



*Lackawanna/Luzerne Transportation Study  
Metropolitan Planning Organization*

*www.lltsmpo.com*

**FINAL MINUTES OF THE**  
**LACKAWANNA-LUZERNE TRANSPORTATION STUDY**  
**PUBLIC MEETING OF THE COMBINED TECHNICAL**  
**AND COORDINATING COMMITTEES**  
**Jan. 8, 2020**

Following are the final minutes of the Lackawanna-Luzerne Transportation Study (LLTS) public meeting of the Combined Technical and Coordinating Committees, held 10:00 AM on Jan. 8, 2020 in the Barry J. Centini Room at the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton International Airport in Avoca, Pennsylvania. These minutes were adopted by the Committees on April 15, 2020.

The LLTS Combined Technical and Coordinating Committees meeting was held on Wednesday, Jan. 8, 2020 in the Barry J. Centini Room at the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton International Airport in Avoca, PA.

Kristin Mulkerin and Dean Roberts of PennDOT Central Office both joined the meeting via conference call.

Steve Pitoniak, Chairman of the Technical Committee, stated for the record that he did advertise in the Scranton Times-Tribune and Citizens' Voice newspapers that the Technical and Coordinating Committees would meet in a combined session today in accordance with the provisions of the Sunshine Law and Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act.

Letters were recently received from Mayor Wayne Evans and City Engineer, John Pocius stating that David Osborne would serve as Scranton's voting member on the Coordinating and Technical Committees today.

A letter was also received from newly-inaugurated Mayor George Brown re-designating Attilio "Butch" Frati as the permanent proxy for the City of Wilkes-Barre on the Coordinating and Technical Committees.

Proxy representatives noted to be in attendance included:

(for the Coordinating Committee):

- Alan Wufsus for Jeffrey Cusat, Member from City of Hazleton
- David Osborne for Wayne Evans, Member from City of Scranton
- Butch Frati for George Brown, Member from City of Wilkes-Barre

(for the Technical Committee):

- Butch Frati for George Brown, Member from City of Wilkes-Barre
- David Osborne for Wayne Evans, Member from City of Scranton
- Ralph Sharp for Jeffrey Cusat, Hazleton City Transit Member
- Alan Baranski for Jeff Box, Northeast Pennsylvania (NEPA) Alliance Member

A full list of committee members and proxies is appended to these minutes.

Mr. Pitoniak welcomed everyone, and asked for self-introductions.

### **ITEM #1: PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Pitoniak invited anyone attending from the general public to provide comments. There was no commentary from the public.

## **ITEM #2A: APPROVAL OF OCTOBER MEETING MINUTES**

Mr. Pitoniak suggested the committees consider a vote to adopt the minutes from their last combined meeting held October 2, 2019, unless members had edit suggestions.

Sue Hazelton offered a correction to the last sentence on Page 3: The County had undertaken the subject inspection rather than PennDOT.

Chris Chapman said staff had received an e-mail from Coordinating Committee member Matt Smoker (Federal Highway Administration) with corrections for Page 6. Mr. Chapman had also recently e-mailed Matthew Jones a spelling correction.

Mr. Pitoniak noted that another clarification was needed on Page 4 regarding the description of the motor vehicle fee.

Mr. Pitoniak entertained a motion from the Technical Committee – on condition that staff makes the necessary corrections – to endorse and finalize the October minutes. Chris Chapman made this motion, with Alan Baranski seconding, and carried. David Pedri entertained a motion on behalf of the Coordinating Committee. Butch Frati made this motion, with Alan Wufsus seconding, and carried.

## **ITEM #2B – TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)**

Steve Fisher highlighted some adjustments to the Federal Fiscal Year 2019 TIP. These were sent out to all committee members in advance. These are modifications which involve moving funding due to cost shifts, projects schedules, etc.

The complete list of TIP modifications is posted here:

<http://www.lltsmpo.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/January-2020-Actions.pdf>

Mr. Fisher noted that the TIP changes were modifications, not amendments, and would not require a vote.

## **ITEM #2C – SAFETY PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

Dean Roberts gave a slideshow on Pennsylvania's Safety Performance Measures:

<http://www.lltsmpo.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Safety-Performance-Measures.pdf>

The State missed its 2018 safety targets. Now the State is reducing by 1% its goal for the reduction in fatalities. By February, the State needs all metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) such as LLTS to endorse this goal.

Mr. Pitoniak said that the targets for serious injuries are going up, but this was due to a glitch in how past data was collected. Mr. Roberts concurred, and said the State recently re-defined what constitutes a serious crash injury.

On behalf of the Technical Committee, Heath Eddy made a motion to approve the Safety Performance Measures goals, with John Petrini seconding, and carried.

On behalf of the Coordinating Committee, Robert Fiume made a motion to approve the goals, with Richard Roman seconding, and carried.

### **ITEM #2D – UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP)**

Mr. Pitoniak announced that the final draft of the 2020-2022 update to the UPWP had been generated after weeks of work on the part of staff. This is the two-year contract and program of work LLTS undertakes in coordination with PennDOT. The document was circulated to committee members before the meeting via e-mail. Mr. Pitoniak invited Mr. Petrini to discuss some of the changes to the document since its last iteration.

Mr. Petrini explained that instead of 5 main tasks (and 23 subtasks) the new version is trimmed down to 3 main tasks (and 5 subtasks). This was to make the document more accurate in reflecting the actual work anticipated to be completed. The feedback received from FHWA and PennDOT Central Office was positive.

On behalf of the Coordinating Committee, Mr. Pedri entertained a motion to approve and endorse the 2020-2022 UPWP update presented by staff. This motion was made by Mr. Frati, seconded by Richard Roman, and carried.

Mr. Pedri commended the transportation planning staffs of both counties, and said it was nice to have this strong collaboration. He said Luzerne County recruited Mr. Petrini and Mr. Chapman as former staffers with Lackawanna County, and said they are doing a great job.

The 2020-2022 UPWP will eventually be posted on the LLTS website after final approval is received from PennDOT Central Office.

### **ITEM #3A – COMMENCEMENT OF WINTER PROJECTS**

Mr. Pitoniak presented the bridge and roadway improvement projects expected to let between January and March 2020 in Lackawanna County with the following slideshow:  
<http://www.lltsmpo.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/LET-projects-1.8.20.pdf>

Continuing with the slideshow, Mr. Petrini presented the projects expected to let this winter in Luzerne County. He asked if there were any questions or comments. Hearing none, the committees moved forward to the next discussion item.

### **ITEM #3B – TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES (TA) SET-ASIDES**

In discussing the TA Set-Asides program, Mr. Pitoniak noted that the State provides funding for projects, and the MPO provides supplemental funding. We have been looking to see if there will be another round of funding available from the State.

Mr. Roberts said he anticipated there would be \$800,000 available for LLTS for each two-year TIP equaling \$400,000 per year. In discussions with Chris Metka, the State's TA Set-Asides coordinator, he says there will also likely be a statewide pot of funds that could be applied for totaling approximately \$5,000,000.

Mr. Pitoniak said that LLTS traditionally has tried to award at least one project in each of our two Counties in late spring or early summer. He suggested this be an item for continued discussion at the next LLTS committee meetings in April. Applications should be prepared by interested parties so they can be submitted for consideration of the regional pot of funds as well as the statewide pot.

### **ITEM #3C – CERTIFICATION REVIEW**

Mr. Chapman announced that LLTS's certification review will occur on Jan. 29 (full day) and Jan. 30 (half day). Committee members and the general public are invited to attend. The certification review is an opportunity for federal partners to review the work of the MPO to ensure it is compliant with federal law. These partners include the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Mr. Chapman reminded the committees the last time LLTS underwent its certification review was in 2016. The review went well, but there was one negative finding: federal officials noted that the MPO had not issued its annual report of federally-obligated transportation improvement grant projects. As a result, County planning staffers have worked to ensure this report is issued in a timely fashion every year since. The next obligations report (for FFY 2019) is expected to be issued before the end of January. This should keep us in good standing.

Mr. Pitoniak said he planned to advertise these coming meetings in the region's two major newspapers.

Mr. Baranski asked about the status of LLTS regarding CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality).

Mr. Pitoniak said that CMAQ funding would be discontinuing. LLTS will still need to issue a CMAQ report, but it will not need to contain an air pollution modeling component.

Marie Bishop noted that there will be a few CMAQ projects left for 2020. Mr. Pitoniak noted that those projects are comprised of Park-and-Rides.

### **ITEM #3D – ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE (EJ) WORKSHOP**

Mr. Chapman said that a workshop on Environmental Justice would be occurring on Jan. 23 at Albright College. Plans have been made for the workshop to be attended by Mr. Pitoniak, Mr. Petrini, and Mr. Chapman so staff can be up to speed on this topic.

Mr. Pitoniak explained that plans for Title VI (EJ and nondiscrimination) are required to be produced every few years. We wrap this effort into the production of the Long-Range Transportation Plan so both components can be published around the same time.

### **ITEM #3E – HISTORIC METAL TRUSS BRIDGES**

Mr. Chapman said Luzerne County is trying to scope whether it can preserve some of its metal truss bridges. There are eight (8) historic metal truss bridges in Luzerne County. Mr. Chapman is working with the Luzerne County Engineer Larry Plesh in an effort to rank/ prioritize them.

### **ITEM #3F – MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION FUND (MTF)**

Mr. Petrini presented a slideshow on MTF applications:

<http://www.lltsmpo.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/LLTS-MTF-Applications.pdf>

Projects may be reviewed until the Jan. 17 deadline.

### **ITEM #3G – SPIKE FUNDING PROJECT**

Mr. Fisher brought to the attention of the group the SPIKE funding project involving the State Route 115 bridge over Interstate 81 in Wilkes-Barre Township, Luzerne County.

Ms. Hazelton mentioned that this project will also involve ramp improvements.

### **ITEM #4A – SCRANTON/ WILKES-BARRE DOWNTOWNS BICYCLE/ PEDESTRIAN NETWORK PLAN**

Mr. Pitoniak announced that a public outreach meeting on the bike/ ped study will occur at 5:00 PM on Jan. 14 at the Lackawanna Heritage Valley offices/ 213 Railroad Avenue/ Scranton.

Mr. Chapman said that another outreach meeting will occur at 5:00 PM on Jan. 21 at the Arnaud C. Marts Center/ Room 214/ Wilkes University/ 292 S. Franklin Street/ Wilkes-Barre.

The developing bike/ ped study will be presented and discussed. All are welcome to attend.

#### **ITEM #4B – PENNDOT CONNECTS**

Mr. Fisher told the group that PennDOT Central Office recently gave a briefing to the staff of PennDOT District 4-0 on the latest capabilities of PennDOT Connects (an interactive database of information on transportation infrastructure improvement projects useful for sharing/ gathering input from the public and government stakeholders). He said PennDOT officials are looking to attend additional meetings of municipal governments to expose them more to this program.

Alan Wufsus said Hazleton City officials recently met and discussed PennDOT Connects, and enjoyed the interaction. He said they learned a lot about roadway improvement planning and how considerations over the location of underground utilities can influence this.

Mr. Fisher said more meetings will be planned to occur as part of the Long-Range Transportation Plan development efforts.

#### **ITEM #4C – FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION**

Mr. Chapman provided an update regarding the bi-county effort to update the functional classification of roadways within LLTS's jurisdiction. He said Luzerne County staff have drafted a spreadsheet with all of the data thought to be necessary to expedite this project.

Mr. Jones said that Lackawanna County staff have compiled approximately 80% of the data thought to be required for their spreadsheet. The data will eventually be shared with PennDOT officials to check on whether it is complete, or if additional information will be needed to finalize the process.

#### **ITEM #4D – SCRANTON TO HOBOKEN RAIL RESUMPTION**

Mr. Pitoniak provided an update regarding the years-long effort to re-establish commuter rail services between Scranton, PA and Hoboken, NJ. There are plans to produce a video in coordination with State Senator John Blake's office as part of a public relations blitz in March or April. Staff is also trying to coordinate a meeting with New Jersey transit officials so the parties can exchange information on what's happening on both sides of the state border to advance this project. Extensive preliminary engineering work has occurred.

Mr. Pedri asked whether the full track still exists between the two endpoints. Mr. Pitoniak said that the entire rail line remains intact from Scranton to the New Jersey border. From there, 14 miles of track need to be re-established to Andover. The structural integrity of two bridges needs to be brought up to standard; an engineering study has shown that these costs are not fatal for resuming use of the Delaware River Viaduct and the Paulinskill Viaduct over which the tracks run.

#### **ITEM #4E – TIP UPDATE**

Mr. Roberts brought everyone's attention to the draft TIP for FFY 2021 which was displayed using the projector (file too large to post on LLTS website). The document was shared with committee members beforehand via e-mail, and is available by contacting Mr. Roberts or county planning staff.

A conference call will occur at 7:30 AM on Jan. 15 with PennDOT officials and county staff to review the TIP in more detail.

#### **ITEM #4F – DEVELOPMENT OF THE BI-COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND THE LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRTP)**

Mr. Pitoniak explained that an effort was underway to update both the Long Range Transportation Plan and the Regional (Comprehensive) Plan together. These plans need updating every 5 years. The target date for completion is Feb. 2021. A contract for hiring the selected consultant, Michael Baker, was drafted by planning staff. This contract has been approved by the Luzerne County Solicitor. Heath Eddy will sign the contract in his capacity as Executive Director of Planning and Zoning for Luzerne County, and then it will be forwarded to the Luzerne County Council for their approval and authorization.

Update of the hazard mitigation plans will be performed separately.

#### **ITEM #4G – APRIL MEETINGS**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Technical Committee will occur on April 1, and the next meeting of the Coordinating Committee will be April 15. Locations are to be determined. Robert Fiume offered for consideration use of the Lackawanna County Intermodal Center in Scranton. Staff will announce the final locations in advance of the meetings.

#### **ITEM #5 – OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Pitoniak asked whether there was any other business committee members wished to discuss.

Mr. Pedri mentioned there is an effort underway to renew the motor vehicle fee enacted by Luzerne County in 2017. If not renewed, the fee will eventually expire. He said he wished to coordinate this matter with PennDOT Central Office.

Mr. Roberts offered to meet with Mr. Pedri along with PennDOT Deputy Secretary for Planning, Larry Shifflet on Feb. 11 at 6:00 PM to discuss.

Mr. Pitoniak said he would bring the matter of motor vehicle fees to the attention of the newly inaugurated Lackawanna County Commissioners.



## **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Pitoniak entertained a motion to adjourn. Ms. Hazelton made this motion on behalf of the Technical Committee, with Mr. Eddy seconding, and carried.

On behalf of the Coordinating Committee, Mr. Pedri entertained a motion to adjourn. Mr. Fiume made this motion, with Mr. Wufsus seconding, and carried.

The meeting adjourned.

LACKAWANNA-LUZERNE TRANSPORTATION  
STUDY MEETING - COORDINATING COMMITTEE  
Jan. 8, 2020

<u>COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEMBERS</u>	<u>MEMBER PRESENT</u>	<u>ABSENT &amp; NO PROXY</u>	<u>PROXY PRESENT</u>
<u>PENNDOT</u>			
Richard N. Roman, District 4-0 Office	X		
Kristin Mulkerin, Central Office	X		
<u>LACKAWANNA COUNTY</u>			
Vacant		X	
Vacant		X	
<u>LUZERNE COUNTY</u>			
C. David Pedri, County Manager, Committee Chair – (Heath Eddy, Executive Director of Planning & Zoning – Permanent Proxy)	X		
<u>CITY OF HAZLETON</u>			
Jeffrey L. Cusat, Mayor - (Alan Wufsus, Hazleton City Engineering Technician – Permanent Proxy)			X
<u>CITY OF SCRANTON</u>			
Wayne Evans, Mayor – (John Pocius, LaBella Associates – Permanent Proxy... David Osborne, Alternate Proxy on Jan. 8, 2020)			X
<u>CITY OF WILKES-BARRE</u>			
George Brown, Mayor – (Attilio “Butch” Frati, Director of Operations – Permanent Proxy)			X
<u>TRANSIT REPRESENTATIVE – LACKAWANNA COUNTY</u>			
Robert Fiume, COLTS Director, Committee Vice-Chair	X		

TRANSIT REPRESENTATIVE – LUZERNE COUNTY

Lee Horton, LCTA Interim Executive Director – (Kathy Bednarek, LCTA Grants Coordinator – Permanent Proxy) X

AVIATION REPRESENTATIVE

Carl Beardsley, Wilkes-Barre/Scranton International Airport Director X

\*PA NORTHEAST REGIONAL RAILROAD AUTHORITY

Larry Malski, President X

\*FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

Matt Smoker, Transportation Planning Program Manager X

\*FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA)

Timothy Lidiak, Project Manager X

\*FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

Lori Pagnanelli, District Office Manager X

\*SENATOR BLAKE’S OFFICE (LACKAWANNA)

Larry West, Regional Director X

\*Non-Voting Members

LLTS Technical Committee Members Present:

- Steve Pitoniak, Lackawanna County Regional Planning Commission, Committee Chair
- Susan Hazelton, PennDOT District 4-0 Assistant Executive for Design
- Gerard Babinski, PennDOT District 4-0 District Bridge Engineer
- Dean Roberts, PennDOT Central Office, Committee Vice-Chair
- Lee Horton, Luzerne County Transit Representative, Luzerne County Transportation Authority (LCTA)
- Heath Eddy, Luzerne County Planning Commission
- John Petrini, Luzerne County
- Chris Chapman, Luzerne County
- Attilio “Butch” Frati, Proxy for Wilkes-Barre City Mayor, George Brown
- David Osborne, Alternate Proxy for Scranton City Mayor, Wayne Evans
- Ralph Sharp, Proxy for Hazleton City Transit Representative, Mayor Jeffrey L. Cusat
- Alan Baranski, Proxy for Northeast Pennsylvania (NEPA) Alliance Member, Jeff Box
- Stephen Mykulyn, Lackawanna Aviation Representative

\*Non-Voting Members

LLTS Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) Members Present:

Patrick Williams, Clarks Summit Borough Council  
Ted Wampole, Luzerne County Convention and Visitors Bureau  
Bernie McGurl, Lackawanna River Corridor Association  
Owen Worozbyt, Lackawanna Heritage Valley  
Stephanie Milewski, North Pocono Trails Association  
Aaron Whitney, Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce

Non-Members Present:

Kathy Bednarek, Luzerne County Transportation Authority (LCTA)  
Matthew Jones, Lackawanna County Planning  
Jay Schectman, Lackawanna County Planning  
Marie Bishop, PennDOT District 4-0 Planning and Programming  
Steve Fisher, PennDOT District 4-0 Planning and Programming  
John Frankosky, PennDOT District 4-0 Planning and Programming  
Emma Pugh, PennDOT District 4-0 Planning and Programming  
Julianne Lawson, PennDOT District 4-0 Planning and Programming  
Jason Petch, PennDOT District 4-0  
Michael Taluto, PennDOT District 4-0  
Kate McMahon, NEPA Alliance  
Joe Corcoran, Lackawanna Heritage Valley  
Barbara Idhaw, Greenman-Pedersen Inc. (GPI)  
Jim Brady, STV Incorporated