

**SOUTHERN ALLEGHENIES  
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

**RURAL TRANSPORTATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE**

**May 12, 2021**

**10:00 AM**

**SAP&DC Conference Room and Zoom**

**Altoona, PA**

**ACTION SUMMARY**

The following are the major actions taken by the Rural Transportation Coordinating Committee (RTCC) at its regular meeting held on May 12, 2021, at the SAP&DC and Zoom in Altoona, PA.

1. Approved the April 12, 2021, Joint RTTC & RTCC meeting minutes as presented.

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**MEETING MINUTES**

**I. Welcome**

The following members were present at the meeting:

- Commissioner Barry Dallara, Bedford County
- Commissioner Jeff Thomas, Huntingdon County
- Commissioner Colleen Dawson, Somerset County
- Mark Tobin, PennDOT Central Office
- Tom Prestash, PennDOT District 9-0
- Steve Howsare, SAP&DC
- Brandon Carson, SAP&DC

Others in attendance included:

- Commissioner Gerald Walker, Somerset County
- Anne Stich, PennDOT District 9-0
- Michele Ivory, Senator Judy Ward's Office
- Jim French, French Engineering
- Kari Shedlock, French Engineering
- Frank Hampton, PennDOT Central Office
- David Lyberger, PennDOT District 9-0
- Brenda Thomas, Representative Stefano's Office
- Tammie Hess, Representative Jesse Topper's Office
- Chris Hull, PennDOT District 9-0
- Vince Greenland, PennDOT District 9-0
- Matt Bjorkman, SAP&DC
- Zachary Lee, SAP&DC
- Brandon Peters, SAP&DC
- Janice Streightiff, SAP&DC

Each participant received a meeting packet that included:

- Agenda
- April 14, 2021 Joint RTTC & RTCC Meeting Minutes

- Southern Alleghenies RPO TIP Adjustments
- Community Project Funding Program

## **II. Review and Approval of the April 14, 2021 Joint RTTC & RTCC Meeting Minutes**

Tom Prestash welcomed the committee to the meeting and Brandon Peters conducted roll call. He thanked everyone that participated in the PennDOT Outreach meeting that was conducted virtually. All materials are available on PennDOT's website, and they are currently conducting follow-up. He asked the committee to review the April 14, 2021, joint RTTC & RTCC meeting minutes included in the packet.

With no further discussion, Commissioner Jeff Thomas made a motion to approve the April 12, 2021, Joint RTTC & RTCC meeting minutes as presented. Brandon Carson seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **III. FY 2021-2024 TIP Modifications and Amendments**

David Lybarger reviewed the FY 2021-2024 TIP Modifications with the committee answering any questions they had. There were no amendments requiring approval.

## **IV. 2042 Southern Alleghenies LRTP**

Tom introduced Brandon who noted the first item was the county illustrative lists. Matt Bjorkman did some research and discovered the other LDDs list up to a few hundred projects. The RPO would like to take a broader look at the projects to include. Unfunded past projects are always the starting point, but discussions need to be held with the four county commissioners and other contingents to see what is of political, economic, or transportation equality importance in their perspective counties. These meetings should be held by early June. The categories for projects included asset management and maintenance, transit, multimodal, studies, safety, new capacity, TSMO, and other. Brandon will email the committee members later today and set up meetings.

Matt informed the committee that SAP&DC has been working with French Engineering who just wrapped up the HSIP Study. Jim French presented the final report to the committee and reviewed the HSIP identification and prioritization process. He reviewed the methodology for identifying hot spots and systemic improvements and presented the results by county showing the hotspots in each as well as the project cost benefit ratio. They performed the benefit cost analysis in accordance with PennDOT Central Office's advice. One of the biggest challenges they faced was filtering out locations that had already been addressed. They were able to narrow the selection down to 14 potential projects. He reviewed the results for each county answering any questions they had.

## **V. Community Project Funding Program**

Brandon reviewed the projects that were submitted for the Community Project Funding Program following discussions at the Joint RTTC and RTCC meeting held last month. Two projects were submitted, the US 219 Salisbury Rockfall project and the Addison Resurface project. Each congressman has \$20M to distribute over several different categories. It is unlikely any of these projects will be funded in their entirety, but rather that smaller amounts will be awarded to several projects. Brandon will keep the committee updated.

## **VI. Alternative Revenue Options**

Brandon informed the committee that the Alternative Revenue Options were discussed again at the RTTC meeting a few weeks ago and they had a few more general comments. He reviewed the comments with the committee and opened it up for discussion. Commissioner Barry Dallara noted that he would like to build on what we have rather than starting over. Address inequities such as electric vehicles, etc. Some of the recommendations that go by miles traveled would penalize rural areas as there is less transit options and commutes tend to be farther in rural areas. He would like to see a think tank put together to strive for equity in what is done so that people are comfortable with the solution. Brandon told him that there was a discussion about using the Vehicle Miles Traveled in coordination with the Managed Lanes option to balance that out. Another possibility would be to use the Vehicle Miles Traveled but set different rates for each area, so the rural areas only pay their fair share. Commissioner Dallara also recommended they set a maximum amount anyone pays in to help keep it equaled out. He knows more funding is needed, but let's make sure the money we have now is being used equitably, and let's make sure anyone who is not paying any fair share begins to pay it as soon as possible. Brandon will submit the comments to the TROC later today. He will also include these comments in the Legislative letters prepared earlier and send those out today as well.

Commissioner Dallara asked Tom about billing on the turnpike. He has been told you just get on and then they bill you. He wondered how this option was working. Tom said he can get the information on what has been paid vs what is outstanding and send it to him.

## **VII. 2021 Southern Alleghenies Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan**

Matt reviewed the walkability analysis with the committee. As you would expect, the larger boroughs have the highest walkability and rural areas the least. This will track where people would be most likely to walk to, be it for recreation or necessity. They have data showing if there is access to a park within walking distance; they also have location data on shopping centers, health care facilities, pharmacies, schools, colleges, government buildings, etc. Using that information along with the results from the survey, they will be able to target the most effective project areas.

Zachary Lee reviewed the survey on publicinput.com with the committee. They are currently working through a few technical difficulties with the site. There was some discussion about e-bikes and e-scooters. Some trail users find them annoying while others may need them to access the trails. It was agreed to add a question on the impacts of disability on the plan. Zachary also discussed how Publicinput.com provides the results including providing the location of the person responding and the ability to run reports on the data. Brandon discussed some of the benefits of using publicinput.com, including the map you can drop a pin on and add a comment noting a transportation problem there. There are several funding programs that support bicycle and pedestrian projects. It is very helpful for a potential applicant to be able to state on their application that their project is listed in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. If anyone has questions or comments on the survey, please submit them to Zachary as soon as possible. He hopes to finish the survey and get it out later this week.

### **VIII. Other Business**

Tom asked the committee if anyone had anything else for the committee. Brandon noted that he received notice from ARC for the next round of local access roads. West Providence Township just received an award of \$2,050,000 to provide secondary access to the Everett Area Business Park and provide access to additional acreage at the rear of the business park. This is the largest amount awarded in the Southern Alleghenies Region. He is still waiting to hear the decision on the Lamppost Lane project. If that project is also funded, the region will have secured more than half of the ARC LAR funds for PA. A new ARC Co-Chair was just sworn in, Mrs. Mansion, which could be part of the delay.

He also reviewed two potential projects for FY 2022 ARC LAR funding. The first is on McMahan Road near Lowes in Altoona, Blair County. The project would provide access to additional undeveloped acreage behind Lowes and provide improvements to the intersection on McMahan Road and 17<sup>th</sup> Street. The project will cost approximately \$1M. The second project would be to provide access to the new AMED facility in Altoona, Blair County. If anyone is aware of any potential local access roads, please reach out to the prospective applicants about the program. Pre-applications are due to ARC by July 23, 2021.

Commissioner Barry Dallara thanked Brandon for recommending the ARC LAR funding for the Everett Area Business Park Access Road project. This will really help to bring in clients for the business park. There was some discussion about drive times for the truckers. Matt agreed to look into doing a drive time analysis from the Everett Area Business Park to see what destinations could be reached and returned from in a day.

There was some discussion about incorporating fiber in any transportation projects. Any time there is roadwork, at the least conduit could be laid. Commissioner Dallara referenced a meeting in the past with PennDOT and Mark Compton in Bedford where this was discussed but decided they did not believe it could really happen. During the U.S. Route 219 project, Tom worked with Senator Casey to try and lay fiber with the project, but they

could not get any of the companies in the area to invest in it. There are a lot of factors involved. Brandon Carson informed the committee about the creation of Alleghenies Broadband Inc. (ABI) and added that they are currently leveraging any resources available to build out broadband infrastructure to include fiber where it makes sense. In the past there was issues with ownership and the funding agencies. ABI was created to own and maintain the infrastructure and work in partnership with the private sector to provide last mile service to customers. There is currently a lot of funding available for broadband projects including the American Rescue Plan funds. ABI is currently working with the six counties in the region using those funds. Frank recommended discussing further with the legislators for possible public private partnerships in the future. Brandon said ABI would be interested in convening those partnerships with PennDOT and private sector providers. Tom will reach out to Brandon and set something up.

Tom informed the committee that Governor Wolf is lifting the mitigation after Memorial Day. The next meeting is in August. Does the committee want to continue to meet virtually or begin in person meetings again? Brandon added that SAP&DC staff and Commissioner Dallara are in person here at SAP&DC and he would welcome in person meetings again. Tom told the committee to think about what they want to do moving forward.

## **IX. Adjournment**

Steve Howsare made a motion to adjourn at 11:30 AM.

<p><b><u>NOTE:</u></b> The next meeting of the RTCC is scheduled for August 4, 2021, at the SAP&amp;DC and/or Zoom beginning at 10:00 AM.</p>
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**ACTION ITEMS**

<b>Action Items</b>	<b>By Whom</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Set up meetings with the commissioners and other contingents in each county to see what projects are of political, economic, or transportation equality importance in their perspective counties.	Brandon Peters	held by the end of July
Submit the RPO's comments on the alternative revenue options to the TROC later today.	Brandon Peters	May 12, 2021
Include the alternative revenue option comments in the Legislative letters prepared earlier and send them out.	Brandon Peters	May 12, 2021
Provide Commissioner Dallara with information on the new turnpike billing system, specifically what has been paid vs outstanding.	Tom Prestash	No date given