

PENNSYLVANIA STATE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
BUSINESS MEETING  
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA  
APRIL 8, 2021



**CALL TO ORDER:**

The business meeting of the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) was called to order on Skype for Business at 1:05 p.m. on April 8, 2021.

*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, Ms. Jody Holton, AICP, gave brief remarks welcoming TAC members to the Skype meeting.

Ms. Holton reminded attendees that all TAC meetings are recorded for minute taking purposes.

**MINUTES:**

ON A MOTION by Mr. Ronald Wagenmann and seconded by Ms. Karina Ricks, and unanimously approved, the Minutes of the February 1, 2021 TAC Business Meeting were accepted.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

None.

**SECRETARY'S REMARKS:**

Secretary Yassmin Gramian, P.E. welcomed TAC members and guests to the meeting. Secretary Gramian announced the passing of Executive Deputy Secretary George McAuley, who passed away on February 28, 2021. She said that the *PennDOT Family* mourns the loss of an amazing colleague and a dedicated public servant.

Secretary Gramian discussed the Major Bridge Public Private Partnership Initiative. She explained that in November the Department received approval from the Public Private Partnership (P3) board to initiate the major bridge initiative, which is a design-build-finance, operator maintained, and project delivery program for the replacement or rehabilitation of bridges throughout the state that considers user fees as permitted under federal and state laws. The major bridge initiative is the first initiative out of the PennDOT Pathways Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study.

Secretary Gramian said that in February the department announced nine candidate bridges to be examined for tolling. She added that each bridge is currently undergoing thorough economic evaluation to ensure that they will be able to pay for themselves through a reasonable toll rate and the excess revenue will be invested in the local communities. Additionally, the Major Bridge initiative will provide relief to the Interstate and Regional Transportation Improvement Programs.

Secretary Gramian noted that an extensive outreach is being conducted to gather input from all stakeholders including a special emphasis on identifying and evaluating economic impacts to underserved populations as well as direct and indirect impacts of potential diversions; and the major bridges initiative will use existing P3 legislation to proceed. She added that the challenges facing transportation can no longer be addressed with the current unreliable funding sources.

Secretary Gramian also discussed the Governor's executive order signed on March 12, 2021 establishing the Transportation Revenue Options Commission (TROC). She noted that this commission will develop comprehensive funding recommendations for Pennsylvania's aging infrastructure. She said that the commission is comprised of transportation, economic, and community stakeholders from both the public and private sectors, including majority and minority leaders from the House and Senate Transportation and Appropriations committees. The commission held its first meeting on March 25, 2021. A report of commission activities and funding options will be submitted to the Governor before Aug. 1, 2021.

Secretary Gramian concluded her remarks announcing the appointment of Ms. Melissa Batula, PE, as the new Acting Executive Deputy Secretary and the appointment of Mr. Michael Keiser, PE, as the new Acting Deputy Secretary for Highway Administration.

TAC Chair Jody Holton noted that the 2019 Transportation Funding Risks TAC report was some of the materials presented to the Transportation Revenue Commission.

Mr. Murawski commented about the efforts to refocus the attention on transportation funding issues. He noted that it is important that all members of the different committees and commissions provide constructive and realistic input to help solve the issue.

Secretary Gramian said she is hopeful that all members of the Commission understand how critical it is to address the funding issue.

## **WORKING SESSION:**

### **Utilities in the State Right-of-Way**

Mr. Dale Witmer and Mr. Brian Link from Michael Baker International presented the TAC Utilities in the State Right-of-Way study. Mr. Witmer noted that Mr. John Pocius, P.E., PLS was the study Task Force Chair. His experience and leadership having dealt with these issues in the field and in design was instrumental to the success of the study.

Mr. Witmer also noted that the study focus emphasis is really placed on utility projects in State owned Right-of-Way, further explaining that these improvements and recommendations are to

address those types of projects. He also underscored that the study does not dictate what happens outside of state right-of-way.

Mr. Witmer highlighted that the study outreach efforts included two surveys to gather input from a very extended stakeholder group.

Mr. Witmer discussed some key takeaways from the outreach surveys:

- Schedule has emerged as the biggest challenge
- Improved coordination tools would offer the greatest benefit
- Utility relocation timelines are needed
- Aerial utility identification inefficiencies exist
- Coordinate PA and Utility Relocation Management System (URMS) database systems – Industry would benefit from continued awareness efforts.

Mr. Brian Link, from Michael Baker Int'l discussed the draft report recommendations including:

#### ***Process Improvements***

- Require utilization of URMS and Coordinate PA on all projects administered by PennDOT.
- Provide integration of Coordinate PA and PA OneMap to inform utility owners of programmed work.
- Ensure that Districts are utilizing Best Practices outlined by PennDOT Next Generation (PNG) and update Design Manual Part 5 Subsurface Utility Engineering (SUE) Form to align with Section 6.1 of the PA One Call Law.

#### ***Regulatory Improvements***

- Require utilities in the state right-of-way to perform predetermined relocations within a defined timeframe or be responsible for delay costs incurred for non-compliance to the relocation timeframe.
- Provide new legislation or regulations to define responsibility for tracking and identification of aerial utilities (utility pole attachments).
- Increase the amount of ticketing required to go through Coordinate PA for utility owners, professional designers, and professional excavators.

Mr. Murawski commented that the implementation of the recommendations would be up to PennDOT and the Stakeholders. He added that enforcing the recommendations would likely be determined by new policies that will result from implementing those recommendations.

Ms. Holton commented that it would be important for the TAC and the STC to provide recommendations to relevant parties such as the Public Utilities Commission.

Mr. Detweiler commented that the One Call ticketing system has been effective, but the two weeks' notice can be cumbersome for contractors.

**ON A MOTION** by Mr. Ronald Wagenmann and seconded by Mr. Don Detweiler, and unanimously approved, *Utilities in the State Right-of-Way* study the was approved. The State Transportation Commission will consider the study at its June 9, 2021 business meeting.

### **2021 Study Topic Identification**

The TAC continues to work on identifying the next study topics. Mr. Brian Funkhouser of Michael Baker International discussed the proposed scopes of work for the two topics previously approved by the TAC:

#### ***Public Transit Demand and Post-Pandemic Mobility Planning:***

Study Purpose: How to plan for the future of public transportation in Pennsylvania, post-pandemic.

#### ***Address Economic Disparities in Rural PA by Increasing Transportation Options:***

Study Purpose: Identify initiatives that would help workers in the state's rural areas who need jobs to be able to access job opportunities through improved transportation options.

The TAC discussed and approved a proposal to combine these two topics into one study.

Mr. Alan Blahovec and Dr. Larry Nulton will co-chair the study taskforce.

The TAC further discussed merging two additional topics into a single broad study:

#### ***Demand for Alternate Uses of State Right-of-Way:***

Use of ROW for pedestrians, cyclists, outdoor dining, and other outside uses increases, creating congestion, competition for space, and safety issues.

#### ***Importance of and Funding for Pedestrian Networks:***

To consider the totality of the network, types and cost of improvements, ownership, and liability.

**ON A MOTION** by Mr. Mark Murawski and seconded by Ms. Karina Ricks, and unanimously approved, the *Demand for Alternate Uses of State Right-of-Way* and the *Importance of and Funding for Pedestrian Networks* topics were approved.

### **2023 12-Year Program Update Outreach**

Mr. Daniel Keane gave an update about the 2023 12-Year Program Update public outreach. He noted that the 45-day public comment period includes an Online Public Forum, which was held on Tuesday, March 23, and the Transportation Survey. The Survey opened on March 1 and continues until April 14, 2021.

Mr. Keane explained that for the first time the data collected will be included in the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the Freight Movement Plan (FMP).

Mr. Keane listed some of the specific goals for the 2023 campaign including:

- increase participation
- gain quality feedback
- improve usability, and

- increase the number of participants in the 18-24 age group.

Mr. Keane also noted that the goal is to achieve over 7,000 survey participants by April 14.

Mr. Keane explained that the Online Public Forum had a record 203 pre-registrants, 214 views through PAcast and 1,717 video views through Facebook Live. Also, for this campaign, and for the first time, social media content was proactively translated in both Spanish and Mandarin.

Mr. Keane also discussed the various techniques being used including:

- frequent website updates
- social media campaign
- email blasts to stakeholders and previous survey participants
- print and broadcast media
- online toolkit.

The online toolkit, Mr. Keane noted is located on our Talk PA Transportation website and offers promotional, informational, and educational resources to help promote the Public Comment Period. It also contains social media content and a factsheet about the Public Comment Period in English, Spanish, and Mandarin.

Mr. Keane concluded his presentation saying that a focus group will be held after the conclusion of this year's campaign to evaluate the overall strategy and gather input on how to make future campaigns more successful.

### **PENNSYLVANIA LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN AND FREIGHT MOVEMENT PLAN: By Brian Funkhouser**

Mr. Brian Funkhouser briefed the TAC on the update underway for Pennsylvania's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and Freight Movement Plan (FMP). He discussed the TAC and STC roles in the different plans.

Mr. Funkhouser explained the strategic directions for both plans. For the FMP, he listed:

- Economic development and land use
- Project investments
- Transportation operations and safety
- Data analytical tools

For the LRTP, Mr. Funkhouser listed:

- Safety and security
- Transportation mobility
- Access and equity
- Resiliency
- Conditions and performance
- Funding and finance.

Mr. Funkhouser discussed the Public and stakeholders engagement efforts. He noted that an in-reach with PennDOT executives will be held in the coming weeks. Other outreach efforts include:

- Statewide Freight Forum
- State Planning Board
- Municipal Associations
- Affinity Focus Groups
- STC Public Forum
- STC Public Survey.

Mr. Funkhouser also discussed the Transportation Data Repository, which will serve as resource toolbox for planning and programing. He listed some important topic areas based on a Planning Partners survey including:

- Infrastructure (Pavements and Bridges)
- Safety
- Freight
- Traffic Demand
- Travel Origins and Destinations
- Travel Time
- Land Use
- Active Transportation
- Transit
- Environmental Justice.

Mr. Funkhouser concluded his update discussing the next steps, which will include:

- Continue Department In-reach
- Development of Draft Final Products
- Launch 30-day Review and Comment Period
- Adoption process with Program Management Committee (PMC)
- Implementation and Tracking.

### **PA Department of Transportation Update:**

#### **Executive Deputy Secretary**

Ms. Melissa Batula, PE, Acting Executive Deputy Secretary, gave a brief report noting that the PennDOT Pathways program, which is set to provide more sustainable funding solutions for the Department, is progressing and a final public comment period will be held in mid-April to mid-May.

Ms. Batula also noted that the Department has received request for information on the program from 23 offerors and one-on-one meetings were held with nine offerors to discuss potential strategies to bundle the contracts, the nature of the procurements, and the opportunities for involving local contractors.

### **Administration and Budget**

Mr. Robert Chiappelli, Deputy Secretary for Administration, gave a brief report about his Deputate. Mr. Chiappelli said that over two-thirds of the Department's workforce is working on-site and the rest are teleworking.

Mr. Chiappelli explained that the Office of Administration released the management directives for a permanent telework on April 7<sup>th</sup>. He added that the Department created a team to implement the new directives.

Mr. Chiappelli said that winter temporary work hiring program closed in March and was down 7% compared to last year's program.

Mr. Chiappelli also discussed the summer hiring for student and non-students, which will hire over 700 students and over 200 non-students.

### **Driver and Vehicle Services**

Deputy Secretary for Driver and Vehicle Services, Mr. Kurt Myers, gave an update about the DVS Deputate.

Mr. Myers said that October 1, 2021 remains the deadline for the Real ID's implementation. Mr. Myers noted that there has not been communication from the Department of Homeland security or the Biden administration about an extension of the deadline.

Mr. Myers explained that the demand for Real ID is slowly increasing and that the Department will start an ad campaign to promo the Real ID in May.

Mr. Myers also discussed the ongoing COVID-19 mitigation efforts, which include the photo on file initiative and the skills test modification.

Mr. Myers concluded his update noting that the Department continues to work on the mobile driver's license. A pilot project will be rolled out in the coming months. He added that the Department will be requesting legislation to allow the full implementation of the project.

Ms. Holton asked if the mobile driver's license is an addition to the physical product? Mr. Myers answered yes. He added that the legislation will specify that it is just an option.

### **Multimodal Transportation**

Deputy Secretary for Multimodal Transportation, Ms. Jennie Granger, AICP, gave a brief update for the Multimodal Deputate.

Ms. Granger noted her Deputate initiated a workforce development program at the request of the Governor's Office. She said that the cities of Lancaster and Chester have been chosen to implement a pilot program.

Ms. Granger explained that public and private investment will be used to expand 10 miles of facility service and fill 200 to 400 positions in partnership with the Transportation Management

Association of Chester County. She added that another pilot with CAT and Rabbit Transit to bring jobs in the area between Hanover and Gettysburg will be implemented.

Ms. Granger also discussed the progression of the Middletown train station project and Coatesville station that will go in construction soon.

Mr. Nolan Ritchie commented about new Amtrak proposals on President Biden's Infrastructure Plan that could benefit PA.

Ms. Granger said that Amtrak has released proposed new routes throughout the nation that could be completed if President Biden's Infrastructure Plan is approved by Congress. She noted that PennDOT has not been part of the process of determining the proposed new PA routes. She added that there are separate conversations about the expansion of the Keystone line.

Mr. Hennessey asked for more information about the Coatesville train station construction.

Ms. Granger said that there were some issues but the Department is working through them. She added that she will work on getting a cost estimate.

Mr. Hennessey asked if Amtrak has responded to the House Transportation Committee's request to relinquish control of the Keystone line from Philadelphia to Harrisburg?

Ms. Granger said that she has not heard anything on the matter.

### **Highway and Bridge Program**

Mr. Michael Keiser, PE, gave an update for the Highway Administration Deputate. Mr. Keiser discussed the 2020 letting program, which was reduced from \$2.2 billion to \$1.6 billion. Mr. Keiser said the 2021 letting program is estimated at \$1.9 billion. He added that the COVID-19 relief fund helped maintained the program at the current level.

Mr. Keiser explained that the digital delivery directives are available on PennDOT's website. He added that pilot projects can also be viewed through the website.

Mr. Keiser also discussed the 2020 crash data, which he said is still being finalized. He noted that fatality numbers have increased.

### **Office of Planning**

Deputy Secretary for Planning, Mr. Larry Shifflet, gave a brief update about his Deputate. Mr. Shifflet discussed President Biden's proposed Infrastructure bill. He said that the \$2.3 trillion bill, if passed, would be paid through corporate tax changes.

Mr. Shifflet explained that the proposed bill would provide \$600 billion for transportation infrastructure nationally, of which \$115 billion will go bridge and highway programs. He also noted that Pennsylvania would receive an estimate of approximately \$4.7 billion over 8 years. Mr. Shifflet added that if the proposed bill passes, states will need more funds to provide program matches.



Mr. Shifflet said that the FAST Act reauthorization is moving through Congress. He noted that federal funding for transportation is expected to remain flat.

Mr. Shifflet also discussed the return of two earmark processes being considered in Congress that are being called the Community Service Funding and the Member Designated Projects programs.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

Mr. Murawski updated that TAC on the Statewide Small Bridge Investment Plan study he presented to the STC at the February 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. He noted that the study taskforce will begin working with the Department to implement some of the recommendations.

**NEXT MEETING:**

The next TAC business meeting is scheduled to be held virtually on **Thursday, July 15, 2021.**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**ON A MOTION** by Mr. Ronald Wagenmann and seconded by Mr. Mark Murawski, and unanimously approved, the TAC meeting was adjourned at 3:01 P.M.

**Attendance from the TAC Business Meeting**  
**April 8, 2021**

1. Ms. Jody Holton, AICP, Chair
2. Ms. Yassmin Gramian, P.E., TAC member
3. Mr. Dennis Davin, TAC member
4. Mr. Paul Opiyo, alternate for Mr. Dennis Davin, TAC member
5. Mr. John Kashatus, alternate for Mr. Noe Ortega, TAC member
6. Mr. Dominic Rocco, alternate for Mr. Patrick McDonnell, TAC member
7. Senator Wayne Langerholc, TAC member
8. Mr. Nolan Ritchie, alternate for Senator Wayne Langerholc, TAC member
9. Senator Tim Kearney, TAC member
10. Sam Arnold, alternate for Senator Tim Kearney, TAC member
11. Representative Tim Hennessey, TAC member
12. Josiah Shelly alternate for Representative Tim Hennessey, TAC member
13. Representative Mike Carroll, TAC member
14. Meredith Biggica, alternate for Representative Mike Carroll, TAC member
15. Mr. Alan Blahovec, CCPM, TAC member
16. Mr. Donald Detwiler, TAC member
17. Mr. Tom Geanopulos, TAC member
18. Mr. Elam Herr, TAC member
19. Mr. Mark Murawski, TAC member
20. Dr. Larry Nulton, TAC member
21. Ms. Karina Ricks, TAC member
22. Ms. Brenda Sandberg, TAC member
23. Mr. Ronald Wagenmann, TAC member
24. Ms. Melissa Batula, P.E., PennDOT
25. Mr. Robert Chiappelli, PennDOT
26. Ms. Sarah Clark, PennDOT
27. Ms. Jennie Granger, AICP, PennDOT
28. Mr. Michael Keiser, P.E., PennDOT
29. Mr. Kurt Myers, PennDOT
30. Mr. Larry Shifflet, PennDOT
31. Ms. Erin Waters-Trasatt, PennDOT
32. Ms. Alexis Campbell, PennDOT
33. Mr. Shane Rice, PennDOT
34. Mr. Abdoul Ahmed, PennDOT
35. Ms. Jessica Clark, PennDOT
36. Mr. Brian Hare, P.E., PennDOT
37. Ms. Karen Heath, PennDOT
38. Mr. Daniel Keane, PennDOT

39. Mr. Terry Pinder, PennDOT
40. Mr. Brian Sharkey, PennDOT
41. Mr. Mark Tobin, PennDOT
42. Mr. Brian Walters, PennDOT
43. Mr. Michael Rimer, PennDOT
44. Ms. Ngani Ndimbie, PennDOT
45. Mr. Ronald Grutza, PA State Association of Boroughs
46. Ms. Christi Sabb, McCormick Taylor
47. Ms. Lugene Keys, McCormick Taylor
48. Ms. Samantha Heigel, McCormick Taylor
49. Mr. Brian Funkhouser, Michael Baker Int'l
50. Mr. Troy Truax, AICP, Michael Baker Int'l
51. Mr. Dale Witmer, AICP, Michael Baker Int'l
52. Ms. Leanne Doran, Michael Baker Int'l
53. Mr. Tyler Burke, Milliron Goodman
54. Mr. Jim Ritzman, Pennoni
55. Mr. Colin Parry, DCED
56. Mr. Michael Clinger, PennDOT
57. Mr. George DiCarlantonio, PUC