

PENNSYLVANIA STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
BUSINESS MEETING  
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA  
DECEMBER 20, 2018



*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 a quarterly business meeting of the State Transportation Commission (STC) at 10:04 am on December 20, 2018, in Harrisburg, PA.

**ROLL CALL:**

**Commissioners Present in Person:**

1. Honorable Leslie Richards, Chairperson
3. Honorable Robert B. Pease, P.E., Vice Chair
4. Honorable Frank E. Paczewski
5. Honorable Ronald J. Drnevich
6. Honorable James D. Kingsborough
7. Honorable George M. Khoury
8. Honorable John C. Rafferty Jr.  
Mr. Nolan Ritchie, Alternate Present
9. Honorable John Taylor  
Mr. Eric Bugaile, Alternate Present
10. Honorable William Keller  
Ms. Meredith Biggica, Alternate Present

**Commissioners Present by Phone:**

2. Honorable Sharon L. Knoll

**Commissioners Not Present:**

1. Honorable Christina G. Cavalieri
2. Honorable John Sabatina

**MINUTES:**

**ON A MOTION** by Mr. Paczewski and seconded by Mr. Pease, and unanimously approved, the May 17, 2018, STC business meeting minutes were accepted.

## **SECRETARY'S REMARKS:**

Secretary Richards gave brief remarks in which she welcomed Commissioners and Guests to Harrisburg, PA. Secretary Richards introduced the new STC Executive Secretary: Ms. Karen Heath from PennDOT's Office of Planning. Secretary Richards announced that three legislative members have completed their public service and will be recognized for their service. She indicated that those legislative members were instrumental for ACT 89 Transportation Funding Bill. She added that a resolution was drafted for each member and will be signed by STC commissioners.

## **2019 TWELVE YEAR TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM ADJUSTMENTS**

Deputy Secretary Jim Ritzman presented the 2019 Twelve Year Program (TYP) adjustments stating that between October 1, 2018 and November 30, 2018, there were 1,339 program adjustments including:

- 591 Project/Phase Additions
- 606 Project/Changes
- 86 Project/Phase Deletions
- 56 Adjustments to Funding Line Items

Mr. Ritzman explained that the overall changes represent a \$92,230,514 increase for the reporting period. He added that part of the increase occurred in the Safety and Mobility and Transportation Enhancement Programs. Mr. Ritzman highlighted the CSVT North Section paving project in Union County.

Mr. Ritchie asked about the changes to Interstate Line Items for some MPO/RPOs in the report.

Mr. Ritzman explained that some of the changes were the result of the decision to centralize Statewide Interstate Program for an improved decision-making.

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

## **WORKING SESSION**

### **TRANSPORTATION FUNDING: By Leslie Richards, Secretary of Transportation**

Secretary Richards gave a presentation in which she highlighted the accomplishments over the past four years and challenges the Department of Transportation is facing in the future. Secretary Richards first acknowledged the significant contribution of the STC commissioners, who she said, have spent several years working with the legislature as well as previous governors and transportation secretaries to get several transportation funding bills passed.

After noting that PennDOT has one of the largest highway systems in the country as well as huge bridge inventory, all of which take significant funding to hold together, Secretary Richards listed some notable accomplishment through the past four years:

- PennDOT Connects Initiative

- Road MaP Initiative: \$1B to County Maintenance and \$1.1B to Interstate & Major Road Reconstruction
- County Maintenance Accreditation Program
- Connected and Automated Vehicles: Policy Task Force and Testing Guidelines
- Diverse and Inclusive Workforce
- Small and Diverse Business Opportunities
- \$9.9B in Transportation Contracts let from January 2015 to November 2018
- 23,409 segment miles of highway improved
- Created websites for tracking highway and bridge projects and Customer Care
- Reduced Fatal Accidents on Commonwealth roads.

Secretary Richards noted that the funding generated by Act 89 has been used to invest in highways, bridges, transit systems, ports, bicycle and pedestrian projects, trails, freight rail, and airports. She explained that since the passage of Act 89 in 2013, the Department has let about \$2.4/\$2.5 billion per year in construction contracts. However, in 2019 the number will likely drop to \$2.2 billion due to flat revenue in the state motor license fund as well as uncertainty in the federal highway trust fund.

Secretary Richards indicated that as the funding gap continues to grow for transit, highways, and bridges, the Department faces multiples challenges and the most imminent of those challenges is Transit capital funding. She noted that with the current suspension of the \$450 million annual Act 44/Act 89 payments from the Turnpike, the Department was forced to use almost all its Multimodal Fund reserves to make it through this fiscal year with minor disruptions to the capital programs in the Philadelphia area and Pittsburgh.

Secretary Richards also reiterated that unless new funding sources are found to replace the suspended Act 44/89 payments by July 1, 2019, the Department will begin to see significant reductions of capital projects that will impact Amtrak service between Philadelphia and Harrisburg. She added that the challenges are not just on the transit side. There are also looming financial issues for the interstate and national highway systems, State Motor License Fund, Local Roads and Bridges, Safety and Guiderail upgrades, Intelligent Transportation Systems, Connected Automated Vehicles, Real ID/and Vehicles Services, MS4 Compliance, and Emergency Repair due to inclement weather.

Talking about the Interstate challenges, Secretary Richards explained that the Commonwealth's Interstate System is relatively old with many miles and many bridges in need of complete reconstruction. And though the Interstate System makes up only 6% of the state-owned mileage, it carries 26% of the daily vehicle miles traveled. As for the non-Interstate portion of the NHS, Secretary Richards noted that it carries 37% of daily vehicle miles traveled in the Commonwealth. She added that all together, these two systems make up 22% of the State mileage and 63% of the daily vehicle miles traveled.

Secretary Richards indicated that the policy choice the department is facing is how to manage its aging assets. She further explained that funding needs for the Interstate weren't included in the needs identified leading up to Act 89 because the assumption was that the federal government

would cover those costs, which has not been the case. She noted that the Interstate System currently receives less than half billion dollars per year in funding when \$1.2 billion per year is needed just to be able to keep the System in the state of good repair with twice that much for modernization. She also highlighted funding gaps for Bridges. She concluded that all these challenges combined call for a very robust forward thinking and policy decisions that she hopes will soon begin to materialize.

Mr. Pease asked if there any new funding sources for transportation?

Secretary Richards answered that that would part of the decisions the Legislature will have to make in the future.

Mr. Ritchie commented about the ASCE Report Cards, which showed that the Commonwealth has not made any considerable progress in terms improving the transportation infrastructure.

Secretary Richards indicated that she believes the Commonwealth has made progress but there is still a lot to do about the transportation infrastructure. She added that there is need to educate the public about the importance of continuing to invest in the transportation system.

### **2019 PUBLIC OUTREACH CAMPAIGN PLAN: By Jessica Clark and Lugene Keys**

Ms. Clark and Lugene Keys gave a presentation about the upcoming STC Public Outreach for the 2021 TYP Update. Ms. Clark indicated that for each TYP update cycle, the Public Outreach efforts have consistently improved and 2017 was not different.

Ms. Clark noted that at the end of each cycle, the process, the tools used, and the results are assessed in preparation for future campaigns. She indicated that the decision to release the Transportation Performance Report at the end of February, marking the official kick-off of the public comment period in 2017, was inspired by the success experienced in 2015. She also noted that the first customized, PennDOT-owned, online transportation survey tool and the use of social media as a promotional tool that were added to the 2017 campaign. Ms. Clark mentioned the award recognition PennDOT and the STC received from AASHTO and the TRB

Ms. Clark provided a summary of key components of the 2017 campaign including:

- **Transportation Performance Report**
  - New digital format
  - Video Soundbites by Secretary and Executive Staff
- **Customized Online Transportation Survey**
  - Enhanced Mapping Attributes
  - Educational Features
  - Mobile Device Accessibility
- **Themed Social Media Campaign**
  - Online Survey
  - Online Public Meeting

Moving to the 2019 campaign, Ms. Clark explained that the goals are to increase the number and diversity of public participants for both the survey and the online public meeting, improve the

experience of participants in every aspect of the campaign, and ensure that survey questions provide sufficient information to continue fostering high quality feedback from the public. She added that the outreach campaign will continue to take advantage of educational opportunities that exist in the development of content; promotional messages, and interaction with all key stakeholders.

Ms. Clark announced the Outreach Team held a Planning Partners Focus Group on December 11<sup>th</sup> to learn new ways to improve the outreach tools and methodology going in the 2019 campaign. Ten Planning Partners representatives from both rural and urban areas were invited for the Focus Group and 6 participated.

Ms. Clark indicated that the Planning Partners responded to 14 poll questions. They were able to answer from their phones and their answers could be seen in real time. She added that the Planning Partners had an overall positive view of the outreach campaign.

She also noted that the Planning Partners made suggestions on how to improve the outreach plan. For instance, the Planning Partners mentioned that they liked that the Director's Challenge was local based and suggested keeping it but would like an earlier notice and more time to participate. They also suggested finding a way to show the public what happens with their comments. Ms. Clark went on to share more suggestions received from the Planning Partners including more inclusion and accommodations efforts, providing instant translation, conducting social media campaign and radio advertising in Spanish, aligning the outreach results delivery with the Planning Partners Long Range Transportation Plans outreach, and providing outreach results data in a format compatible with PennDOT's OneMap.

Ms. Clark noted that there will no major changes from to the 2019 outreach campaign schedule when compared to 2017. The 2019 schedule is as follow:

- The release of the Transportation Performance Report will kick off the comment period
- The Open Comment Period will be announced in late February for the public to complete the survey. The survey will be available until the middle of April.
- The Online Public Meeting will be held in March.
- The feedback from the outreach campaign will be compiled, analyzed, and shared in June and in time for the Commissioner's visits to the planning partner regions late summer and early fall.

Ms. Clark concluded her presentation saying that this year's campaign will also feature the Director's Challenge and the Outreach Team is brainstorming what that challenge will look like. She added that the STC commissioners are welcomed to provide ideas or suggestions.

Mr. Drnevich asked if there is a way to educate the public more about the financial challenges the Department is facing.

Ms. Clark stated that the Online survey features a budget tool, which is tailored to reflect the Department spending and give the public a sense of the financial challenges the Department must deal with.

Mr. Drnevich commented that it would be good asked to ask people to propose funding sources.

Mr. Khoury commented that it would be informative to show survey takers the consequences of the budgeting choices they make when they take the survey.

Ms. Keys indicated that would be an idea to consider.

Mr. Khoury asked if there is any feedback about the commissioners' presentation to the Planning Partners.

Ms. Clark said that the Planning Partners are very appreciative of the presentations.

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

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

TAC Chair, Jody Holton, gave a brief report highlighting the three TAC studies:

- Intercity Passenger Rail Study
- Risks to Transportation Funding Analysis Study
- 2019 Transportation Performance Report

She gave an overview and the expected completion date of the three studies. She noted for the **Intercity Passenger Rail** study, the TAC received a Draft report and a Taskforce meeting is scheduled for January 10, 2019. The Final Draft Report will be reviewed by TAC members in late January; and the Committee is expected to vote on it at the February 4, 2019 Meeting.

For the **Risks the Transportation Funding Analysis Study**, Ms. Holton noted that the TAC also received an update on the overall progress of the study. An analysis of the potential risks and the funding gaps were discussed. She indicated that the Draft Report is expected for early January. Ms. Holton explained that a Taskforce meeting is also scheduled for January 10, 2019. The Final Draft Report will be reviewed by TAC members in late January; and the Committee is expected to vote on it at the February 4, 2019 Meeting.

Finally, Ms. Holton discussed the **2019 Transportation Performance Report**. She indicated that TAC is expecting a Draft Report by early January followed by TAC members' review in late January 2019. Ms. Holton noted that the TAC is also expected to vote on the Final Draft Report at the February 4, 2019 Meeting.

#### **Office of Planning**

Deputy Secretary Ritzman gave a brief update in which he discussed the issues with the Federal Highway Trust Fund solvency and Interstate Funding. He highlighted the funding gap between the what's needed to maintain the Interstate in the state of good repair and current funding levels. Mr. Ritzman also discussed the P3 CNG fueling stations program, which will supply natural gas to more than 1,600 public-transit buses at the 29 sites. Mr. Ritzman said that the P3 Committee is currently accepting proposals for P3 Projects from the public. He added that a proposal for a wetland bank is currently being examined.

## **Administration and Budget**

Deputy Secretary Suzanne Itzko gave a report in which she announced that the Department's Communication Director, Richard Kirkpatrick, will retire in January 2019. She added that Erin Waters-Trasatt will replace him.

Ms. Itzko also discussed the 2017 Disparity Study initiated in June 2017. She noted the study team met with representatives from the Department of General Services executive team and the Governor's Advisory Council on Diversity, Inclusion, and Small Business Opportunities to discuss the study and to answer questions. Ms. Itzko added the recommendations from the study will be implemented. Ms. Itzko also indicated that the department is awaiting the Auditor General's report.

## **Drivers and Vehicles Services**

Deputy Secretary Kurt Myers gave an update stating that Real ID is moving along, and delivery is scheduled to begin in March 2019. Mr. Myers explained that five more delivery centers and 250 more employees are being added to speed up the process. He added that the pre-verification process went well, and an effective communication campaign is being conducted to explain the process.

Mr. Myers also discussed the implementation of the final piece of Act 30. He explained that the Legislation amended Title 75 of the PA Consolidated Statutes by allowing a person to receive credit towards serving an operating privilege suspension, revocation, or disqualification based off a date determined by the PennDOT as opposed to the date the driver's license or acknowledgment form was surrendered to PennDOT.

The School Bus Safety Week and Statistics from Operation Safe Stop were also discussed.

## **Highway and Bridge Program**

Deputy Secretary George McAuley gave a brief report highlighting the reduction in fatalities on the Commonwealth's roads, the decrease in bridges in poor condition, and the increase in bridge closures due to the flooding over the summer. He indicated that the Rapid Bridge Replacement program is having a significant impact on reducing the number of bridges in poor condition. Mr. McAuley also noted that the Department is on track to hit the \$2.5 Billion letting goal. He added that emergency contracts have increased because of the major flooding events. Also, winter maintenance is off to a slow start but is catching up quickly.

## **Multimodal Transportation**

Deputy Secretary, Jennie Granger gave a brief report in which she indicated that her deputate has closed the FY 2019-20 Multimodal Transportation Fund application round on November 15, 2018. She explained that 124 new applications along with 72 resubmissions from previous round were received. The total request amounts to \$222.7.1 million. She noted that this year's application process has been simplified to make it easier for applicants to apply.

Ms. Granger also announced that the Mount Joy Train Station project is almost completed. She showed STC Commissioners some photographs of the construction work and the overall progress of the project. She noted that the rainy summer has had some impacts on the progress of the project.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

The 2019 STC Quarterly Meetings Schedule is as follow:

- February 21, 2019 (Thursday) in Harrisburg, PA
- June 13, 2019 (Thursday) in Washington, PA
- September 19, 2019 (Thursday) in Jim Thorpe, PA
- December 12, 2019 (Thursday) in Harrisburg, PA

**ON A MOTION** by Mr. Khoury and seconded by Mr. Kingsborough, the 2019 STC quarterly meeting schedule was approved.

### **NEXT MEETING**

The next STC quarterly meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, February 21, 2019**, in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**ON A MOTION** by Mr. Kingsborough and seconded by Mr. Drnevich, the STC quarterly meeting was adjourned at 11:48 AM.