

PENNSYLVANIA STATE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
BUSINESS MEETING
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA
DECEMBER 5TH, 2019



CALL TO ORDER:

A quarterly business meeting of the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) was called to order at 10:09 a.m. on December 5, 2019, in Harrisburg, PA.

MINUTES:

ON A MOTION by Ms. Brenda Sandberg and seconded by Mr. John Pocius, and unanimously approved, the Minutes of July 18, 2019, TAC Business Meeting were accepted.

Please note that these minutes are not intended to capture every individual comment, but rather to identify critical discussion points and highlights of the TAC business meetings.

CHAIR'S REMARKS:

TAC Chair, Jody Holton gave brief remarks welcoming TAC members to Harrisburg.

Ms. Holton gave some updates including:

- The departure of Transportation Secretary Leslie Richards. She is set to become SEPTA's new General Manager in January 2020.
- The appointment of Ms. Yassmin Gramian as the new Acting Secretary for Transportation.
- The release of the State House of Representatives Task Force Report on Transportation Infrastructure. She noted that the Task Force was chaired by Representative Martina White.

SECRETARY'S REMARKS

Acting Secretary Yassmin Gramian provided brief remarks on funding issues and the ongoing initiatives to address those issues. Ms. Gramian said that transportation is very important to the development of all communities across the Commonwealth and the funding shortfall threatens that development. She explained that the past years have seen notable efforts both from the Department and the Legislature to address those threats. Ms. Gramian referenced the report released by the Task Force chaired by Representative Martina White, which laid out recommendations and proposed legislation to implement those recommendations.

Representative Tim Hennessey commented about the need to pass the needed legislations to implement the recommendations from the report.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN: Roy Gothie, PennDOT

Mr. Roy Gothie gave a presentation on Pennsylvania's new Active Transportation Plan. Mr. Gothie defined Active Transportation as any self-propelled, human-powered mode of transportation, such as walking or bicycling. Mr. Gothie explained that the goals of the Plan are to improve conditions for walking and bicycling across Pennsylvania and identify and help prioritize strategies that increase the number of people walking and bicycling, while supporting safety and multimodal connectivity throughout the state.

Mr. Gothie added that the Plan will serve as a resource for Metropolitan and Rural Planning Organizations, as well as municipalities throughout the Commonwealth as they develop and implement regional and local active transportation plans.

Mr. Gothie explained that the plan incorporates feedbacks from the Statewide Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan Open House Meeting as well as the project survey posted on the Department's website. He noted that over 13,000 people provided feedback for the survey.

Mr. Gothie discussed the Plan's Vision Statement, which states that *"Biking and walking are integral elements of Pennsylvania's transportation system that contribute to community health, economic mobility, and quality of life"*.

Mr. Gothie highlighted six objectives that the Plan aims to fulfill:

- Enhance safety
- Provide transportation equity
- Connect walking and biking networks
- Leverage partnerships
- Improve public health
- Increase economic mobility

Mr. Gothie provided some specific goals to reach for each objective.

Mr. Mark Murawski asked about the state of funding for Bicycle/Pedestrian Projects and the effects on project selection.

Mr. Gothie answered that the return on investment for Active Transportation projects is very high but it is still challenging to fit the various needs in the overall goals. He added that the focus is on making sure that the benefits of the projects work for as many people as possible.

Mr. Michael Carroll urged the Committee to take a greater responsibility and work with the Department's Chief Counsel to improve the interpretation of Title 75.

Mr. Hennessey noted that legislation for protected bike lanes passed the House and is awaiting a vote in the Senate.

Ms. Karina Ricks commented that PennDOT has yet to adopt the Complete Streets Policy.

Mr. Brian Hare added that though there is not yet a written policy about complete streets, the concept is incorporated in the designs.

Mr. Nolan Ritchie inquired about why liquid fuels funds cannot be used on Bicycle Pedestrian projects.

Mr. Gothie replied that the Chief Counsel's office is better positioned to answer that.

ENHANCED COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION

Ms. Amanda Shaffer from McCormick Taylor provided an update on the drafts of the Roles and Responsibilities, the Charter, and the Bylaws as developed by the ECC Subcommittee.

The TAC discussed all three drafts, which were set to be voted on.

Bylaws

Mr. Pocius commented that the bylaws should create a Vice Chair position or allow the committee to vote to designate an alternate vice chairperson.

Mr. Murawski commented that bylaws need to create a better mechanism to track terms expiration dates and reappointments.

The motion to approve the bylaws was delayed until the next TAC meeting to obtain clarification from the Department's Chief Counsel Office.

Charter

Ms. Holton commented that the Charter drafted is reflective of the overall work TAC does.

ON A MOTION by Ms. Brenda Sandberg and seconded by Mr. Mark Murawski, and unanimously approved, the TAC Mission Statement was approved.

Roles and Responsibilities

ON A MOTION by Mr. John Pocius and seconded by Ms. Brenda Sandberg, and unanimously approved, the TAC Roles and Responsibilities was approved.

Ms. Shafer explained that the next steps will include the study topic identification process.

TAC STUDY UPDATES

The TAC has started work on two new study topics. Mr. Brian Funkhouser and Mr. Troy Truax gave an update about the TAC studies.

Mr. Truax explained that a scope of work was developed for both studies and distributed to TAC members on October 11, 2019, for comments. TAC members were also asked to participate in the Taskforces for each study.

For each study, Mr. Truax discussed the backgrounds, the specific objectives, the Task Force meetings and the expected deliverables.

Statewide Small Local Bridge Investment Plan

Mr. Truax explained that Locally-owned bridges have not always received the same level of attention that of state-owned bridges have received, yet they represent an important part of the transportation infrastructure that has been quietly growing as a public safety concern.

Mr. Truax noted that many local governments continue to struggle to provide basic maintenance on the system and lack the expertise and resources to adequately plan and fund the long-term capital needs of the local bridge inventor., This study proposes to examine the local bridges as part of a larger transportation system and economic network.

More specifically, Mr. Truax said that the ***Statewide Small Local Bridge Investment Plan*** study aims to:

- Examine and understand the ability of local municipalities to adequately maintain these structures and advance bridge projects to bid and construction.
- Highlight the plight of the state's locally-owned bridge inventory and to evaluate the pros and cons of a variety of potential approaches related to their improvement.

Mr. Truax said that Mr. Mark Murawski has volunteered to chair the taskforce for this study. He added that the official kickoff meeting with the Task Force for this study is tentatively scheduled for February 3, 2020, following the TAC business meeting.

Mr. Murawski commented that this study presents a unique opportunity to determine what the real problem is and formulate effective solutions to address it.

Utilities in State Right-of-Way

Mr. Truax explained that as the utility infrastructure beneath many local, county and state roads continues to age, and renewal and construction projects are advanced, there is an opportunity to identify and promote better practices between Utility and Transportation facility owners.

Mr. Truax indicated that the ***Utilities in State Right-of-Way*** study will:

- Identify the existing systems and processes related to utilities in the state and other public rights-of-way.
- Evaluate the Commonwealth's utility maintenance and replacement management system(s).
- Develop a series of recommendations for a better coordination and collaboration between utility and transportation facility owners and agencies.

Mr. Truax noted that Mr. John Pocius has volunteered to chair the taskforce for this study and the official kickoff meeting for this study will be held after today's TAC business meeting.

Impacts of increased freight movements on the rail freight and highway networks in Pennsylvania

A study request form was submitted for TAC review and approval by the Multimodal Deputate. Deputy Secretary Mr. Larry Shifflet explained that this study aims:

- To understand and document the impacts of current and projected increased freight movement via heavy trucks on the highway system and Pennsylvania communities.
- To understand and document impacts to the rail freight network that may result in a shift of freight movement from rail to highway.

Mr. Ritchie commented that the warehousing issue should be looked at too.

ON A MOTION by Ms. Brenda Sandberg and seconded by Mr. John Pocius, and unanimously approved, the *Impacts of increased freight movements on the rail freight and highway networks in Pennsylvania* study topic was approved. The consultant team will develop a scope of work for the TAC to review at its next meeting.

PA Department of Transportation Update:Office of Planning

Deputy Secretary Mr. Larry Shifflet gave a brief update highlighting the updates of the Statewide Long-Range Transportation and the Comprehensive Freight Movement Plans. He noted that updates to both plans have recent started. Mr. Shifflet also addressed the repeal of the Federal funding rescission that was included in a Continuing Resolution was passed by Congress to extend federal funding through December 20. Mr. Shifflet added that with the FAST Act expiring, the Twelve Year Program will assume flat federal funding.

Highway and Bridge Program

Ms. Melissa Batula from the Bureau of Project Delivery gave an update for the Highway and Bridge Program. Ms. Batula said that winter maintenance operations are off to a good start. She noted that the Department is still struggling to hire temporary workers for winter maintenance; therefore, mobile emergency teams are being used to fill in.

Ms. Batula also discussed the Automated Work Zone Speed Enforcement Pilot. She explained that 10 units will be deployed in various locations for the next construction season.

Mr. Bender asked if the units will be for enforcement or informational?

Ms. Batula said that the pilot is just informational.

Mr. Ritchie asked how this year's emergency repairs compare to last year.

Ms. Batula answered that this year is not as bad as last year.

Office of the Secretary

Mr. Roger Cohen, Senior Policy Advisor, gave an update about an ongoing regional initiative to reduce the Department's carbon footprint. Mr. Cohen explained that the initiative involves twelve states and aims to evaluate the impacts of climate change on the transportation infrastructure and the transportation sector's contribution to climate change through greenhouse gas emissions.

Mr. Cohen said that a proposal, through which the states are involved will voluntarily pledge to reduce their GHGs, is being drafted. Mr. Cohen said that a proposal is being drafted which will voluntarily pledge to reduce the GHGs for all involved states. He added that Pennsylvania has been one of the leaders of the initiative.

Mr. Cohen clarified that the initiative will not result in any more regulation of Natural Gas production in the Commonwealth.

Mr. Josiah Shelly asked if the Legislature's approval will be needed for the final agreement.

Mr. Cohen answered no.

Mr. Ritchie commented that without legislative approval the benefits will be limited.

Mr. Cohen indicated that a statutory authorization could be requested based on the final recommendations of the Memorandum of Understanding.

Mr. Murawski commented that there has always been a silo approach to dealing with climate change issues in the State. He asked if there will be any interagency coordination this time.

Mr. Cohen said that there will be multiple agencies involved in the initiative.

OTHER BUSINESS

NEXT MEETING:

The next TAC business meeting is scheduled for **Monday, February 3, 2020**, in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

ADJOURNMENT:

ON A MOTION by Mr. Tom Geanopoulos and seconded by Mr. Donald Detwiler, the TAC meeting was adjourned at 11:59 a.m.

Attendance* from the TAC Business Meeting
December 05, 2019

1. Ms. Jody Holton, AICP, Chair
2. Ms. Yassmin Gramian, P.E., TAC member
3. Mr. Michael Carroll, P.E., TAC member
4. Ms. Brenda Sandberg, TAC member
5. Mr. Ashley Porter, P.E., TAC member
6. Ms. Karina Ricks, TAC member
7. Mr. Donald Detwiler, TAC Member
8. Mr. John Pocius, P.E., PLS, TAC member
9. Mr. Mark Murawski, TAC member
10. Mr. Tom Geanopulos, TAC member
11. Mr. Alan Blahovec, CCPM, TAC member
12. DMr. Larry Nulton, TAC member
13. Mr. Rodney Bender, alternate for Ms. Gladys Brown Dutrieuille, TAC member
14. Ms. Kim Ward, TAC member
15. Mr. Nolan Ritchie, M.P.A., alternate for Ms. Kim Ward, TAC member
16. Ms. Meredith Biggica, aAlternate for Mr. Mike Carroll, TAC member
17. Mr. Tim Kearney, TAC member
18. Mr. Sam Arnold, alternate for Mr. Tim Kearney, TAC member
19. Mr. Tim Hennessey, TAC member
20. Mr. Josiah Shelly, alternate for Mr. Tim Hennessey, TAC member
21. Mr. John Kashatus, alternate for Mr. Pedro Rivera, TAC member
22. Mr. Paul Opiyo, alternate for Mr. Dennis Davin, TAC member
23. Ms. Tiffany Landis, P.E., alternate for Mr. Patrick McDonnell, TAC member
24. Ms. Katie McLaughlin, aAlternate for Mr. Russell Redding, TAC member
25. Mr. George McAuley, Jr., P.E., PennDOT
26. Ms. Melissa Batula, P.E., PennDOT
27. Ms. Sarah Clark, PennDOT
28. Ms. Natasha Fackler, PennDOT
29. Mr. Larry Shifflet, PennDOT
30. Mr. Kurt Myers, PennDOT
31. Mr. Roger Cohen, PennDOT
32. Mr. Robert Chiappelli, PennDOT
33. Mr. Roy Gothie, PennDOT
34. Mr. Shane Rice, PennDOT
35. Ms. Amanda Shaffer, McCormick Taylor
36. Ms. Christi Sabb, McCormick Taylor
37. Ms. Lugene Keys, McCormick Taylor
38. Ms. Leanne Doran, Michael Baker Int'l

39. Mr. Brian Funkhouser, Michael Baker Int'l
40. Mr. Troy Truex, AICP, Michael Baker Int'l
41. Mr. Tim Smith, Gannett Fleming
42. Mr. Tyler Burke, Milliron Goodman
43. Mr. Kevin Sunday, PA Chamber of Business and Industry
44. Ms. Nicki Jacobs, GPI
45. Mr. Neil Ward, Commuter Rail Assoc. of Lancaster
46. Mr. Brian Hare, P.E., PennDOT
47. Mr. Mark Tobin, PennDOT
48. Ms. Jessica Clark, PennDOT
49. Mr. Abdoul Ahmed, PennDOT
50. Mr. Terry Pinder, PennDOT
51. Mr. Brian Sharkey, PennDOT
52. Ms. Karen Heath, PennDOT

**Attendance includes members present via conference call.*