

MINUTES

SHENANGO VALLEY METROPOLITAN
PLANNING ORGANIZATION COORDINATING/TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Tuesday, May 14, 2019 – 10:30 A.M. - MCRPC Offices
Hermitage, PA

PERSONS PRESENT

Brad Elder
Chris Vollmer
Ken Robertson
Courtney Lyle
Tom McClelland
Paul Hamill
Richard Stachel
Brian McNulty
Travis Siegel
Gary Byers
Cynthia Byers
Shelli Oakes
Zach Miles
Paul Gheddy
Stephen Theiss
Jasson Urey
Scott Boyd
Melinda Gosser
Rick Dillaman
Chuck Weber
Kim A. DiCintio
Michael Ceci
Michael Nashtock
Bill Klumph
Jeremy Coxe
Gary R. Lowers
Heather Maurer
Gary Hittle
Jen Crobak
Robert F. Lark
Dan Keane, via phone
Dan Gracenin
Matt Stewart

REPRESENTING

Mercer County Bridge Department
Gannett Fleming
Sharpsville Borough
PennDOT, District 1-0
PennDOT
Greenville Borough
Pine Township
PennDOT, District 1-0
Northwest RPO
Citizen of Sharon
Citizen of Sharon
Representative Tedd Nesbit
PennDOT, District 1-4
PennDOT
Mercer County Trails Association
Greenville Borough
Mercer County Commissioner
Senator Michele Brooks
Springfield Township
Wolf Creek Township
Mercer County Regional COG
Farrell City
Mercer County Regional Council of Governments
South Pymatuning Township
Hermitage City
Pymatuning Township
Representative Mark Longietti
Hempfield Township
FHWA
West Middlesex Borough
PennDOT
MCRPC
MCRPC

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Coxe, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. **A quorum was present.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING FEBRUARY 12, 2019

Mr. Coxe asked for any additions, corrections or deletions to the Minutes of the February 12, 2019 meeting. Mr. Elder noted one correction under the 2019-2022 TIP Modifications. The sentence should read: Mr. Keane referenced a Fiscal Constraint Chart noting that the District has been working with Brad Elder to receive some “**STP road map money to reconstruct 4 bridges (2 on Gilmore Road and 2 on Hosack Road)**”. There being no other changes, Mr. Coxe asked for a motion to approve. Mr. Klumph so moved, Ms. DiCintio seconded. The motion passed.

2019-2022 TIP MODIFICATIONS

Mr. Dan Keane, via phone, briefly explained the Highway/Bridge TIP Management Actions, which are all for informational purposes. (A copy is attached to and made a part of the permanent record of Minutes.)

PA PERFORMANCE-BASED PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING WRITTEN PROVISIONS

Mr. Stewart mentioned that back at the November 2018 MPO meeting, this Committee authorized to agree with the state-wide methodology for measuring performance measures. PM1 is our safety performance measures; PM2 is our bridge and pavement conditions; and PM3 is our safety, congestion mitigation and air quality. Federal Performance-Based Planning and Programming (PBPP) regulations require PennDOT and the MPOs/RPOs to document written provisions for how they will cooperatively develop and share information by May 20, 2019. To ensure compliance, PennDOT has requested that we respond to their letter before May 20, 2019, by signing the acknowledgement form indicating that this MPO region has adopted these written provisions. Ms. Jen Crobak from FHWA briefly noted that by signing this acknowledgement form this MPO agrees to and is going to comply and meet these performance measures. A motion was made by Mr. Dillaman to approve the PA Performance Based Planning and Programming Written Provisions. Mr. Stachel seconded. The motion passed.

LOCAL BRIDGE FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS

Mr. Brad Elder, Mercer County Bridge Engineer, gave a PowerPoint presentation to discuss some funding considerations for local bridges. First, he explained the project status for the Kelly Road bridge replacement in Sharpville Borough. Anticipated construction will take place over 2 construction seasons and will cost roughly \$5 million for construction, utility relocation and right-of-way costs. Mr. Elder explained the scenario regarding available construction funds noting that three years of TIP funds (roughly \$2.4M) can be applied to the construction phase, as well as \$1M of FLAP funds, which would leave a funding gap for the Kelly Road bridge replacement of \$1.6M. The TIP funding needed for construction is broken down at 80% BOF (Federal), 15% State match and 5% local match. The 12-year program is what this project is using for its funding.

Mr. Elder mentioned that in order to enhance locally owned bridges in Mercer County we would need to request an increase under the TIP annual line item for the SVATS MPO Bridge Off-system (BOF) from \$800,000 to \$1,345,000. He stated that there are 247 local bridges and we need to average 3 bridge projects a year. Also, we need more project funding to sustain bridge inventory. This increase request will allow more projects at certain times of need, but will still balance when used less.

Mr. Brian McNulty mentioned that they support this project and PennDOT in on board. Mr. Stewart stated that another possible motion would be to increase the BOF funds available for locally owned bridges in Mercer County from \$800,000 to \$1,345,000 for a three year period to complete the Kelly Road bridge replacement project; then revert back to \$800,000; or we could leave it the same. Mr. Courtney Lyle talked about the impacts to state projects should an action to approve additional local dollars passes. Mr. Stachel questioned where the money will come from for the increase? Mr. Coxe stated that roughly \$681,000 a year would be shifted from State bridges to locally owned bridges, which represents about 8% of the total bridge funding available for Mercer County. There would be no change in

ownership of the bridges, only funding changes. Mr. Dillaman questioned where the \$5,000,000 in BOF funds that were not used end up going to? Mr. McNulty stated that it goes somewhere else for Mercer County projects. After discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Dillaman to approve increasing the BOF funds available for locally owned bridges in Mercer County from \$800,000 to \$1,345,000 and reassess in the future. Mr. Stachel seconded. The motion passed.

PROJECT STATUS UPDATES

---Transportation Alternatives and STU Project Status Reports - Mr. Stewart gave a few updates. The **Sharpsville Borough 6th and High Street Reconstruction Project** is basically ready to go, once the Consultant Inspection Agreement is executed. The **City of Sharon** has 2 projects underway. The first one is the **Silver Street/Sharpsville Avenue/Thornton Street** project, which is currently underway, with the sidewalk being installed along E. Silver Street. The City of Sharon was able to receive a grant for additional monies to add candlesticks to the bicycle lane on Sharpsville Avenue, which will be removed seasonally. The other project has not started yet for the **US 62 Gateway Project**. A phone call meeting with PennDOT District 1 has been set up for Tuesday, May 21st to start with preparations for the planning and design. The **City of Farrell Hamilton Avenue Project** is expecting to start construction by the end of May or beginning of June. Some soft work has been completed such as tree removal and stump grinding. The City of Hermitage **Thornton/Forker Boulevard Project** is a continuation of the Sharon project. Engineering and design are complete and is currently out for public review at the City Building and on their website, hermitage.net. The let date is currently set for 2020, but the City is working to hopefully move the let date to June of July of this year to be able to construct this season. The **SR 208 Multimodal Trail Phase 2 Project in Springfield Township** is wrapping up the design and right of way plans with their consultant and hoping the easement acquisition to start soon.

---Major Road/Bridge Projects - Mr. Tom McClelland gave an update on 3 design projects. He mentioned that the **US 62/State Street Improvement Project** for a single lane roundabout at the Shenango Valley Mall entrance on US 62 in the City of Hermitage received right-of-way clearance in April and utility clearance in May and the final plan was delivered to PennDOT. Next, he mentioned that survey work is being done regarding the **State Street Sidewalk Project from Route 18 to Boyd Drive**, with construction to start in late 2020 or early 2021. The final project is the **Mercer Avenue Intersections (518 and 418 and 418 and Roemer Boulevard) in the City of Farrell** to improve traffic signals, sidewalks and ADA curb ramps. An agreement was executed with the consultant this spring and the engineering and design will start soon.

---Planning and Data Collection Project Updates - Mr. McClelland mentioned that there are three safety corridor studies that were recently written into the TIP and will be using highway safety monies to look at the corridors of Route 62, from Keel Ridge Road in Hermitage to Mercer Borough. A public meeting will take place at the Hickory VFW tomorrow, May 15th to discuss this corridor study. On April 24th, a public meeting was held to discuss the Route 58 corridor, from Greenville to Mercer. PennDOT is handling these two studies and they have hired two separate firms to look at intersection safety issues and roadway geometry improvements. Both of these corridor areas have high crash clusters and they are hoping to wrap up these studies by the fall. The third study is for the US 62 railroad study (railroad tunnel just outside of Mercer Borough on Route 62). PennDOT is looking at ways to improve this tunnel or actually try to open it up so it could be used for a detour for either I-79 or I-80. Mr. Stewart asked if there was any update on the Route 173 project, south of downtown Grove City. Mr. McClelland mentioned that PennDOT's in-house staff has been working on this and noted that the scope of work and estimate has not changed. Mr. Stewart mentioned that there is a public survey up on our website through the end of May regarding the Route 62 study. The Route 58 study also performed a public survey, but has since been closed. The draft plan for the pedestrian/circulation study in Greenville recently wrapped up about a month ago and the review Committee provided their comments and forwarded them to the Consultant who will incorporate them into the final study soon. Next, the Mercer County Signal Improvement Study hired a consultant to look at the 102 signalized intersections in Mercer County to look for recommendations for low and moderate cost improvement to equipment and prioritize their recommendation. Lastly,

the 2019 traffic counting season will be starting soon. MCRPC will be setting fewer traffic counts this year, as well as other regions across the State, due to PennDOT hiring vendors to prepare traffic counts.

PRESENTATION: ASSET MANAGEMENT

Mr. Brian McNulty gave a presentation regarding the SVTS MPO Asset Management for betterment funds which are needed to maintain our interstates and to figure out how much money is needed to maintain these pavements in a cycle. Betterment projects could include resurfacing the pavement and up to 30% base repair to existing pavement; shoulder widening, adding climbing lanes and turn lane, etc. Resurfacing projects would be for paving projects which do not add structural capacity to the pavement. These are known as pavement preservation projects and typically consist of 2” of mill and overlay to preserve the underlying pavement structure and provide a smooth riding surface. In Mercer County, there are 741 state route miles; 116 interstate miles and 625 remain. The Betterment Network would include all NHS Routes except interstates; all routes carrying more than 3,000 vehicles per day and routes within the urban boundary, leaving 220 miles. An ideal paving cycle would be to resurface at 10 years, resurface again at 20 years with a betterment scheduled at 30 years. Betterment costs in 2019 per mile would be \$700k; resurfacing cost per mile would be \$300k and to maintain the 30 year and 10 year cycles in Mercer County, the annual investment would be \$9.5M per year. Our TIP cannot afford this funding cycle. The overall 2019 TIP funds is roughly \$14.5M and new betterment needs totals roughly \$7.9M versus prior betterment needs of \$4.5M. He noted that since construction costs have risen over the years, we are considering adding 3% per year for inflation towards the 2021 TIP Betterment Funds needed. He noted that this is for informational purposes only. (A copy is attached to and made a part of the permanent record of Minutes.) A question was asked about fabric being put in mixes on milled pavement. Mr. McNulty mentioned that they do put fabrics in mixes sometimes, and they have talked about plastic additives.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Stewart mentioned that we received a letter from PennDOT regarding the challenging conditions Pennsylvania faces to ensure steady funding for our highway and bridge infrastructure which its principal revenue source coming from our motor fuels taxes and over the long-term, this decline in gas tax revenues will become drastic. Congress has instructed the states to test new funding approaches that could ensure future resources for our transportation system needs. Pennsylvania is doing their part by participating in a test study project being conducted by the I-95 Corridor Coalition. The project will test the practicality of a mileage-based usage fee, an approach that would charge motorists for the mileage they travel on public roadways, instead of the fuel they consume. PennDOT has been tasked to sign up 450 Pennsylvanians from across the state to try out a plug-in mileage-recording device. Volunteers will be sent an artificial bill and no one will be charged a fee. The deadline to sign up is Friday, June 14th. Mr. Stewart asked that anyone who might be interested in participating to let him know, so that he could pass along information on how to participate.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion was made by Mr. Klumph and seconded by Ms. DiCintio to adjourn the meeting at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel M. Gracenin,
MPO Secretary

DMG/ew