

PENNSYLVANIA STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
BUSINESS MEETING  
LEHIGHTON, PENNSYLVANIA  
SEPTEMBER 19<sup>TH</sup>, 2019



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

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Leslie Richards convened the quarterly business meeting of the State Transportation Commission (STC) at 10:01 am on September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2019, in Lehigh, PA.

**ROLL CALL:**

**Commissioners Present in Person:**

1. Honorable Leslie S. Richards, Chair
2. Honorable Robert B. Pease, P.E., Vice Chair
3. Honorable George M. Khoury, Secretary
4. Honorable Sharon L. Knoll
5. Honorable James D. Kingsborough
6. Honorable Frank E. Paczewski
7. Honorable Ronald Drnevich
8. Honorable Paige M. Willan
9. Honorable Kim Ward

Mr. Nolan Ritchie, Alternate Present

**Commissioners Not Present**

1. Honorable Tim Hennessey
2. Honorable John Sabatina
3. Honorable Mike Carroll

**MINUTES:**

**ON A MOTION** by Mr. Robert Pease and seconded by Ms. Sharon Knoll, and unanimously approved, the June 13th, 2019, STC business meeting minutes were accepted.

**CHAIR'S REMARKS:**

Secretary Richards gave opening remarks welcoming Commissioners and Guests to Lehigh, PA. Secretary Richards thanked the PennDOT District 5-0 office for their help and coordination in setting up the meeting and welcomed the newest Commissioner, Ms. Paige Willan, who is from Philadelphia County, PA.

Secretary Richards also welcomed a few PennDOT staff to their new roles within the Department including:

- Larry Shifflet, Deputy Secretary for Planning
- Robert Chiappelli, Acting Deputy Secretary for Administration
- Brian Hare, Bureau Director, Center or Program Development and Management.

Secretary Richards announced that the Commonwealth is one of twelve states competing in the 2019 America's Transportation Awards competition. The PennDOT Connects/Connecting Communities initiative was selected by AASHTO and the US Chamber of Commerce in the Quality of Life/Community Development Small Category. She urged everyone to help by voting online until October 6<sup>th</sup>.

Secretary Richards also announced the passing of former PA State Representative and STC Member, Rick Geist on August 29, 2019. She added that Rick proudly served the 79<sup>th</sup> District from 1978-2012. He was Chair of the House Transportation Committee, President of the High-Speed Ground Transportation Association and the first Chair of the Pennsylvania High Speed Intercity Rail Passenger Commission.

Secretary Richards closed her remarks by acknowledging the presence of a few honored guests attending the STC meeting including:

- From NEPA
  - Jeffery Box
  - Alan Baranski
  - Kate McMahon
- From Monroe County Planning Commission
  - Christine Meinhart-Fritz

Other guests in the attendance include: Christine Verdier, Brad Hurley and Bill Royer.

### **2019 TWELVE YEAR TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM: By Larry Shifflet**

Deputy Secretary Larry Shifflet presented the 2019 Twelve Year Transportation Program (TYP) adjustments stating that between May 18, 2019 and August 23, 2019, there were 733 program adjustments including:

- 246 Project/Phase Additions
- 375 Project/Phase Changes
- 44 Project/Phase Deletions
- 68 Adjustments to Funding Line Items

Mr. Shifflet explained that the overall changes represent a \$83,850,593 increase for the reporting period.

He went on to highlight some specific projects in the Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance (NEPA) MPO including the PA 248 rehabilitation projects in Carbon County.

**ON A MOTION** by Mr. George Khoury and seconded by Mr. Frank Paczewski, the 2019 Twelve Year Program Adjustments were unanimously approved.

### **WORKING SESSION**

#### **GENDER-NEUTRAL DOCUMENT POLICY AND REVISED STC BYLAWS: By Shane Rice, PennDOT Policy Office**

Mr. Shane Rice gave a presentation about PennDOT's Gender-Neutral Document Policy. He explained that the goal of the policy is to remove gender-specific references in all documents generated by the Department. The policy applies to all newly generated documents in conjunction with regularly scheduled revisions or editions. He noted that if terms are industry standards, PennDOT is flexible and amenable to using them on a case-by-case basis. The policy was effective August 1, 2018.

Specifically pertaining to the STC Bylaws, Mr. Rice listed the following updates:

- STC bylaws use the term "Chairperson" on pages 1-3 but switch to "Chairman" on pages 3-5.
- 4 instances where "Chairman" was changed to "Chairperson":
  - Pg. 3, Item IV, section E, line 2
  - Pg. 4, Item VII, section A, line 6
  - Pg. 4, Item VII, section B, subsection 1, line 10
  - Pg. 5, Item VIII, section B, subsection 1, line 9

Secretary Richards commented that she is proud to see that the Department is leading the way in making workplaces across the Commonwealth more inclusive.

**ON A MOTION** by Ms. Sharon Knoll and seconded by Mr. Robert Pease, the revised STC Bylaws were unanimously approved.

#### **2021 PUBLIC OUTREACH MILESTONE: By Lugene Keys and Jessica Clark**

Ms. Lugene Keys and Jessica Clark gave a presentation about the 2021 Public Outreach milestones. Ms. Keys listed the some of the major milestones including:

- Presentation of the Focus Group Outcomes and the Public Outreach Schedule at the December 20, 2018 meeting

- Adoption of the Transportation Performance Report, Announcement and Promotion of the TYP Public Comment Period and Feedback Tools at the February 21, 2019 meeting
- The official launching of the Open comment period from March 11-April 26, 2019
- The preparation and analysis of survey results
- The presentation of statewide results at the June 13, 2019 meeting.

Ms. Clark explained that all the milestones, statewide survey results, and other important materials are included in the commissioners' binders. Ms. Clark also added that the binders also feature personal profiles of STC commissioners. The profiles include detailed backgrounds and how long they have served on the Commission.

Ms. Clark noted that commissioners are encouraged to provide input to enhance the binders.

**PENNDOT ENGINEERING DISTRICT 5-0: By Michael W. Rebert, PE**

Mr. Rebert gave a presentation about District 5-0. Mr. Rebert characterized the District as including:

- 3,727 total linear road miles
- 2,047 total state bridges
- 8,321 total snow lane miles
- 2<sup>nd</sup> in Interstate Lane Miles (712)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> in DVMT (25,441,508)

Mr. Rebert explained that 40 bridges are being replaced as part of P3 Rapid Bridge Replacement program in District 5-0; and the last bridge began construction in March 2019.

Mr. Rebert listed some major construction projects in District 5-0 including:

LVTS

- US 22 Widening (15<sup>th</sup> Street to SR 378)
- PA 309/Tilghman St. Interchange
- Hill to Hill Bridge
- SR 873 Bridge over Lehigh River

NEPA

- I-80 Reconstruction (Mileposts 303–307)
- SR 61 Restoration (St Clair–Frackville)
- I-80 White Haven Bridge

RATS

- US 222 South of Kutztown

- US 422 West Shore Bypass Reconstruction
- SR 61 Phases 1 & 2

Mr. Rebert also said that the District's rate of overall poor and structurally deficient bridges have decreased from 22% in 2009 to 11% in 2018.

Smart and innovative practices such as the use Void Reducing Asphalt Membrane (VRAM) in Pilot Projects for Interstates 81 and 380, Aluminum Arch Inserts, Aluminum Box Culverts, and systematic signing were also discussed.

Mr. Drnevich asked about the status of local bridges in the District.

Mr. Rebert answered that 30% of the local bridges are structurally deficient and most of them are in the Reading area.

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

#### **Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)**

TAC chair Ms. Jody Holton gave a brief report highlighting the Committee's effort to implement the recommendations from the Enhanced Communication and Collaboration(ECC) Initiative.

Ms. Holton explained that the ECC subcommittee has drafted a Memorandum of Understanding, Charter, and Bylaws for the TAC to review and adopt.

Ms. Holton also discussed the Committee's next study topics, which include:

- *Statewide Small Local Bridge Investment Plan*
- *Utilities in the State Right-of-Way*

Ms. Holton added that scopes are being developed and will be discussed at future meetings.

#### **Executive Deputy Secretary**

Executive Deputy Secretary Yassmin Gramian gave a report in which she highlighted funding challenges the Department is facing. Ms. Gramian explained that while revenue projections remain flat at best, the Department's purchasing power has been slowly decreasing.

Ms. Gramian indicated that the Department has been looking at alternatives funding sources to make up for the revenue shortfall. She pointed out to the Mobility Partnership Studies released earlier in the year, which made recommendations on alternative revenue source options.

Ms. Gramian noted that options include: spot tolling, express lane tolling, and congestion pricing.

Ms. Gramian also discussed the I-95 Corridor's Mileage-Based User Fee study, which is a multi-state pilot project design to provide a better understanding of how an MBUF might work in real life.

### **Administration and Budget**

Mr. Robert Chiappelli, the Acting Deputy Secretary for Administration, gave a brief report in which he discussed the Green County Maintenance Office reconstruction project. He explained that the project was delegated to PennDOT by DGS because of a declared emergency due to a fire in the building. He added that Michael Baker International has been selected as the Design Professional and the design will be completed on November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

Mr. Chiappelli also discussed Student Outreach Forums held from May 1, thru July 31, 2019. The purpose of the forums was to give students an inside look at what it means to work for the Commonwealth and help them with the job application process.

Mr. Ritchie asked if the forum covered a wide variety of jobs or just engineering jobs.

Mr. Chiappelli answered that all fields of work were covered.

### **Drivers and Vehicles Services**

Deputy Secretary Kurt Myers gave a report for the Drivers and Vehicles Services deputate. Mr. Myers discussed the pilot project for the digital license plate launched in March 2019. He noted that the Department has an agreement with RiviverMx Inc., which will supply 20 digital license plates for use in the pilot program.

Mr. Myers also gave an update about Real ID. He noted that early signs from the Department of Homeland Security indicate that an extension will not be granted. Therefore, starting October 2020, a Real ID will be needed to board commercial flights and access Federal facilities.

Mr. Myers finished his update by discussing the 2019 Live Free Ride Alive Program, which highlighted the motorcycle Safety Month. He explained that an event was held at the Farm Show Complex in Harrisburg to encourage riders to test their skills on and off the motorcycle and help spread awareness of the importance of motorcycle safety.

Mr. Drnevich asked if there were any updates on the registration sticker removal.

Mr. Myers answered that he has testified before the House. Also, State Police has testified about the change. He added that there is no change in vehicle registration numbers.

Ms. Willan asked about the cyber security implications of the digital license.

Mr. Myers explained that the pilot program is not connected to PennDOT's network. He added that security will be a top priority if the pilot program is to be implemented.

### **Highway and Bridge Program**

Mr. Brian Thompson from the Bureau of Project Delivery gave an update about the Highway and Bridge Deputate highlighting the P3 program. He noted that the goal had been to have all 558 bridges completed last year but that was not the case. Mr. Thompson said that three bridges remain under construction through 2020.

Mr. Thompson also discussed winter maintenance expenditures, letting trends, and the increase in emergency repairs due to inclement weather.

Secretary Richards noted that a report about the lesson learned from the P3 program has just been released.

### **Multimodal Transportation**

Deputy Secretary Jennie Granger gave a brief update about the Multimodal deputation stating that the Multimodal Grant applications are opened from September 9 to November 8, 2019. Ms. Granger added that the Governor has also announced the approval of \$13.7 million in grant funding for equipment and infrastructure upgrades at 29 State airports.

Ms. Granger also discussed improvements made to the Mount Joy train station and pre-construction work for the new Middletown train station.

### **Office of Planning**

Deputy Secretary Larry Shifflet gave an update highlighting the PennDOT Connects Initiative, which was nominated in the Quality of Life/Community Development category of the 2019 America's Transportation Awards Competition sponsored by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, (AASHTO), AAA, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Both Mr. Shifflet and Secretary Richards urged the attendance to go online cast their vote for PennDOT Connects.

Mr. Shifflet also gave an update about the 2021 financial guidance, funding formula changes, and safety performance measures.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **NEXT MEETING**

The next STC quarterly meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, December 12, 2019** in Harrisburg, PA.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**ON A MOTION** by Mr. George Khoury and seconded by Mr. Frank Paczewski, the STC quarterly meeting was adjourned at 12:06 PM.