

Lackawanna/Luzerne MPO

Transportation Study

Technical and Coordinating

Committee Meeting

January 26, 2022 1:00 PM

Minutes

Dean Roberts opened the meeting at 1:03.

Mr. Chapman noted that the meeting will be recorded.

Mr. Roberts noted that, per the Sunshine Act requirements, the meeting and agenda was advertised in the Scranton Times, Citizens Voice and Hazleton Standard Speaker and meeting and agenda were posted on the LLTS MPO website 24 hours prior to the meeting.

Mr. Roberts mentioned Marie Bishop is a proxy for Sue Hazelton for the Technical Committee. Mr. Chapman mentioned that John Pocius is a proxy for Scranton Mayor Paige Cagnetti for the Coordinating and Technical Committees and Matt Jones is a proxy for Romilda Crocarno on the Coordinating Committee.

No requests for access for public comment from Lackawanna and Luzerne County.

Chris Chapman conducted roll call for Coordinating Committee, Technical Committee, TAC Committee and non-members present.

1. Public Comment

Discussion of items not on the agenda. No public comment was offered.

Action Items

2a. IJJA Overview

Kristin Mulkerin offered a review of the new transportation infrastructure bill, Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IJJA) now being referred to as Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). Nationally, starting in 2022 to 2026 it adds \$351 Billion over 5 years for highway and bridges. Funding will include \$91B for Transit, \$12B for Highway Safety, and \$66B for Passenger Rail. The Bill creates a \$27B Special Bridge Program and the creation of a \$5B special Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure formula program. \$118B will be transferred from the General Fund to the Highway Trust Fund. It does not provide a long-term solution to funding shortfalls.

For PA, \$4 Billion over 5 years is available for highway and bridges. With this money it gives us \$13B overall for the five years for highway and bridges.

Typically, a 20 percent match is required and that would require about \$1 Billion in additional state funds to take full advantage of the new funding. This does not satisfy our overall \$8B highway and bridge funding needs.

The financial guidance workgroup met in November and decided that existing formulas will be utilized for distribution of funds and discussed a new formula for the federal bridge funds. Estimates were provided to the MPOs and RPOs in early December to integrate into the draft program.

Also in December, FHWA announced the apportionment of the Federal Aid Highway programs authorized for FFY 2022. This information was consistent with the preliminary estimates for NHPP, Safety, HSIP and CMAQ funds. We still don't have supplementary tables to show the distribution of the set aside amounts from the surface transportation block grant program (STP).

In January, FHWA provided additional information on the new formula bridge program, Bridge Formula Program Implementation Guidance and Apportionment Information. This set of funds is being referred to as BRIP. Of these funds, there is a set aside that will be utilized on TIPs as additional funds to the off system bridges, referred to as BOF.

Awaiting information from FHWA on program eligibility for the new Protect Program, which focuses resiliency and Carbon Reduction program. Also, awaiting on estimates from FTA on the 2022 and 2023 programs.

Dean Roberts presented a chart showing the expected additional federal funds from IJA and to the TIP as a line item, which would need an amendment. He stated that a large portion of this funding will likely go the Casey Highway project.

Dean Robert asked the Technical Committee for a motion to add the additional funds from the IJA to the FFY 2022 TIP.

Matt Jones moved to add the additional funds to the 2022 TIP, second by John Pocius, motion carried.

Dean Roberts asked for a motion from the Coordinating Committee to add additional funds from IJA to the 2022 TIP.

Rich Roman moved to add the additional funds to the 2022 TIP, second by Bob Fiume, motion carried.

2b. Nominations for Coordinating Committee Chairperson

Rich Roman outlined that at the July 2021 meeting, we named Bob Fiume as new chair of the Coordinating Committee. Since Bob has changed jobs we have a vacancy. We decided to have a formal vote for the positions on both committees.

Rich Roman nominated **Bob Fiume** for Committee Chair.

Brenda Sacco second, motion carried.

2c. Nominations for Coordinating Committee Vice-Chair

Bob Fiume nominated **Rich Roman** as Vice Chair, second by John Pocius, motion carried.

2d. Nominations for Technical Committee Chairperson

Mr. Roberts asked for a motion to nominate a Technical Committee Chair.
Matt Jones moved to nominate **Dean Roberts** as Chair of Technical Committee, second by,
Butch Frati, motion carried.

2e. Nominations for Technical Committee Vice-Chair

Mr. Roberts asked for a motion to nominate **Sue Hazelton** as Vice Chair of the Technical Committee.
Butch Frati moved to nominate Sue Hazelton as Vice Chair, Barb Idhaw second, motion carried.

2f. Approval of October 6th Combined Technical and Coordinating Committee Meeting Minutes

Mr. Roberts asked for a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the October 6th meeting minutes.

Mr. Pocius moved to approve the October 6th minutes, second by Mr. Jones, motion carried.

Mr. Fiume asked for a motion from the Coordinating Committee to approve the October 6th meeting minutes.

Rich Roman moved to approve the October 6th minutes, second by Kristin Mulkerin, motion carried.

[LLTS MPO October 6th Minutes](#)

2g. Current TIP and Actions

Steve Fisher did not detail any individual action items.

[Current TIP](#) and [Actions](#)

2h. SR 339 Construction Phase Amendment

Steve Fisher detailed a proposed TIP amendment asked the committee to add federal funding the SR 339 Construction phase. Paving on SR 339 from SR 3015 to SR 93 in Nescopeck Borough.

The amendment for SR 339 is to add \$315k in STP Urban funds from the highway reserve line item.

Dean Roberts asked the Technical Committee to approve the amendment detailed by Steve Fisher.

Marie Bishop moved to approve the amendment for additional federal funds for SR 339, second by John Pocius.

Bob Fiume asked for a motion from the Coordinating Committee to approve the amendment for additional federal funding for SR 339.

Rich Roman moved to approve the amendment, second by Butch Frati, motion carried.

[SR 339 added TIP Funding](#)

2i. Reaffirmation of 4 Transit TIP Amendments

Chris Chapman noted that there are four (4) Transit TIP amendments; two from Luzerne County Transportation Authority (LCTA), one for County of Lackawanna Transit Authority (COLTS) and one for Hazleton Public Transit (HPT). These were sent out as an e-vote prior to this meeting and all were approved. This needs to be affirmed by the Coordinating Committee.

Bob Fiume asked for a motion from the Coordinating Committee for a motion to reaffirm the four Transit TIP amendments.

Brenda Sacco moved to reaffirm the TIP Amendments, second by Rich Roman, motion carried.

[LCTA MPMS# 115456](#)

[HPT MPMS# 112214](#)

[COLTS Bus and Facility Maintenance](#)

[LCTA MPMS# 115456 – 2nd Amendment](#)

2j. Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Chris Chapman summarized that the UPWP was emailed to all committees last month for review by members, The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) needs to be reviewed and approved by the end of January. It was sent to FHWA, FTA and PennDOT Central Office, and public comment ended last week, with no comment. There was one update from the Bureau of Planning and Research in Central Office who noted an error on submission date for HPMS segments. The change was made and there were no other updates to the document. Dean Roberts commended Mr. Chapman on behalf of Matt Smoker for the work on the document.

Dean Roberts asked for a Motion from the Technical Committee to approve the 2022-2024 UPWP.

Butch Frati moved to approve the 2022-2024 UPWP, second by Matt Jones, motion carried.

Bob Fiume asked for motion from the Coordinating Committee to approve the 2022-2024 UPWP.

Rich Roman moved to approve 2022-2024 UPWP, second by John Pocius. Motion carried.

[2022-2024 UPWP Update](#)

2k. 2022 Safety Target Settings (PM1)

Dean Roberts offered a review of our safety targets, Performance Measure 1 (PM1). This is the 5th year we are to bringing the targets to the committee to approve PM1. LLTS MPO has decided to support statewide targets and a letter will be sent to that effect.

Five measures make up the targets, number of fatalities, fatality rate, number of serious injuries, serious injury rate and number of non-motorized fatalities & serious injuries. The state did not meet its targets and will have to develop an HSIP plan as a result.

Dean Roberts made a motion for the LLTS MPO Technical Committee to support the statewide goals (for PM1) of the following targets; 1% reduction of fatality and 0% increase in serious injury.

Second by Brenda Sacco, motion carried.

Bob Fiume asked for a motion from the Coordinating Committee to support the statewide targets for PM1 safety targets.

Rich Roman moved to support the statewide targets for PM1 safety targets, second by John Pocius, motion carried.

[Safety Target Setting \(PM1\)](#)

Discussion Items

3a. PennDOT Pathways/IIJA

Kristin Mulkerin stated that all candidate projects (bridge tolling) from the PennDOT Pathways program have completed their diversion workshops with their stakeholders. Also, seven of the nine projects have completed their 30-day public comment period.

3b. Winter Project Commencement

Jay Schectman presented an overview of the 13 upcoming Let projects for this quarter:

- MPMS# 67471 SR 92 over Lewis Creek Bridge Replacement
- MPMS# 69210 SR 8015 Ramp F over Leggett's Creek Bridge Rehabilitation
- MPMS# 111478 Wilkes University Pedestrian Safety Improvements
- MPMS# 8235 SR 107 over SB Tunkhannock Creek Bridge Rehabilitation
- MPMS# 111469 Dickson City Main Street Safety Improvements
- MPMS# 67366 SR 309 over SR 2022 and Railroad Bridge Preservation
- MPMS# 67417 SR 309 over Wilkes-Barre Boulevard Bridge Rehabilitation
- HPMS# 79594 SR 309 over Main Street Bridge Preservation
- MPMS# SR 3007 over Little Wapwallopen Creek Bridge Replacement
- MPMS# 68966 SR 1012 over branch of Harvey's Creek Bridge Replacement
- MPMS# 61813 SR 6 (Robert P. Casey Highway) to SR 6006 Highway Restoration
- MPMS# 112837 SR 29 over Susquehanna River & RR Bridge Preservation
- MPMS# 8868 SR 3014 (Dump Hill Road) over Nescopeck Creek Bridge Replacement

[Winter Let Projects](#)

3c. Valley View Business Park Extension

Aaron Whitney from Scranton Lackawanna Industrial Building Company (SLIBCO) offered an overview of the options for the extension, between exit 3 and 4 of the Casey Highway. SLIBCO would like funding for the extension of Valley View Drive to be added to the TIP. Mr. Whitney reviewed three options from a feasibility study.

Option 1 (Red) uses the existing one way tunnel under Route 6, it is the least expensive option at \$14.4M proposes an extension of Valley View Drive about 6400 linear feet to meet the existing tunnel with traffic signals on each side (one-way) . Option 2 (Blue), extends Valley View Drive over to Laurel Run Creek with a concrete arch culvert. At Salem Road, there will be high volume driveway, traffic signals and turning lanes as well as at the two ramps on the Casey highway. This is the most expensive option at a cost of \$26M.

Option 3 (Green) is estimated at \$21M similar to Option 1 with addition of a new tunnel next to the existing tunnel, also extending Valley View Drive 6400 linear feet and constructing a new 170 linear feet tunnel. Also, traffic signals and turning lanes at Power Boulevard, PEI entrance and two ramps at the Casey highway. Mr. Whitney stated that there are agreements of sale in place for 4 parcels that will add

to traffic in the area. Archbald borough had 214 emergency calls in 2020 to present. Currently, emergency vehicles get on Casey highway to Jessup exit 3, up 247 to the park and around to get access. Of all three options, SLIBCO prefers Option 1, the least expensive option.

Dean Roberts stated that we are still behind in basic needs for maintenance and construction. Chris Chapman stated that the project is not on the Long-Range Transportation Plan. This is a viable project that should be discussed by the committee, separately. Rich Roman suggested that SLIBCO consider going to the developer to assist financially in the infrastructure improvements. Rich inquired whether traffic studies have been completed, which SLIBCO offered to share. Lot 30 is 44 acres and lot 36 is 38 acres. Rich asked if this is a state road, Aaron stated Archbald owns the road where lots 30 and 36 are. The developer and the borough could ask PennDOT for help. The size of development would require Traffic Impact (TIS) study. Please note that PennDOT participation would have to include all aspects, including roadway standards and guidelines.

[Valley View Business Park Extension](#)

3d. Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA)

Chris Chapman notes that 6 projects were reviewed in the two county area.

The projects in Luzerne County:

- a. West Hazleton Storm Water project – ineligible
- b. D & L Trail Project from Oliver Mills to Mountain Top
- c. Pittston City Trail Connection Project

In Lackawanna County:

- a. Dickson City Streetscape project from Eagle Lane to Dundaff Street
- b. Archbald Columbus Drive School Sidewalk project to Valley View School Complex
- c. Lackawanna Heritage Valley Authority Dickson City Rail Trail Connector

We expect to hear from the state later this year on the project awards. The TASA program is typically every two years. We exhausted all of our large MPO funds in the last round of the TASA program and these projects are only eligible for the statewide pot of funding.

Butch Frati noted that he will have to leave the meeting shortly.

3e. Multimodal Transportation Fund (MTF) Projects

Mr. Chapman noted that this is a similar program to TASA.

Luzerne County:

Bike/Ped Projects:

West Pittston Borough
Salem Township

Hazleton City – 2 projects

Highway and Bridge Projects:

Exeter Borough
Ross Township (submitted by Luzerne County)
Sugar Notch Borough
Yatesville Borough
Pittston Township
Plains Township (submitted by Geisinger)
Conyngham Borough

Lackawanna County:

Highway and Bridge Projects:

Olyphant Borough, Mid Valley Drive entire pavement reconstruction, bus shelters, bike lanes and sidewalks
Spring Brook Township, Aston Mountain Road reconstruction, paving and storm sewers

Ms. Donato stated that she would review the Lackawanna County projects. The MPO staff will review the projects by February 11th.

Progress Reports

4a. 2023-2026 TIP Update and Schedule

Dean Roberts stated that we had TIP review meetings with Central Office, District 4-0, FHWA and the each planning partner. Thanks to the district and planning partners for the good work that has been completed thus far.

Chris Chapman followed up. We had four TIP meetings with Central Office, FHWA and District 4-0. There was positive feedback, thanks to the District and Planning Partners on the good work that was done. Regional priorities, road safety reviews and PennDOT Connects success stories were discussed. Chris mentioned the many kudos were offered on the work and how well the MPO and PennDOT collaborated together. The 30-day public comment period will occur in June. We plan to approve the TIP at the July 6th MPO meeting.

4b. Scranton and Wilkes-Barre Bicycle/Pedestrian Network Plan

Mr. Chapman noted that there have been staff changes and we do not want this to fall off the radar. We had approval of the plan about 1 year ago, now we need implementation of the plan in Scranton and Wilkes-Barre.

Chris Chapman spoke with a representative from Wilkes-Barre City and consultant, Stephanie Milewski who has a personal and professional interest in this project. The MPO will coordinate meetings to follow up with implementation of the plan.

Mary Liz Donato spoke about Robert Kenney, new planner in Lackawanna County who rides his bike to work every day from Hanover Township to Scranton. Mr. Kenney will be an asset to the plan.

4c. PennDOT Connects Update

John Petrini sat in for Steve Fisher.

The next step is to continue to finalize the project list in Lackawanna and Luzerne County. We will move forward with e-mail correspondence spring. Based on the level of response to the outreach, a determination will be made to consider a regional Connects forum. Mr. Petrini asked that any projects be brought forward that are of interest to the MPO.

Matt Jones asked about the two bridges in Pittston, the Fort Jenkins Bridge and the Water Street Bridge and the possibility of a meeting of interested parties to discuss the options of the repair or replacement. Steve Fisher mentioned that PennDOT did meet with officials in Pittston and West Pittston when the PennDOT study of the bridges kicked off. We will reach out to the consultant for a status update.

4d. Update of Bylaws and Committee Structure

Chris Chapman offered that there have been multiple meetings with District 4-0, Central Office, FHWA and both counties on updating bylaws. There is an interest in condensing to one committee, we have been meeting with combined committees for a few years now. A draft has been laid out and both counties need to bring the proposals to their legal departments.

[Draft Bylaws LLTS MPO](#)

4e. Eastern PA Freight Alliance (EPFA) Freight Study

Chris Chapman presented that the MPO Committee agreed to fund the local match for the EPFA Freight Study. The LLTS MPO portion is over \$16K, UPWP funds will be used with labor and in kind services. The proposed schedule is as follows: RFP was to be released on January 7th and closes on February 4th. The proposals will be reviewed by all 10 Counties involved between February 7th and February 18th. Interviews with the potential consultants are planned between Feb 21st and March 4th. Selections should begin shortly after this.

All things being equal, the plan is to start the Study on or before April 1st. Supplemental funds were approved for \$350K including the local match. Following the meeting, an updated schedule was given and the RFP was released in February.

4f. Upcoming MPO Meetings

The upcoming meetings will be available with a virtual component.

All meetings are at 1:00 PM unless otherwise noted

- April 20th, 2022
- July 6th, 2022
- October 5th, 2022

5. Other Business

Charlie Altmiller, Butler Township Supervisor stated that they were looking for K-Route funding that was promised last year. They have two roads they would like funding for this year and upcoming years. The Township is growing with over 10k residents and a new housing development on Butler Drive is planned. Butler Township would consider a match of funds if that would be of help.

Chris Chapman mentioned that Butler Township did come to the MPO for funding along with other municipalities. The annual funding is \$400k. The staff reviews all projects and has discussed prioritizing the K-Route projects. No promises were made to Butler Township or the other municipalities that have inquired about K-Route funding.

Bob Fiume has been in contact with Charlie that he understand the needs. The projects are on the list, but there is a process.

Dean Roberts mentioned that we have more needs than funds. The project will be considered with other funding requests.

Matt Jones noted that Chris maintains a list of all requests. There are many requests competing for funds. It is a small pot of funding, but we do need to understand Butler Township's needs.

With no other business, Dean Roberts made a motion from the Technical Committee to adjourn the meeting. Chris Chapman seconded the motion.

Bob Fiume asked for a motion from the Coordinating Committee to adjourn the meeting.

Matt Jones moved to adjourn the meeting with a second from Bob Fiume.

Meeting adjourned.

**LACKAWANNA-LUZERNE TRANSPORTATION
STUDY MEETING
MPO TECHNICAL-COORDINATING COMMITTEES**

January 26, 2022

| <u>COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEMBERS</u> | <u>MEMBER PRESENT</u> | <u>ABSENT & NO PROXY</u> | <u>PROXY PRESENT</u> |
|--|----------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| <u>PENNDOT</u> | | | |
| Richard N. Roman, District 4-0 Office, Committee Vice-Chair | X | | |
| Kristin Mulkerin, Central Office | X | | |
| <u>LACKAWANNA COUNTY</u> | | | |
| <i>Vacant</i> (Board of Commissioners) | | | |
| Brenda N. Sacco, Director of Planning & Economic Development | X | | |
| <u>LUZERNE COUNTY</u> | | | |
| Romilda Crocamo, Esq., Acting County Manager (Matthew Jones, Executive Director of Luzerne County 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> | | | |
| Paige Cognetti, Mayor - (John Pocius, LaBella Associates - Permanent Proxy) | | | 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> | | | |
| VACANT | | | |
| <u>TRANSIT REPRESENTATIVE - LUZERNE COUNTY</u> | | | |
| Robert Fiume, LCTA (Luzerne County Transportation Authority) Executive Director (Committee Chair) | 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, Innovative Finance & Planning Implementation
Manager

X

***FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA)**

Timothy Lidiak, Project Manager

X

***FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION**

Lori Pagnanelli, District Office Manager

X

*Non-Voting Member

LLTS Technical Committee Members Present:

Dean Roberts,
PennDOT Central Office, **Committee Chair**
Susan Hazelton,
PennDOT District 4-0 Assistant District Executive for Design
Committee Vice-Chair (Marie Bishop, Proxy)
Gerard Babinski,
PennDOT District 4-0 District Bridge Engineer
Brenda Sacco,
Lackawanna County, Director of Planning and Economic Development
Barbara Idhaw,
Lackawanna County, Engineering Consultant, Greeman-Pederson, Inc.
Mary Liz Donato,
Lackawanna County, Planning Department Manager
Chris Chapman,
Luzerne County, Transportation Planner
John Pocius,
Proxy for Scranton City Mayor, Paige Cognetti, Engineering Consultant, LaBella Associates
Attilio “Butch” Frati
Proxy for Wilkes-Barre Mayor, George Brown, Director of Operations
Kathy Bednarek,
Luzerne County Transportation Authority, (LCTA) Grants Coordinator
Stephen Mykulyn,
Lackawanna County Aviation Representative
Matt Jones,
Executive Director, Luzerne County Planning and Zoning
Ralph Sharp,
Proxy for Mayor Cusat, Hazleton Public Transit Director
Jay Schectman,
Luzerne County, Transportation Planner
Butch Frati,
Proxy for Wilkes-Barre Mayor
Alan Baranski,
Permanent Proxy for Jeffrey Box, NEPA Alliance President/CEO
Matt Smoker,
FHWA Innovative Finance & Planning Implementation Manager

LLTS Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) Members Present:

Christine Dettore, DCNR
Denise Corcoran, ARCIL
Aaron Whitney, Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce
Bernie McGurl, Lackawanna River Corridor Association
Owen Worozbyt, Lackawanna Heritage Valley Association
Gary Jordan, Kings College

Non-Members Present:

Christine Dettore, DCNR
Steve Fisher, PennDOT District 4-0
Julianne Lawson, PennDOT District 4-0 Planning and Programming
Jessica Ruddy, PennDOT District 4-0
John Petrini, PennDOT District 4-0
Joe Corcoran, Lackawanna Heritage Valley Association
Kate McMahon, NEPA Alliance
Robert Kenney, Lackawanna County Planning
Mike Taluto, PennDOT District 4-0
Michael Grantner, STV
William Stone, Luzerne County Planning
Dave Johnson, Larson Design Group
Charlie Altmiller, Butler Township
Bill Richards, office of State Senator John Yudichak