

PENNSYLVANIA STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
QUARTERLY MEETING MINUTES
WELLSBORO, PENNSYLVANIA
SEPTEMBER 10, 2015
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CALL TO ORDER:

Secretary of Transportation Leslie S. Richards convened a quarterly business meeting of the Pennsylvania State Transportation Commission (STC) at 10:17 a.m. on Thursday, September 10, 2015 in Wellsboro, PA.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners Present:

Honorable Leslie S. Richards, Chairwoman
Honorable Robert B. Pease, P.E., Secretary, via conference call
Honorable Frederic M. Wentz
Honorable Cristina G. Cavalieri, via conference call
Honorable Edward J. Cernic, Sr.
Honorable Ronald J. Drnevich
Honorable William F. Keller , alternate present
Honorable James D. Kingsborough
Honorable George M. Khoury
Honorable Sharon L. Knoll
Honorable Charles C. Martin, via conference call
Honorable Frank E. Paczewski
Honorable John C. Rafferty, alternate present
Honorable John Taylor

MINUTES:

ON A MOTION by Commissioner Cernic seconded by Commissioner Wentz, and unanimously approved, the minutes of the June 18, 2015 STC quarterly business meeting were accepted as presented.

SECRETARY'S OPENING REMARKS:

Secretary Leslie Richards gave a brief opening statement, welcoming the Commission to Wellsboro and thanked the District 3-0 and Central Office staffs for organizing and conducting tour of District 3, in addition to River Valley Transit.

The Secretary delivered an update on the Commonwealth's preparation for the Papal Visit which was held on September 25-27-2015 in Philadelphia.

TWELVE YEAR TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM:

2015 Highway and Bridge Program Adjustments/Major Project Adjustments

Deputy Secretary Jim Ritzman presented the 2015 Highway and Bridge Program Adjustments and Major Project Adjustments, stating that between May 16, 2015 and August 7, 2015 there were 1,250 program adjustments.

Mr. Ritzman indicated that the changes for the Centre County MPO were a technical correction to the program. This change was in the public transportation category. Two projects were completed and one project was dropped as a technical amendment. This resulted in a negative change of \$32 million to the program.

Mr. Ritzman explained the statewide line item, which had a \$55 million increase. The increase in funds occurred in the public transportation Sec. 5311 funds because of a difference between anticipated Federal funds and required federal funds. Sec. 5311 are typically used for intercity and rural transit programs.

Mr. Ritzman also explained the funding for the rapid bridge replacement program using Centre MPO's section. Their funding was moved to the SD bridge line item, as they have for most planning partner regions. Most other adjustments to the program are increases due to deobligations- when projects are finished under budget those funds are returned to the region to be applied to other projects.

ON A MOTION by Commissioner Wentz, seconded by Commissioner Paczewski, and unanimously approved, the 2015 Highway and Bridge TYP Adjustments/Major Project Adjustments were accepted as presented.

WORKING SESSION

Rapid Bridge Replacement Program Update

Deputy Secretary Jim Ritzman delivered a brief presentation about Pennsylvania's Rapid Bridge Replacement P3 Project. He stated that the P3 program now is part of the Office of Planning, however the technical expertise for a P3 project comes from the area of responsibility.

The Rapid Bridge Replacement program is for the design, build, finance, and maintenance of 558 bridges, over a term of 25 years. There are economies of scale in design and construction. The program will accelerate the replacement of structurally deficient bridges which will improve system connectivity and mobility, and will minimize impacts on the traveling public. Plenary Walsh is responsible for maintaining these bridges for 25 years. The bridges chosen were single span and some multi-spans and are full replacements with limited impacts to utilities, right of way, and the environment.

All 558 bridges are to be completed by the end of calendar year 2017. The Department designed 87 early completion bridges with construction start in 2015. Plenary Walsh performs final design on these bridges. For the remaining 471 bridges, PennDOT provides scoping documents, detours, and two borings per bridge. Plenary Walsh is responsible for NEPA, surveying, right of way, permits and final design.

FHWA allocated up to \$1.2 billion in private activity bonds to the Pennsylvania Economic Development Financing Authority for the contractor to use to finance the project. The Department also procured special permission to allow the contractor to create and submit the NEPA document for each bridge, along with public outreach. The development entity is responsible for hiring contractors.

In CY 2015

- 62 construction notice to proceeds issued
- 41 bridges under construction
- 49 bridges under construction by the end of the week of September 7, 2015

The current schedule is:

- CY 2015, 41 bridges to be completed
- CY 2016, 200 bridges to be completed
- CY 2017, 317 bridges to be completed
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Plenary Walsh will receive three major payments over the next three years. They have already received the mobilization payment. Starting in January 2016, they will receive a milestone payment \$35 million every six months for six pay periods, for a total of \$290 million. The contractor will begin receiving availability payments monthly at about \$6,000 per bridge when the first 58 bridges are substantially complete and open to traffic. These payments will continue for the next 25 years.

Questions

Q: Commissioner Wentz asked if the contractor was chosen via RFP bidding or a process

A: Deputy Secretary Ritzman stated that the contractor was chosen by a process.

Q: Mr. Nolan Ritchie noted that the Rapid Bridge Replacement website was not easy to access from PennDOT's web portal.

A: Deputy Secretary Ritzman stated that PennDOT's new website would have a link to the RBR project page.

On a request from the Secretary, Mr. Ritzman highlighted **projects.penndot.gov**. The site has three sections: an active construction projects section, an Act 89 progress section and a Four and Twelve Year Plan Projects section. This website enables PennDOT's customers and users to see their investments in the network that serves them.

2017 Twelve Year Program Public Outreach- Regional STC Public Member/Planning Partner Meetings

Ms. Leanne Doran (McCormick Taylor) and Ms. Jessica Clark of PennDOT presented the 2017 Twelve Year Program Public Member outreach.

Ms. Doran gave a brief review of past activities. A change from the 2015 Twelve Year Program development is the public comment period occurred in the spring instead of the fall. This aligns the 2017 Twelve Year Program update with the MPO pre-TIP public meetings. Each STC member is assigned to a planning partner and will attend the pre-TIP public meeting.

Each member was given a toolkit for attending the pre-TIP meeting. The toolkits include a profile of the planning partner and its summary data from the open comment period, talking points, FAQs, and guidance. Ms. Jessica Clark and Ms. Leanne Doran walked the Commission through the contents of their binders. These toolkits will be used during the MPO and RPO public pre-TIP meetings.

The commissioners assigned to meetings would present the results for that planning partner and collect any general information received from the public in attendance.

Questions

Commissioner Khoury asked if handouts would be provided to the Planning Partners for commissioner use during the pre-TIP meetings. Ms. Clark said handouts will be provided to the Planning Partners ahead of the meetings. Commissioner Khoury also asked where the Planning Partners were in their draft TIP development process. Ms. Doran stated that the STC's 2017 Twelve Year Program development process was ahead of the Planning Partners' process. Mr. Ritzman clarified further by saying MPO and RPO staffs were familiar with the data to be presented.

REPORTS:

Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)

Mr. Lou Schultz, TAC Chairman, discussed the Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations Study now underway. Mr. Schultz stated the notice to proceed was executed and the study's kickoff meeting was held on September 8, 2015.

Two Project Groups will be formed to guide this Study:

Working Group* - This group will meet at least monthly to provide project input and help steer the project to successful outcomes. It will consist of approximately 10 members including:

- Key PennDOT staff from both District Offices and Central Office
- One or more representatives from the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)
- One representative from the Pedalcycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (PPAC).
- It may also be appropriate to include a member from PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) involved in their trail program.

Policy Group* - This group will provide key input at specific project milestones where high-level perspectives and decision-maker considerations are required. This group will also be important in regards to helping to organize the overall policy framework that all tasks support. The group should consist of approximately six members including:

- TAC Chairman
- PennDOT Deputy Secretaries
- PennDOT Office of Chief Counsel
- PennDOT Bike/Ped Coordinator

Commissioner Drnevich will represent the STC on the Policy Group.

Administrative/Budget

Deputy Secretary Suzanne Itzko was not in attendance and her report stands as is.

Driver and Vehicle Services

Deputy Secretary Kurt Myers was not in attendance and his report stands as is.

Highway and Bridge Program

Deputy Secretary, Scott Christie delivered a report for the Highway and Bridge Program, highlighting the Accelerated Bridge Program and the trends in Structurally Deficient (SD) Bridges.

- The targeted number of bridges rebuilt or rehabbed for 2015 was 350 and the Department was on schedule to meet that target.
- SD bridges continue to trend downward
- Number of SD bridges is under 4,000.

Mr. Christie stated that roughly 200 to 300 bridges become structurally deficient in any given year. The Department rehabilitates bridges to ensure the number of structurally deficient bridges continue to drop and the bridge asset management program is going to be using modeling to forecast and predict which bridges are due to become structurally deficient.

Mr. Christie discussed posted bridges, roadway roughness mileage across all networks, and reported fatalities. Poor roughness mileage has gone up because of the focus on bridges. He also stated historical rock salt pricing has increased due to the previous two winters. The price of asphalt has decreased but the availability of truck drivers in construction has caused some bid prices to go up. Project scoping has also caused some project costs to go up.

Questions

Mr. Nolan Ritchie asked if Congress passed legislation to increase truck weights who would be responsible for posting bridges on interstates. Deputy Secretary Christie stated that the Department examines every bridge whenever truck weights are increased. If Congress passed such legislation there might be up to ten bridges on interstates that'd be affected but the Department has an aggressive bridge program.

Commissioner Drnevich asked about the total number of bridges in the state. Mr. Christie stated that there were about 25,000 bridges (greater than eight feet long) and about 16,000 of them were greater than twenty feet long.

Multimodal Transportation

Deputy Secretary Toby Fauver was not in attendance; his report stands as written.

Planning

Deputy Secretary Jim Ritzman delivered a brief report for the Planning Deputate.

Mr. Ritzman stated that Federal funding continues to be uncertain. MAP-21 expired on September 30, 2014, and the continuing resolution ends on October 29, 2015. This continuing

resolution adds an additional \$8 billion in funding from the general fund. The next Federal bill would require \$100 billion in additional funding to keep funding levels flat.

Mr. Ritzman stated the Department gained an additional \$95.9 million in Federal spending authority during the August redistribution period. These funds can be used for projects already on the TIP.

The Municipal Advisory Commission, comprised of local and county commissioners associations, will meet in October. They will meet with the district municipal services coordinators.

Mr. Ritzman highlighted the STIC web viewer and the new MPMS mobile website. The STIC web viewer (www.modernDOT.pa.gov) displays the innovations researched by STIC and where they are implemented around the Commonwealth. MPMS Mobile enables users to access MPMS-IQ via a smartphone or tablet. This was created in-house by the Department and was a low cost innovation.

The CNG Infrastructure for Transit P3 project Request for Proposal will be finalized in October and proposals are due in January 2016.

Commissioner Reports

Commissioner Drnevich stated that the commissioner presentations to the MPO/RPOs at the pre TIP public meetings should be concise.

Chairperson Richards stated that in concert with the Oklahoma DOT secretary they were making contact with Congress members to discuss the Federal surface transportation reauthorization.

Representative Taylor stated the House and Senate transportation committees have a full agenda upcoming.

Open Public Comment

No comments were offered during the open public comment period.

NEXT MEETING:

The next STC quarterly business meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 17, 2015, in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

ADJOURNMENT:

ON A MOTION by Commissioner Wentz and seconded by Commissioner Pacwezski, the STC quarterly business meeting was adjourned at 12:03 p.m.