

PENNSYLVANIA STATE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
BUSINESS MEETING
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA
OCTOBER 11, 2022



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.

CALL TO ORDER:

The hybrid business meeting of the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) was called to order on Microsoft Teams and the Keystone Building 8N1 at 10:04 a.m. on October 11, 2022.

CHAIR'S REMARKS:

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

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

Ms. Holton also thanked Ms. Brenda Sandberg for her service to the TAC. Ms. Sandberg has accepted a new position and thus has resigned her committee position.

MINUTES:

ON A MOTION by Mr. John Pocius and seconded by Mr. Alan Blahovec, CCPM, and approved, the Minutes of the July 19, 2022, TAC Business Meeting were accepted. Mr. Elam Herr abstained.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

SECRETARY'S REMARKS:

Secretary Yassmin Gramian, P.E., was not in attendance.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION UPDATE:

Administration

Acting Deputy Secretary Michelle Jennings delivered a report for the Administration Deputate. She discussed the effects of centralized hiring across the Commonwealth, which has presented the Department with some challenges due to the tight labor market. The Administration Deputate also has expanded its outreach in Equity and Inclusion. She stated that the Department hired Ms. Nicole Tyler as its Director of Transportation Equity and that Ms. Tyler is working with the Bureau of Equal Opportunity to increase opportunities for disadvantaged businesses to participate with PennDOT.

Driver and Vehicle Services

Ms. Sarah Baker delivered a report for the Driver and Vehicle Services Deputate (DVS) on behalf of Deputy Secretary Kurt Myers. She provided an update on REAL ID. The REAL ID deadline of May 23, 2023, has not changed and is unlikely to do so.

Mr. Pocius stated that his recent experiences with ID renewal were good.

Highway and Bridge Program

Acting Deputy Secretary Mr. Michael Keiser, P.E., gave an update on the Highway Administration Deputate.

Mr. Keiser began with a report on winter maintenance services, stating that the budget for winter services is \$212 million, based on a five-year average. Temporary operators and diesel mechanics are hard to find. The Department is piloting a program using variable speed limit dynamic message signs to use in areas on interstates that are problem spots for white-outs during snow squalls.

Mr. Keiser discussed the budget, stating that the budget gives PennDOT the ability to match the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding. The Department will be able to let \$2.5 billion in projects for 2023 and likely will exceed the planned \$2.5 billion in projects for 2022. Mr. Keiser stated that inflation had been a factor. As an example, he said that as of October 6, the Department has bid 491 projects out of 727 planned projects total, and the value of those currently bid projects is about \$2.21 billion. The bids for 2022 would probably end up around \$2.6 billion to \$2.7 billion.

Mr. Keiser discussed the Digital Delivery program, which is projected to launch in 2025. In addition, he discussed workforce and labor issues, particularly for night-time work.

Mr. Pocius asked if project estimates matched project bids. Mr. Keiser stated that bids were 13 percent higher year-over-year.

Mr. Mike Carroll, P.E., asked if the Department would begin relying on indexing for prices or if the Department would continue paying inflationary prices when costs start to go down. He also asked if there was a benefit to stimulating specific industries in short supply in Pennsylvania, such as aluminum used for sign fabrication. Mr. Keiser stated that sustainable funding would enable PennDOT to do more planning for the future with our partners. On indexing for prices, Mr. Keiser noted that high prices were expected to continue into 2023. The Department is not penalizing contractors who can prove they are adversely affected by supply chain issues.

Mr. Mark Murawski asked if TROC's funding guidelines were outdated and needed to be updated regarding inflation. Mr. Keiser stated that with inflation, programs cost more, and future programs may have to be higher.

Multimodal Transportation

Acting Deputy Secretary Andrew Batson, AICP, was not in attendance.

Office of Planning

Mr. Mark Tobin delivered a report for the Office of Planning on behalf of the Deputy Secretary for Planning, Mr. Larry Shifflet. He reported that the State Transportation Commission adopted the \$84 billion 12-Year Program on August 17, 2022, and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program on September 29, 2022. Mr. Tobin mentioned August redistribution and that PennDOT received \$170 million in additional obligation authority.

WORKING SESSION:

Post-Pandemic Mobility and Rural Disparities Study

Mr. Aarion Franklin, from Michael Baker International, presented the draft final report to the TAC.

Mr. Franklin discussed the literature review to research public health crises affecting transportation and three surveys used for outreach to the public, planning partners, and transportation providers. Seventeen organizations were interviewed, which were used to develop insights from six perspectives.

The study discovered significant rural challenges, such as poor broadband access and a lack of affordable transportation options. Another implication is the "new normal," such as mobility as a service, increased E-Commerce, and teleworking. The lack of broadband access and affordable options in rural areas were significant for access to these services.

The study noted that for public transit, it might take five to eight years from the pandemic's start for passenger trips to return to 2019 levels. Part of this is due to passenger demand being reduced. The study recommended examining and redesigning some existing services and researching mobility as a service and micro transit for transit agencies. The study also noted a significant need to improve broadband service in rural Pennsylvania, and to examine ways to make public transportation more effective in rural communities.

Future research areas involve working with Federal partners on current formula-based grants that lack direct measures for accessibility and equity.

Mr. Alan Blahovec thanked the team for developing the study.

Mr. Nolan Ritchie noted the lack of appropriate transportation funding in several categories for rural parts of the Commonwealth. He asked if landmass could be considered for a funding distribution formula. Mr. Franklin stated that accessibility was part of that conversation.

Ms. Holton commented that frequency is essential for fixed-route transit, so service is available outside the regular commuting hours and that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) is researching micro transit for suburban areas.

Mr. Fred Strathmeyer asked if there was consideration for workforce planning in rural areas where jobs are not always transit accessible. Ms. Holton noted that micro transit could fill this need. Mr. Franklin stated that the study did discuss privately subsidized transit trips and that there are opportunities for these. Ms. Felicia Dell noted that rabbittransit does subscription services for businesses with transportation needs for their workforce.

ON A MOTION by Mr. Mark Murawski seconded by Mr. Alan Blahovec, and unanimously approved, the *Post-Pandemic Mobility and Rural Disparities Studies* study was approved and forwarded to the State Transportation Commission for approval at its December meeting.

Corridor Automated Speed Enforcement

Mr. Mike Davidson from Drive Engineering gave a status update on the Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE) white paper. The pilot program along Roosevelt Blvd. in Philadelphia began in 2018 and will sunset in December 2023. The TAC study is to provide an independent and objective assessment of the ASE program.

The TAC team interviewed the Philadelphia Parking Authority members, reviewed automated speed enforcement in other states, and examined considerations for expanding ASE into other corridors across the Commonwealth. Speeds are noted to have been reduced along the pilot corridor, along with crashes and fatalities.

The study is in the process of being finalized and will be presented to TAC on December 6, 2022.

Mr. Murawski asked if the study recommended lowering the ticket threshold to 6 miles from 11 miles an hour. Mr. Davidson stated that the study does recommend this. Mr. Herr stated that the statute says tickets can be given if it is 6 miles an hour over 55 mph, and under 55 mph, it is 10 miles an hour. He stated that there would be significant opposition from the legislature and the public if the threshold was lowered to 6 miles an hour. Mr. Murawski suggested this part of the study should be revisited, and Mr. Josiah Shelly stated it would likely be DOA on the House floor.

Mr. Ritchie noted that legislation on radar/LIDAR for police enforcement has never passed the General Assembly.

Mr. Carroll stated that the study team would consider Mr. Herr's comments as the white paper is finalized for the December TAC meeting.

Pennsylvania Aviation Needs Assessment and Strategic Action Plan

Mr. Keith Chase gave a status update for the PA Aviation Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan study, described as a strategic foundation for aviation. The study engaged with stakeholders through a series of regional listening sessions across the Commonwealth and is currently in its finalization stages.

The study reviewed revenue and revenue sources and reviewed funding needs for the state's 121 public-use airports. An annual estimated unmet need of \$35 to \$45 million was identified. Four scenarios were identified for potential funding sources using the TROC methodology. Potential fees and taxes include:

- Aircraft registration fee
- Package Delivery fees
- Jet fuel taxes
- Aviation Gas tax
- Aircraft Sales tax
- State sales tax
- "Sin" taxes

The study examined strategic development, in addition to funding sources, with eight groupings of over 30 issues and opportunities for development.

The study is scheduled to wrap up and be ready for presentation to the TAC at its December meeting and then forwarded to the State Transportation Commission for its December 14, 2022, meeting.

Transportation Performance Report

Mr. Brian Funkhouser gave a brief update on the Transportation Performance Report (TPR). This latest TPR will be the sixth TPR conducted. Major report headings for the TPR are

- Safety
- Mobility
- Preservation
- Accountability
- Funding
- Freight

Freight is noted to be a new report heading for the TPR. Performance measures from the Freight Movement Plan, which will be available in November, will be incorporated into the TPR.

The task force has interviewed PennDOT's Deputy Secretaries and is currently engaging with PennDOT staff at the bureau level. The report is due for completion at the February 2023 TAC meeting.

Study Selection Process

Mr. Funkhouser also delivered a report for the 2023 TAC Study Topic Identification Process. Study topic forms were provided with the TAC meeting package and are due on November 10. The new ideas will be presented at the December 6, 2022, meeting with a digital survey due on December 20. The top study or studies will be selected for advancement at the February 6, 2023, TAC meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Mr. Murawski asked about a mileage-based user fee as a long-term funding source and if PennDOT was working toward that. Ms. Sarah Clark stated that the Department is developing a pilot to study mileage-based user fees for electric vehicles and has presented this to the legislature.

Advisory Committees Discussion: Motor Carrier Safety Advisory Committee

Mr. Ted Leonard and Ms. Mary Gaiski delivered a presentation for the Motor Carrier Safety Advisory Committee (MCSAC). MCSAC was established in 2001 for the purpose of assessing, evaluating, and recommending standards for the safe operation of motor carriers in the state.

The Governor appoints 24 public members in addition to the Secretary of Transportation and the Chairs of the Public Utility Commission, Turnpike Commission, Majority and Minority Chairs for the House and Senate Transportation committees, and the Commissioner of the State Police.

MCSAC delivers an annual report and holds quarterly meetings. The committee has played an essential role in updating state agencies and the legislature on programs and projects that impact motor carrier safety, especially weather event vehicle restriction plans.

The committee acts as a sounding board for public agency planning and policy. In addition, the committee holds a Commercial Vehicle Safety Symposium, which is led by the PA State Police. Mr. Leonard stated that truck parking had become a significant safety issue across the Commonwealth.

The committee is looking to update its membership, fill/update officer positions, review committee activities, and align with new powers and duties.

Mr. Murawski asked if MCASC should work with a TAC sponsor to study a specific problem, such as truck parking. Ms. Rebecca Oyler, stated she would sponsor a study for TAC as a TAC member.

Proposed Legislation Discussion

Ms. Holton briefly discussed proposed legislation and how TAC would discuss it in the future. Mr. Ritchie stated that the legislature is currently working on autonomous vehicles. Mr. Sam Arnold stated that TAC feedback would be useful and valuable.

NEXT MEETING:

The next TAC business meeting is scheduled to be held virtually on **Tuesday, December 6, 2022.**

ADJOURNMENT:

ON A MOTION by Mr. John Pocius and seconded by Mr. Alan Blahovec, and unanimously approved, the TAC meeting was adjourned at 12:04 p.m.

Attendance from the TAC Business Meeting
October 11, 2022

1. Ms. Jody Holton, AICP, Chair
2. Mr. Mark Murawski, Vice-Chair
3. Mr. Rodney Bender, alternate for Ms. Gladys Brown Dutrieuille, TAC member
4. Mr. John Kashatus, alternate for Mr. Eric Hagarty, TAC Member
5. Mr. Nolan Ritchie, alternate for Senator Wayne Langerholc Jr., TAC member
6. Mr. Sam Arnold, alternate for Senator Tim Kearney, TAC member
7. Ms. Tiffany Landis, alternate for Secretary Ramez Ziadeh, TAC Member
8. Mr. Fred Strathmeyer, alternate for Secretary Russell Redding, TAC Member
9. Mr. Josiah Shelley, alternate for Representative Tim Hennessey, TAC member
10. Ms. Meredith Biggica, alternate for Representative Mike Carroll, TAC member
11. Mr. Michael Carroll, P.E., TAC Member
12. Mr. Alan Blahovec, CCPM, TAC member
13. Ms. Rebecca Oyler, TAC member
14. Ms. Felicia Dell, TAC member
15. Mr. Ronald Wagenmann, TAC member
16. Mr. John Pocius, TAC member
17. Mr. Ashley Porter, TAC member
18. Dr. Larry Nulton, TAC member
19. Ms. Michelle Jennings, PennDOT
20. Mr. Michael Keiser, P.E., PennDOT
21. Ms. Sarah Clark, PennDOT
22. Ms. Sarah Baker, PennDOT
23. Mr. Shane Rice, PennDOT
24. Ms. Natasha Fackler, PennDOT
25. Mr. Brian Hare, P.E., PennDOT
26. Ms. Karen Heath, PennDOT
27. Mr. Daniel Keane, PennDOT
28. Mr. Mark Tobin, PennDOT
29. Mr. Brian Sharkey, PennDOT
30. Mr. Terry Pinder, PennDOT
31. Mr. Brian Walter, PennDOT

32. Ms. Jessica Clark, PennDOT
33. Mr. Nate Walker, PennDOT
34. Mr. Brian Funkhouser, Michael Baker Int'l
35. Mr. Aarion Franklin, Michael Baker Int'l
36. Mr. Mike Davidson, Drive Engineering
37. Mr. Keith Chase, Gannett Fleming
38. Mr. Steve Buckley, Kimley & Horn
39. Mr. Matt Smoker, FHWA
40. Mr. Ted Leonard, MCASC, Chair
41. Ms. Mary Gaiski, MCASC