

PENNSYLVANIA STATE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
BUSINESS MEETING
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA
APRIL 9, 2015



CALL TO ORDER:

A quarterly business meeting of the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) was held on April 9, 2015 at the Keystone Building in Harrisburg, PA. Chairman Lou Schultz began the meeting at 10:01 a.m.

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS:

Chairman Schultz noted that April 9, 2015 was "Stand Up For Transportation Day" in the United States. Transportation industry leaders encouraged Congress to consider action on transportation legislation. Mr. Schultz also welcomed Dr. David Volkmann, alternate for the Secretary of Education, Elizabeth Sickler, alternate for Representative Julie Harhart, and Nolan Ritchie, alternate for Senator John Rafferty. There are five vacancies, seven members continuing to serve beyond the end of their terms, and four terms that expire on June 30, 2015.

The 2017 Twelve Year Program update is underway. A kickoff online public meeting will be held on April 16, 2015 at 7 p.m. Information can be found at www.talkpatransportation.com. The open comment period will last for six weeks after that. TAC members were encouraged to share the public meeting and open comment period information.

The implementation phase of the Modernization of Advisory Committees initiative is in the preliminary stages of development with a scope being drafted. The PennDOT Program Center will be the lead in coordinating this initiative, to be re-named, "PennDOT Advisory Committee Coordination".

MINUTES:

Chairman Schultz and Mr. Jack Rutter noted that on page 4, third paragraph, the February 2, 2015 minutes state that changing the mandated February meeting to a conference call would likely require a legislative change. Mr. Schultz stated that a conference call would likely not require a legislative change but changing the February date likely would. The February 2, 2015 minutes will be modified to reflect this change.

ON A MOTION by Mr. Robert Regola, seconded by Mr. Gustave Scheerbaum, and unanimously approved, the minutes of the February 2, 2015 TAC Business Meeting were accepted as modified.

SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION'S REMARKS:

Acting Secretary Leslie Richards attended a rally in Philadelphia for “Stand Up For Transportation Day” and was not in attendance. Special Assistant Leo Bagley delivered remarks about the Secretary’s interests on her behalf, such as the Ports of Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Erie, relationships between municipalities and PennDOT, and bicycle and pedestrian policy.

PA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION UPDATE:

Deputy Secretary for Administration

Deputy Secretary Suzanne Itzko delivered a brief update for Administration, stating that AFSCME negotiations were underway.

The Department is working with the Department of General Services (DGS) on facilities projects, such as maintenance sheds and county maintenance buildings. . No progress has been made on these projects since they were sent to DGS. In addition, the Department released \$15 million in emergency funds to the counties for Winter Operations.

The Commonwealth’s server farms and mainframes are relocating to Ashburn, Virginia and this process is underway. PennDOT is the only agency that is on-track for relocation.

Deputy Secretary for Highway Administration

Deputy Secretary Scott Christie delivered a brief report for Highway Administration, stating that fatality numbers have hit a new low. He stated that Highway Administration was looking at how safety funds are spent.

Structurally Deficient (SD) Bridges are under 4,000, and the Department continues to deliver more than 300 SD bridges a year, which aids in reducing the number of SD bridges.

Mr. Christie stated that winter weather hit the state hard, the winter budget went over by about \$50 million, and an aggressive repair program was ramping up for the spring and summer.

Mr. Michael Untermeyer asked if there were any statistics regarding cellphone usage and fatalities. Mr. Christie stated that this was one of the categories where fatalities were on the increase.

Deputy Secretary for Multimodal Transportation

Deputy Secretary Toby Fauver delivered a brief report for Multimodal Transportation and included a presentation on rail station upgrades and ADA improvements.

Mr. Fauver delivered a brief update on ridership along the Keystone Line, stating that it continued to rise despite the lower fuel prices.

The ADA changes would address the construction of full-length high-level passenger platforms on passenger routes that share tracks with freight operations. Full-length high-level platforms would address ADA needs and enable faster boarding and disembarking of trains but are incompatible with some freight operations, particularly those carrying oversized cargo. Some stations have alternate routing available for freight rail but not all.

Solutions include a bypass track that would shift the freight onto another track. These are expensive to build and maintain, and the Department and Amtrak would have to pay the railroads to maintain the track. The other option is a “flip-up edge” which would use an edge for the station platform that could flip up when a wide freight load is due to move through a station with a high-level platform.

The flip-up edge would be automated and resistant to corrosion from salt used during the winter months to melt ice on the station platforms. Local police would be informed that the edge has been lifted when oversized freight moves through the station. In addition, this innovation is seen as a cost-effective use at the Coatesville Amtrak station, where the cost of building a bypass track was seen as prohibitive.

Mr. Untermeyer asked if Pennsylvania would assist other states in designing flip-up station edges. Mr. Fauver responded that other states have been fighting full-length high-level platforms. Pennsylvania is coordinating with Amtrak in designing stations that can accommodate all uses of the railroad.

Mr. Scheerbaum asked about the cost of bypass tracks and switches. Mr. Fauver stated that over the long-term bypass tracks are more expensive in construction and maintenance because of Amtrak labor costs. Amtrak has a right to do rail work due to its union rules and Mr. Fauver gave the state interlocking project cost overruns at Harrisburg as an example.

Mr. Wagenmann pointed out that local police response may not be available. Mr. Fauver stated that at Coatesville oversized freight is rare and there would be a long warning time before oversized freight is moved. Most freight would move at night when there is no passenger traffic.

Mr. McNeil asked if the edge would always be down, and Mr. Fauver stated that it would be.

Mr. Stroehmann asked about ridership and whether it was related to traffic congestion. Mr. Fauver stated that it may be due to traffic congestion, but the Keystone Line has the best on-time performance in the country, and the train is equipped to be attractive for business commuters.

Mr. Fauver also stated that the grade crossings in Lancaster County are now closed and with a few other signal improvements, the corridor speed could increase to 125 mph, which would shave five to ten minutes off the trip between Philadelphia and Harrisburg.

Mr. Fauver provided a status update on the multimodal fund applications.

Deputy Secretary for Planning

Deputy Secretary Jim Ritzman delivered a brief report for the Office of Planning. He mentioned the 2017 Program Update.

Payments to local governments via the Liquid Fuels Fund and the programming process are estimated at \$861 million. These payments enable local governments to improve their roads and bridges. When Act 89 is fully implemented, these payments will top \$1 billion a year.

Mr. Ritzman also discussed Safety Planning boot camps. These workshops are hosted by FHWA and enable highway safety professionals to discuss planning with planning professionals.

Deputy Secretary for Driver and Vehicle Services

Kara Templeton delivered a brief report for Driver and Vehicle Services on behalf of Deputy Secretary Kurt Myers. She provided an update on the Veterans program, such as the program to have a veteran's designation on licenses and ID cards, and donations to the Veterans Trust Fund. The Veterans Trust Fund has reached \$2 million to date, and 149,000 veterans have signed up for the designation.

Ms. Templeton mentioned changes involving the \$5 county fee enabled by Act 89. Three counties have signed up to participate in the program.

The Motorcycle safety program will begin its spring courses.

TAC CURRENT STUDIES:

Bicycle Pedestrian Accommodations Work Order

Mr. Keith Chase, Gannett Fleming and Mr. Jonathan Heilman, Gannett Fleming

Mr. Keith Chase and Mr. Jonathan Heilman presented an update to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Policy and Accommodation Study.

Mr. Heilman reviewed the workgroups that identified issue statements, developed a consensus for a study, and defined draft objectives for phase 2. These were presented at the February 2, 2015 TAC meeting.

The Guiding Objectives for the Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations study are:

1. Provide recommendations for a comprehensive Pennsylvania bicycle and pedestrian policy.
2. Recommend an approach for accommodating and connecting bicycle and pedestrian modes as part of existing and new transportation facilities.
3. Develop recommendations for establishing a funding strategy for capital and maintenance improvements.
4. Develop recommendations for an approach for prioritizing bicycle and pedestrian capital and maintenance improvements.
5. Effectively engage and educate the internal and external stakeholders in a consensus building and practical problem-solving process.
6. Identify feasible opportunities and incentives for culture change for bicycle and pedestrian transportation.
7. Identify opportunities for mainstreaming a bicycle and pedestrian focus within existing planning and project development.
8. Evaluate select bicycle and pedestrian issues identified through the Issues Framework phase.

Mr. Heilman discussed success factors and outcomes for Phase 2. He stated they were in the process of developing a scope of work that would be finalized when PennDOT hired a Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator.

The outcome for Phase 2 would be a supportable bicycle and pedestrian policy including facility accommodation.

Mr. Nolan Ritchie stated there was legislation (HB 150) introduced for a bicycle “share the road” vanity plate and the funds generated from sales of the plate could be available for bicycle and pedestrian programs.

Mr. Jack Rutter asked if Pennsylvania state law required vehicles to give pedestrians the right of way in a crosswalk and Mr. Heilman stated this was correct, but pedestrians cannot step into a crosswalk and expect vehicles to stop. A discussion on the definition of crosswalks and whether drivers know what a crosswalk is occurred.

Mr. Gustave Scheerbaum suggested changing the study title from accommodate, suggesting accommodations suggest compromise.

TAC Representation on the State Rail Plan

Mr. Joel McNeil & Mr. Jeff Stroehmann, TAC Members

Mr. Joe McNeil and Mr. Jeff Stroehmann delivered a brief report and discussion on the State Rail Plan update roundtable held on March 24, 2015. Mr. McNeil stated the Rail Plan is still in development stage. The State Rail Plan is a requirement under state (for freight) and federal (for grants for intercity passenger rail service) law. Part of the focus group discussion at the Roundtable involved mapping rail trails and possibly returning some rail trails to freight rail use, positive train control, and identifying oil train corridors. Positive Train Control is a Federal mandate that is considered a burden for rail freight companies.

Mr. Fauver discussed the Rail Freight grant program and how rail freight typically has a short-term outlook while the Department has a long-term outlook. He also discussed working with communities on industrial development opportunities and guiding investment in rail infrastructure with industrial development in mind. Mr. Fauver also discussed investing in ports along with upgrades to the rail infrastructure to serve Pennsylvania’s ports.

Mr. Scheerbaum discussed the construction and upgrade of oil/gas pipelines to support development of the energy sector in Pennsylvania instead of rail. He suggested the topic be revisited in the future.

Mr. Robert Regola discussed the need for safety in transporting oil and gas over rail, stating crude oil routes are being inspected regularly and the railroads within Pennsylvania are replacing infrastructure along oil train routes. He also stated that railroads cannot rip out unused lines but must apply to the federal Surface Transportation Board.

STIC Overview

Mr. Michael Bonini, PennDOT & Ms. Karyn Vandervoort, FHWA

Mr. Michael Bonini and Ms. Karyn Vandervoort delivered an overview report on STIC (State Transportation Innovation Council).

STIC was created in 2011 with the encouragement of FHWA as part of the federal Every Day Counts program. Twenty-six organizations make up Pennsylvania’s STIC and they meet quarterly

to identify and support innovations in transportation. STIC is co-chaired by FHWA's regional administrator and the PA Secretary of Transportation.

STIC involves many stakeholders who facilitate the rapid implementation of proven, well researched technologies, tactics and techniques. It is not a venue for unproven, untested suggestions or ideas. There are 10 technical advisory groups (TAG):

- Project Delivery
- Construction
- Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)
- Maintenance
- Design
- Safety
- Materials
- Environmental
- Structures
- Facilities

Ideas are submitted and immediately assigned to a TAG. The TAG creates a white paper for STIC review at STIC's quarterly meeting. If the STIC approves the white paper, the innovation deployment process begins. 66 initiatives have been assigned to date with 39 initiatives accepted and 37 white papers presented.

Innovations are deployed via outreach efforts like innovation day workshops, publications, and interactive tools such as the Innovation Town map, which displays information about already deployed innovations throughout the Commonwealth. There is also an interactive map. To date, Innovation Day workshops trained 450 professionals in 2015.

Deployed innovations include accelerated bridge construction, pervious pavements, and warm mix asphalt. LED lighting is another pilot in use on the Clarks Ferry Bridge over the Susquehanna River in Dauphin County.

STIC will continue to deploy innovations and will establish a Pennsylvania Consortium of Transportation Universities (PaCTU). FHWA has research funds available and STIC will leverage the funding sources.

Mr. Bonini suggested that members of the TAC join a TAG or suggest an innovative idea.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Mr. Scheerbaum asked about the status of work zone safety speed cameras. Mr. Ritchie stated that a smarter work zone concept is underway, and cameras in work zone will be considered in the future in the Senate.

NEXT MEETING:

The next TAC business meeting is Thursday, July 16, 2015 in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania at the Keystone Building.

ADJOURNMENT:

ON A MOTION by Mr. Robert Regola, seconded by Mr. Gustave Scheerbaum, and unanimously approved, The TAC meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

Attendance from the TAC Business Meeting
April 9, 2015

1. Mr. Lou Schultz, TAC Chairman
2. Mr. Lou Bagley, Special Assistant to the Secretary
3. Mr. Jack Rutter, TAC member
4. Ms. Beth Sickler, alternate for Mr. Dave Hickernell, TAC member
5. Mr. Paul Opiyo, alternate for Mr. Dennis Davin, TAC member
6. Mr. Rodney Bender, TAC member
7. Mr. Joe Mangarella, TAC member
8. Mr. Donald Detwiler, TAC member
9. Mr. Jeffery Stroehmann, TAC member
10. Mr. Joel McNeil, TAC member
11. Mr. Tom Geanopoulos, TAC member
12. Mr. Gustave Scheerbaum, TAC member
13. Mr. Michael Untermeyer, TAC member
14. Mr. Jeffery Means, TAC member
15. Mr. Nolan Ritchie, alternate for Mr. John Rafferty, TAC member
16. Dr. Roy Brant, TAC member
17. Mr. Dennis Volkman, TAC member
18. Mr. Keith Chase, Gannett Fleming
19. Mr. Jonathan Heilman, Gannett Fleming
20. Ms. Leanne Doran, McCormick Taylor
21. Mr. Jim Ritzman, PennDOT
22. Ms. Kara Templeton, PennDOT
23. Mr. Toby Fauver, PennDOT
24. Ms. Suzanne Itzko, PennDOT
25. Mr. Jim Arey, PennDOT
26. Mr. Kenneth Druckenmiller, PennDOT
27. Mr. Larry Shifflet, PennDOT
28. Ms. Jessica Clark, PennDOT
29. Ms. Julie Harmantzis, PennDOT
30. Mr. Martin Sargent, PennDOT
31. Mr. Terry Pinder, PennDOT