

**SOUTHERN ALLEGHENIES
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

RURAL TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

October 9, 2024

9:00 AM

SAP&DC

Altoona, PA

ACTION SUMMARY

The following are the major actions taken by the Rural Transportation Technical Committee (RTTC) at its regular meeting held on October 9, 2024, at the SAP&DC in Altoona, PA.

1. Approved the June 12, 2024, RTTC meeting minutes as presented.
2. Recommended leaving the RTTC membership as is with addition of Cathie Beal as the non-motorized transportation representative and replacement of the Fulton County and Somerset County municipal representatives.
3. Retained Matthew Bjorkman as Chair of the RTTC.
4. Retained Lee Slusser as Vice Chair of the RTTC.

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MEETING MINUTES

I. Welcome

The following members were present at the meeting:

- Stephanie Clevenstine, Bedford County Planning Commission
- Rick Suder, Bedford County Planning Commission
- Tom McInroy, Bedford County Airport
- Justin Evans, Fulton County Planning Commission
- Laurie Nearhood, Huntingdon County Planning Commission
- Ron Rabena, Huntingdon County Rail Authority
- Stew Neff, Warriors Mark Township, Huntingdon County
- Anthony Molinari, Huntingdon-Bedford-Fulton Area Agency on Aging
- Chadd Sines, Somerset County Planning Commission
- Frank Hampton, PennDOT Central Office
- Jim Pruss, PennDOT Central Office
- Kenana Zejcirovic, FHWA
- Lee Slusser, SAP&DC
- Matthew Bjorkman, SAP&DC

Others in attendance included:

- Brian Fochman, Somerset County Commissioner
- Anne Stich, PennDOT District 9-0
- Jaclyn Himmelwright, PennDOT District 9-0
- Tyler Schurr, SAP&DC
- Janice Streightiff, SAP&DC

Each participant received a meeting packet that included:

- Agenda
- RTTC June 12, 2024 Meeting Minutes
- SA RPO FFY 2023 – 2026 TIP Adjustments
- FFY 2023 – 2026 Highway/Bridge Fiscal Constraint Chart
- RTTC Membership List

- UPWP and Statewide Planning and Research (SPR) Work Program Development Timeline
- Southern Alleghenies Greenways and Open Space Network Plan Update Scope of Work

II. Review and Approval of the June 12, 2024 RTTC Meeting Minutes

Matthew Bjorkman welcomed the committee to the meeting and conducted roll call. He introduced Tyler Schurr, the new Transportation Planner, to the committee as he started after the last meeting. He asked them to review the June 12, 2024, meeting minutes included in the meeting packet.

With no further discussion, Stew Neff made a motion to approve the June 12, 2024, RTTC meeting minutes as presented. Ron Rabena seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

III. FY 2023 – 2026 & FY 2025 – 2028 TIP Modifications

Jaclyn Himmelwright reviewed the addition of the multimodal projects that were part of this region's TIP funding. Three of the projects listed were the Middle Taylor Township Paving Project, Hammer Road Bridge Project, and Juniata Gap Lighting Project.

Anne reminded the committee that every year at end of the fiscal year, there is a redistribution to make sure the District is using all of its obligation authority. They can also request authority not used by other regions and States. She reviewed the PA – 31 Barn Swallow Road to the Somerset Borough Line project as an example. Sometimes they will take a project that is being funded over two years and just fully fund it in one year. These projects do not require a vote but were included for the committee's information.

For the next TIP update, there are some projects that will need to have some funds readded to the program. This will be done as a memo vote. They are cash flows onto the FY 2025 TIP. Anne reminded the committee that as of October 1, 2025, the TIP that was approved in June goes into effect and becomes the current TIP.

IV. FY 2027 – 2030 TIP

County Priorities

Matthew noted that on the last TIP, bridge projects started a new assessment process called Bridge Care. There was some discussion at the Planning Partners meeting about how bridges are assessed and selected. Due to the issues using Bridge Care last year, Matthew wanted to open the discussion early this year.

Anne noted that in previous TIP cycles each county reviewed the requests that came in and developed their county priority list. They should be approved by the County Commissioners before being sent to Matthew and then submitted to PennDOT. Anne requested PennDOT receive the county priority lists by January 1st to give PennDOT time to review them. Matthew has been reviewing the online project submission website and has downloaded the submissions and will be sending them to the County Planners. He will also send them the list of projects they submitted in the last two rounds, filtering out those that were programmed. Anne reminded them to be sure to include at least two ranked local bridges in their lists. The Local Bridge Subcommittee will then meet in early spring. When adding local bridges, the owner will need to submit a letter committing to the required match. State match is 20% and Federal is typically 5%. Bundling projects that are similar in nature can reduce that match. Someone asked if they need to use Bridge Care when selecting local bridge projects. Anne replied that there is a tool she could get them in the next month or so for risk assessment. PennDOT will be do the Bridge Care results after their projects are submitted.

V. 2025 RTTC Composition

Select Modal, At-large, and Municipal Representation

The RTTC membership is currently at the end of its two-year term. Matthew reviewed the makeup of the committee. Municipal and at-large representatives are determined by the County Commissioners. He asked if there was anyone who did not want to serve another term. There is currently a vacancy for the non-motorized transportation representative. At the RTCC meeting, they discussed offering that position to Cathie Beal, Somerset County Parks and Trails representative. Matthew is discussing the position with her and if she agrees, it will be finalized at the October RTCC meeting.

With no further discussion, Frank Hampton recommended leaving the RTTC membership as is with addition of Cathie Beal as the non-motorized transportation representative and replacement of the Fulton County and Somerset County municipal representatives. Jim Pruss seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Election of Officers

The current Chair of the RTTC is Matthew Bjorkman and Vice Chair is Lee Slusser.

With no further discussion, Frank Hampton made a motion to retain Matthew Bjorkman as Chair of the RTTC. Stew Neff seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

With no further discussion, Stew Neff made a motion to retain Lee Slusser as Vice Chair of the RTTC. Frank Hampton seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Meeting Schedule

Matthew reviewed the potential meeting dates for 2025 with the committee. These have not been approved by PennDOT yet. The recommendations were February 5, 2025, early May, early August and early December. Once PennDOT reviews the dates, Matt will send them out to the committee. Matt will send the dates to Jaclyn and Anne after the meeting.

VI. Other Business

FY 2025 – 2027 UPWP

Staff is currently developing the FY 2025 – 2027 UPWP. A development schedule is included in the meeting packet. Matthew will be sending it to PennDOT District 9, PennDOT Central Office, FHWA, and FTA for their comments. The UPWP has to be submitted by January 31st so a memo vote by the RTCC will be required to submit. Frank reminded Matthew that the Federal agencies need to have a 45-day review period before the memo vote.

Greenway Plan Update

Lee Slusser informed the committee that staff is currently putting together grant applications for a Greenway Plan update. Tyler put together the scope of work and the County Planners will review it at the PAC meeting this afternoon to be sure it reflects what is needed from the plan. Lee reviewed the timeline for the plan update. Staff is also looking to see if the counties are interested in doing a regional comprehensive plan update at the same time to save money. It is estimated that getting match and approvals will take a year. DCED is on board with the combined Greenway and Comprehensive Plan updates, but staff has not heard back from DCNR. Frank added there are also opportunities for active transportation and safety funding. The MPOs would be a possible source of funds as well. Anne asked if they are planning to update the old plan or do a completely new plan. Lee responded that he is not sure at this point but would imagine they will update the old. Staff did reach out and get some estimates for doing a greenway plan that came in at \$100,000 – \$300,000 thousand. The addition of the comprehensive plan will raise the price.

SMART Grant Update

SAP&DC applied for and received a grant from USDOT to provide drone delivery of emergency products. After phase one, which is proof of concept, if feasible phase two can be submitted. The grant agreement is expected in a few weeks. The project is located mostly in Johnstown but does cross the Somerset County border into Windber. The drones could be used to deliver emergency products such as Narcan, defibrillators, blood, and other medications/equipment to someone's front porch before first responders get there. They are building a network and there will be some challenges and limits. The early tests for this program have gone very well. The program is only two years old.

PennDOT Multimodal Grant Round Opening

The next PennDOT Multimodal grant round is open through November 5th so if you know of anyone who can benefit from that program let them know. There is SAP&DC staff (Ed

Locher, Community Capacity Coordinator) who can assist applicants to strengthen their applications. SAP&DC transportation staff cannot assist as they provide input for review.

Matthew introduced Kenana Zejcirovic, the new FHWA representative for the RPO. Kenana said hello to the committee and that she is excited to work with everyone.

Stew Neff asked if there is somewhere you can go to see how many miles of new State roads are added each year. PennDOT replied that on their website, there is a Highway Statistics book that comes out every year. You would have to subtract the miles from the year before to get just the last year. Anne and Frank will look for it and send it to Stew. Matthew has a copy of this year's and can send it to him.

Ron Rabena said there was a rockslide on Route 829 over the summer and they seal coated the road after the clean-up but left about a half a mile uncoated. He asked if that would be finished. Jim Pruss said he will look into it.

VII. Adjournment

Stew Neff made a motion to adjourn at 9:55 AM

<u>NOTE:</u> The next meeting of the RTTC is scheduled for February 5, 2025, at 9:00 AM at the SAP&DC in Altoona, PA.

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ACTION ITEMS

Action Items	By Whom	Due Date
Send Stew Neff this year's Highway Statistics book from the PennDOT website and look to see if he can find last year's as well.	Matthew Bjorkman, SAP&DC	No date given
Look into whether the last half mile of road will be seal coated on Route 829 following the rockslide.	Jim Pruss, PennDOT District 9-0	No date given