

PENNSYLVANIA STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
QUARTERLY MEETING MINUTES  
VALLEY FORGE, PENNSYLVANIA  
JUNE 18, 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 10:22 a.m. on Thursday, June 18, 2015 in Valley Forge, PA.

**ROLL CALL:**

**Commissioners Present:**

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

**MINUTES:**

Commissioner Charles. M. Martin requested a revision to the February 19, 2015 STC minutes to reflect that he was present at the meeting and not on the conference call.

**ON A MOTION** by Commissioner Cernic, seconded by Commissioner Wentz, and unanimously approved, the minutes of the February 19, 2015 STC quarterly business meeting were accepted as presented.

**SECRETARY'S OPENING REMARKS:**

Secretary Richards offered brief remarks on the morning's District 6-0 tour. The tour visited portions of Norristown and Montgomery County.

## **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 January 31, 2015 and May 15, 2015 there were 1,259 program adjustments.

Mr. Ritzman highlighted the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) region, noting a change of negative \$48 million. He explained that the negative change was due to modifications made to the automated reporting system as well as a project that was approved in the original TIP, however the project amount was incorrectly entered in the system. The project should have been entered for \$7.1 million instead of \$71 million. The report has been corrected and automated reporting systems are being examined for further discrepancies.

Mr. Ritzman also highlighted three projects in the city of Philadelphia:

- The Roosevelt Blvd. Study for \$5 million, which is a partnership between SEPTA, the city of Philadelphia, and PennDOT. The study, which is substantially funded by a USDOT TIGER grant, will focus on pedestrian safety.
- Philadelphia Bike Share Program for \$1.5 million. This project will increase the current 60 bike stations to 185 throughout the city.
- The Chestnut Street Bridge over the Schuylkill project for \$66 million. This project is being advanced due to cost savings on other projects.

### **Question**

**Q:** Commissioner Khoury asked why a project decrease shows a net positive, referencing page 35 in the Quarterly Meeting Briefing Book.

**A:** Mr. Ritzman explained that this was due to sequential calculations that appeared in the modified automated reports. He ensured the Commission that the Program Center staff is aware of the automated reporting issue and is working on a correction to the system.

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

## **WORKING SESSION**

### **Investment Plan**

Deputy Secretary Jim Ritzman delivered a brief report about the Investment Plan that is under development.

The investment plan is a guidance plan that is in line with the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and Linking Planning and NEPA (National Environmental Planning Act). It will link many different efforts within PennDOT to help target investment to where it is needed. . The Investment plan will help guide the development of the 2017 Twelve Year Program update.

## **2017 Twelve Year Program Public Comment Period Results**

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

The Public Participation process began on April 16, 2015 with an online public meeting attended by over 130 people and an online survey, which closed on May 29, 2015.

Ms. Clark indicated a substantial increase in public comment compared to the 2015 Twelve Year Program public comment period. More than 5,300 customers completed the survey identifying over 15,000 transportation issues. This is more than double the previous survey. These results were also shared with the Planning Partners at the June Planning Partners Meeting.

Ms. Clark attributed much of the success of this public comment period to public outreach tools including:

- Director's Challenge issued to the planning partners from the Program Center
- Launching a social media campaign that included a Twitter handle and a custom hashtag

The public participation process also began six months earlier than the 2015 Twelve Year Program public comment period so that comments received could provide more timely aid to the Planning Partners as they develop their regional TIPs.

Ms. Leanne Doran discussed the survey results. Pavement conditions, Safety, and Walking and biking were the top three issues recorded among the 15,000 comments from survey participants. Of the Investment priorities, pavement conditions, bridges, and safety were the top three concerns.

The STC will once again to be involved in Planning Partner meetings during the TIP development process of the 2017 Twelve Year Program update. Each STC member is assigned to a planning partner, and will attend the pre-TIP public meetings. Toolkits for STC members are in development, and will be shared with the STC at the September 10, 2015 STC Quarterly Meeting in Wellsboro, PA.

### **Questions**

**Q:** Commissioner Martin asked if there were any efforts by advocacy groups to skew the data in their favor.

**A:** Ms. Clark and Ms. Doran stated that this can occur and that an analysis is currently being conducted to determine whether this had occurred.

**Q:** Mr. Eric Bugaile (alternate for Commissioner Taylor) asked if intercity transport comments were listed under the Public Transit category.

**A:** Ms. Doran responded that bus and rail were considered different modes. Commuter and intercity rail were not given separate categories.

**Q:** Commissioner Drnevich asked if people were indicating that they knew the difference between local and state bridges, how each is funded, and whether the state had an inventory of

local bridges. **A:** Deputy Secretary Ritzman stated that PennDOT has an inventory of local bridges over 20 feet long. For bridges between 8 and 20 feet, there is no federal money available for inspection because bridges less than 20 feet long are not categorized as bridges by the Federal government.

## **REPORTS:**

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

Mr. Lou Shultz, TAC Chairman, discussed the Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations Study, which will begin pending the hire of a new bicycle and pedestrian coordinator. The study will be a deep comprehensive look at the issues of bicycle and pedestrians and will include policy recommendations. The next TAC meeting will be on October 8, 2015 in 8N1 in the Keystone Building.

### **Administrative/Budget**

Deputy Secretary Suzanne Itzko was not in attendance; her report stands as written.

### **Driver and Vehicle Services**

Deputy Secretary Kurt Myers presented a brief report for Driver and Vehicle Services, highlighting PRISM (Performance and Registration Information Systems Management). PRISM has eight steps which are designed to reduce the number of commercial vehicle crashes. Pennsylvania is already in compliance with seven of the steps; the eighth will require legislation.

Seasonal fluctuations in drivers licensing were also discussed.

### **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.
- SD bridges continue to trend downward
- Number of SD bridges is under 4,000.

Mr. Christie noted that the number of posted bridges spiked because Pennsylvania had strengthened its standards on bridge postings. The number of posted bridges, however, is trending downward. He also noted that the poor IRI has increased because the highway and bridge program has focused on bridges rather than highway pavement. Safety projects are also being targeted in areas with high fatalities.

Winter services cost more than expected due to the snowy winter of 2014/2015 with \$63 million spent in excess of the \$203 million that had been budgeted. The increase in price of rock salt contributed to the higher costs.

Mr. Christie stated, however, that the prices of asphalt and crude oil were trending downward, so the cost of paving contracts would not increase. Mr. Christie stated that an app was under development that would display the location of snowplow trucks during winter storm events.

Project delivery and construction performance continues to be consistent in delivering projects on time. Pennsylvania's performance on delivering and construction projects on budget is in line with national standards.

### **Questions**

**Q:** Mr. Nolan Ritchie (alternate for Senator John Rafferty) asked if Pennsylvania was still ranked 50<sup>th</sup> in terms of the number of SD bridges.

**A:** Mr. Christie responded that Pennsylvania was still toward the bottom, but that the state was gaining ground on SD bridges and was rehabilitating or reconstructing more bridges than those becoming structurally deficient every year. Local bridges, however, are not being fixed at a rate to drive the number of structurally deficient bridges downwards.

**Q:** Mr. Ritchie followed up by asking how different communities and business sectors were responding to bridge postings.

**A:** Mr. Christie stated that PennDOT does a formal outreach to all affected communities and partners.

### **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. He highlighted Publication 772, the Office of Planning Partnering with Pennsylvania Local Governments document. The publication describes the support for local governments provided by the Office of Planning. It was provided to the Commission during the meeting.

Mr. Ritzman stated that Federal funding continues to be uncertain. MAP-21 expired on September 30, 2014, and the continuing resolution ends on July 31, 2015. The Highway Trust Fund will become insolvent toward the end of August.

The Office of Planning has implemented PennShare which allows the Department to relay geographic data to the Planning Partners. GIS-IQ is also active.

The research program in the Office of Planning participated in the Pennsylvania Consortium of Transportation Universities (PaCTU). Mr. Ritzman reported that Penn State would develop a report on the meeting.

Mr. Ritzman stated that the Public-Private Partnership (P3) Office has been moved to the Office of Planning, and Mr. Michael Bonini has been appointed the director of the office.

### **Other Comments**

The Secretary thanked District 6-0 staff for coordinating the tour and SEPTA for providing the tour's transportation. The planning for the upcoming Papal Visit in Philadelphia during the weekend of September 25, 2015 was discussed.

The Secretary recognized Ms. Julie Harmantzis, Executive Secretary for the State Transportation Commission, who will be joining the Multimodal Deputate.

**Commissioner Reports**

Commissioner Cernic reported on a landslide in Johnstown and provided photographs of the event.

**Open Public Comment**

No comments were offered during the open public comment period.

**NEXT MEETING:**

The next STC quarterly business meeting is scheduled on Thursday, September 10, 2015, in Wellsboro, Pennsylvania.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**ON A MOTION** by Commissioner Cernic and seconded by Commissioner Wentz, the STC quarterly business meeting was adjourned at 12:11 p.m.