for the potential U.S. Route 522 Corridor Segment Study.	PennDOT and the four rural County Commissioners	Before the next meeting
February 20, 2019	look into whether there has been any movement on the attempt to put Rt. 453 on the Federal Highway System or designated as a critical freight corridor.	Frank Hampton	No date given
February 20, 2019	Draft a position paper voicing our disapproval of HB 1677 to Lindsay Mauldin at DHS and the local legislators and get it out to the committee for approval. Also put together a list of recipients.	SAP&DC staff	No date given
February 20, 2019	Reach out to Commissioner McCray to discuss contacting Todd Township before PennDOT and SAP&DC staff meet with them.	Brandon Carson	No date given