

PENNSYLVANIA STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
BUSINESS MEETING  
CRANBERRY TOWNSHIP, PENNSYLVANIA  
SEPTEMBER 14, 2017



**CALL TO ORDER:**

Vice Chairman Robert Pease convened a quarterly business meeting of the State Transportation Commission (STC) at 10:11 am on September 14, 2017 in Cranberry Township, PA.

**ROLL CALL:**

**Commissioners Present:**

Honorable Robert B. Pease, P.E., Vice Chairman  
Honorable Edward J. Cernic, Sr., via phone  
Honorable Ronald J. Drnevich  
Honorable James D. Kingsborough  
Honorable George M. Khoury  
Honorable Sharon L. Knoll, via phone  
Frederick M. Wentz, via phone  
Honorable Frank E. Paczewski  
Honorable John C. Rafferty, Jr., alternate via phone  
Honorable John Sabatina, alternate present

**MINUTES:**

**ON A MOTION** by Frank Paczewski and seconded by George Khoury the June 15, 2017 meeting minutes were approved.

**VICE CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS:**

Vice Chairman Robert Pease delivered brief opening remarks in which he thanked District executives for coordinating the STC Business Meeting. Mr. Pease also welcomed special guests who attended the meeting.

## WORKING SESSION

### 2017 TWELVE YEAR TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM ADJUSTMENTS

Deputy Secretary Jim Ritzman presented the 2017 Twelve Year Program (TYP) adjustments stating that between May 27, 2017 and August 18, 2017, there were 1,272 program adjustments including:

- 420 Project or Phase Additions
- 733 Project or Phase Changes
- 56 Project or Phase Deletions
- 63 Adjustments to Funding Line Items

Mr. Ritzman explained that the overall changes represent a \$84,670,006 million increase for the report period. He highlighted Interstate program changes, which have increased by \$703,160,235 million and Statewide Line Items, which have decreased by \$710,066,678 million. Mr. Ritzman also discussed the National Highway Freight Program.

Nolan Ritchie asked if the STC will be monitoring the decision to borrow \$700 million from the Motor License Fund to support the General Fund. Mr. Ritzman answered that there is no need. He noted that this has been done in the past and the law requires that the funds be paid by a certain time. Mr. Ritzman added that the MLF collects interest on the loan so there will be no negative impact.

**ON A MOTION** by George Khoury and seconded by Ronald Drnevich, the 2017 Twelve Year Program Adjustments were unanimously approved.

### **PENNDOT DISTRICT 10 PRESENTATION by Joseph P. Dubovi, P.E., District Executive**

Mr. Joe Dubovi gave a presentation about PennDOT District 10, which encompasses five Counties (Armstrong, Butler, Clarion, Indiana, Jefferson), three planning regions, three State Universities, five State Parks, four Army Corps Flood Control Dams, and 213 miles of recreational trails including the 1<sup>st</sup> in the Commonwealth (Ghost Town Trail). The District has an overall population of 425,000 with 43% in Butler County. Mr. Dubovi indicated that over 800 employees work for the District and are responsible for the design, construction, and maintenance of 1,624 bridges and 3,181 linear miles of roadway. Of the 1,624 state bridges, 317 are structurally deficient. In addition, 87 of the 375 local bridges are structurally deficient. Mr. Dubovi noted that the district is putting a lot of effort into reducing the number of structurally deficient bridges.

Mr. Edward Cernic, Sr. inquired about the status of the bridge on SR 22. Mr. Dubovi answered that the county is working on the design phase and that the District is monitoring it. Mr. Cernic, Sr. indicated that he would like to be updated on the progress.

Mr. Dubovi highlighted some current and future projects in the district. *Current projects include:*

**SR 422 Wray Road Cut in Armstrong County. Estimated Cost: \$10,484,408**

- This project is part of the District's efforts to improve safety on 422 between Kittanning and Indiana. The project includes the realignment of Route 422 between Ping Wing Hollow Road and Lasher Road and concrete patching through the Route 28/422 Interchange.
- The project is expected be completed by October 2018.

**SR 119 Home Railroad Bridge in Indiana County. Estimated Cost: \$9,311,096**

- The project is part of the District effort to reduce numbers of structurally deficient bridges. The project includes the replacement and relocation of the bridge carrying Route 119 over the B & P Railroad.
- The project also eliminated a significant horizontal curve to improve safety on SR 119 and is nearly completed.

**SR 58 Callensburg Bridge #1 in Clarion County. Estimated Cost: \$5,214,821**

- This project is the replacement of a structurally deficient narrow-open grid deck structure over the Clarion River near Callensburg on SR 58.
- The bridge should be open in January 2018.

**I-79 South Section in Butler County. Estimated Cost: \$15,455,174**

- Located on the southern portion of I-79, this project will lengthen the ramp to I-79 North Bound at Exit 85 in Evans City.
- The project also includes a preventative maintenance contract to mill and place 2 ½" binder and 1 ½" wearing and is expected to be completed in 2018.

*Future Projects include:*

**SR 28 Goheenville Dip, Estimated Cost: \$15M to \$20M**

- This project is under design to realign the portion of PA 28 between Kittanning and New Bethlehem and to improve safety in Boggs and Wayne Townships.
- The project will create two lanes of traffic and construction is expected to begin in 2021.

**SR 228 Pittsburgh Street Intersection. Estimated Cost: \$7.5M to \$10M**

- Also part of safety improvement efforts, this project will widen turning lanes and replace a culvert at the intersection of SR 228 and Pittsburgh Street in Adams Township.
- Construction is expected to begin in 2018.

**SR 68 Dolby Street to I-80 Clarion. Estimated Cost: \$7.5M - \$10M**

- This project will improve safety and traffic flow at the SR 68 and Dolby Street intersection in Clarion and Monroe Townships.
- Construction is expected to begin in late 2018.

Mr. Drnevich asked how many bridges are in the District, Mr. Dubovi answered that the district has about 1,624 bridges.

Mr. Khoury asked how many bridges the district has in the Rapid Bridge Replacement program. Mr. Dubovi answered that the district has 38 bridges on the RBR program.

Mr. Khoury asked about the economic status of the rest of the district. Mr. Dubovi answered that overall, the whole district is doing good economically, but the slowdown of the Marcellus Shale Gas industry is impacting Clarion and Jefferson counties.

Mr. Kingsborough asked how many airports are in the district and what is their economic impact on the district. Mr. Dubovi answered that there is at least one airport in each county but the economic impact of most airports is limited because there are not enough commuters.

**HIGHLY AUTOMATED VEHICLES: THE PENNSYLVANIA PERSPECTIVE by Kurt Myers**

Deputy Secretary Kurt Myers gave a presentation about Highly Automated Vehicles (HAVs) in which he highlighted challenges the transportation infrastructure is facing and opportunities HAVs present in addressing those challenges. The challenges, which include population increase and more freight, create the need for a smarter transportation system, more specifically HAVs. Mr. Myers mentioned several benefits of HAVs such as safety, improved mobility, congestion relief, emission reductions, economic development, and a better quality of life.

Mr. Myers indicated that PennDOT has been involved with HAVs for a long time, through collaborative partnerships with the Commonwealth's world-class academic research institutions like Carnegie Mellon, the University of Pennsylvania, and Penn State University. The Department has been working on advanced smart signals, and connected and autonomous vehicles. The Department has also been active in national organizations that have helped the USDOT shape its emerging policies on HAVs. Pittsburgh, and Pennsylvania in general, are recognized as leaders nationwide in this exciting and emerging field.

Talking about challenges of adopting HAVs, Mr. Myers listed public acceptance, legislation, safe testing and deployment, security, decision-making with conflicts, insurance and liability, and transition with varying levels of autonomy as main concerns. He added that connected and automated vehicle technologies will create a shift in the transportation decision-making process throughout Pennsylvania. In response to this changing landscape, PennDOT is developing the Statewide Connected and Automated Vehicle Strategic Plan, which will assist Pennsylvania in preparing for connected and automated vehicle advancements. The strategic plan is expected to be completed by December 2017/January 2018 and will focus on nine business areas including Maintenance and Operations, Design and Construction, Planning and Research, Information Technology and Security, Driver Licensing and Motor Vehicles, Modal Considerations, Workforce Requirements, Policy and Legal, Outreach and Collaboration.

Mr. Myers also mentioned that PennDOT is currently exploring options to develop and deploy an automated shuttle pilot program in Middletown PA, which would be comprised of two projects.

The first would serve as a transit connector for travelers at Harrisburg International Airport between the long-term parking and the gate locations. The second would be a student shuttle around the grounds of Penn State Harrisburg. He explained that Penn State Harrisburg is one of the fastest growing campuses in the state and there are a very large number of international students who utilize both the Amtrak station and/or the airport to make connections to the university.

Mr. Myers also discussed the autonomous work zone vehicles., the SmartBelt Coalition, which includes the states of Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Michigan, to focus on freight movement, and the Inaugural HAV Summit held on September 11-12, 2017 in State College.

Mr. Myers concluded his presentation by discussing current and proposed legislation. He noted that the current law is limited and needs to be updated. Proposed legislation includes:

- SB 427 sponsored by Senator Randy Vulakovich
- HB 1637 sponsored by Representative Jim Marshall

A legislative hearing with the Senate and House Transportation Committees was held on March 21, 2017. These bills will allow for advance HAV testing and platooning on public roads. The testing will be overseen by PennDOT and the PA Turnpike Commission. The bills will also give PennDOT the authority to issue policy to oversee safety. Mr. Myers added that PennDOT will be working with the Transportation Committees of both the House and Senate and all the members of General Assembly to help them understand the issues and the legislation and to encourage them to enact it for the Governor's signature.

#### **PA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION UPDATE:**

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

Mr. Ritzman gave an update about the TAC stating that the Transportation Advisory Committee welcomed Mrs. Jody Holton, AICP as the new chair and three other new members appointed by the Governor. Ms. Holton chaired her first meeting on July 27, 2017. Mr. Ritzman added that the Committee has discussed several study topics and is still taking study topic proposals.

##### **Administration and Budget**

Report stands as written.

##### **Drivers and Vehicles Services**

Deputy Secretary Kurt Myers gave an update discussing the new drivers' license, which is already being delivered. Mr. Myers also discussed the online registration renewal and the two-year registration option, which he said will help the Department save money. The Real ID extension application and deployment timeline were also discussed.

Commissioner Ronald Drnevich asked what is unique about the Real ID. Mr. Myers answered that aside from the look, the Real ID allows individuals to access federal facilities and to board commercial flights. Mr. Myers also added that, to get the Real ID, one must demonstrate legal

presence through a passport, a birth certificate along with a social security card, and proof of residence.

Mr. Ritchie asked if there are concerns about people confusing the new driver's licenses with the Real ID. Mr. Myers answered that there are no concerns.

### **Multimodal Transportation**

Sitting in for Deputy Secretary Toby Fauver, Ms. Angela Watson gave an update highlighting the completion of the Draft Implementation Plan of the State Aviation System Plan and three capital improvement projects at the Philadelphia Regional Port Authority. Mrs. Watson also discussed the Shared Ride Pilot Program and FindMyRidePA.com, which is a resource center developed and piloted in York County to make it easy for veterans and other individuals to find information about available transportation options and schedule trips using a computer or cell phone. The Public Private Partnership Compressed Natural Gas Project and Public Transportation Ridership Trends were also discussed.

Mr. Khoury asked if the State budget impasse will have any impact on the multimodal transportation programs. Ms. Watson said that if the impasse continues, it will impact freight, aviation, commuter rail, and other multimodal projects.

### **Office of Planning**

Deputy Secretary Jim Ritzman gave a brief report highlighting the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside funding program. Mr. Ritzman pointed out that the statewide application round opened on July 10<sup>th</sup> and aims to award \$55 million in TA Set-Aside funds to projects that best align with PennDOT's core principle. Mr. Ritzman added that this application round, which places emphasis on early local collaboration through PennDOT Connects, closes at 4:00 PM September 22, 2017. Mr. Ritzman also discussed the County \$5 registration fee stating that on June 1, 2017, \$11,712,610 was distributed to the 15 counties for which it was collected. Overall, 18 counties have passed the \$5 registration fee.

Mr. Eric Bugaile asked why some individuals in counties that didn't pass the \$5 registration fee have been charged. Mr. Myers responded that the charges are the result of computer system errors and that the Department has fixed the issues when notified.

### **Highway and Bridge Program**

Deputy Secretary George McAuley gave a brief report stating that the number of structurally deficient bridges has been reduced from 6,034 to 3,472, the lowest level since 1998. He also added that as of June 30, 2017, 245 state SD Bridges are scheduled to be let by the end of 2017 in addition to 178 P3 Replacements. Mr. McAuley also pointed out the low fatalities numbers on the Commonwealth's highways and added that he hopes that the continued drivers' education will further reduced those numbers. Winter maintenance expenditures and maintenance on secondary roads using low cost maintenance products were also discussed.

## **PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS**

### ***The McBride Viaduct Demolition Project in Erie by Freda Tepfer and Adam Trott***

Ms. Tepfer and Mr. Trott, members of Erie CPR, presented about the McBride Viaduct demolition project in the City of Erie. The project primarily consists of removing the existing 1,170-foot bridge and all piers, steps and ramps while providing adjacent pedestrian improvements. In addition, a fence will be installed for pedestrian protection from the existing CSX Corp. railroad tracks.

Ms. Tepfer and Mr. Trott believe that the viaduct remains an important pedestrian walkway from East 12th Street and East Avenue south to Buffalo Road, and tearing it down would hurt eastside residents. They claimed that city officials are trying to “expedite” demolition without further public comment. Ms. Tepfer said that repurposing the bridge would likely cost about \$3 million, and demolishing it would cost roughly \$4.5 million.

Erie CPR said that the eastside bridge should be restored as a pedestrian walkway or public park. The viaduct was closed by the city of Erie in June 2010 because of structural concerns. The Group said that they’ve been calling for a public hearing for four years, since the city announced demolition, and they haven’t gotten one despite all the changes to the project.

Mr. Trott and his colleagues want alternatives to be considered and a chance to privately raise money to save the bridge. He noted that they won’t be able to do that unless the city is willing to work with them. The Group is asking PennDOT to withdraw its support to the project and force the city to reconsider its stand.

The STC asked Deputy Secretary of Planning, Mr. Jim Ritzman to look into the matter and report back to the Commission at the next meeting.

### ***Kim Gyer, Butler County Commissioner***

Kim Gyer commented about funding issues in Butler county. Gyer said the state has distributed over \$200 million to counties around the commonwealth because of Act 89. Butler County, however, has received less than three percent of those funds. She added that State representatives from the County voted against the bill in 2013, which resulted in Butler County not receiving the same amount that was given to other counties who voted in favor of it. Ms. Gyer feels that Butler county is being penalized for the votes of their representatives.

Ms. Gyer indicated that despite their best efforts, the county has failed to pass the \$5 registration fee that would bring the county some much needed funds.

## **NEXT MEETING:**

The next STC quarterly meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 14, 2017 in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**ON A MOTION** by Commissioner Paczewski and seconded by Commissioner Kingsborough, the STC quarterly meeting was adjourned at 12:24 pm.