

Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission
Minutes of the Meeting of
January 31, 2005
Regional Enterprise Tower - 425 Sixth Avenue - Pittsburgh, PA 15219
4:30 p.m.

The forty-fifth meeting of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission and the fifty-fourth meeting of the Executive Committee was called to order by the Chairman, Dave Coder.

Commission Commissioners present were: Glenn Anderson, Tom Balya, Bracken Burns, Charles Camp, Tom Ceraso, Dave Coder, Steve Craig, Robert DeLotto, James Gagliano, Jr., John Gardner, Susan Golomb, Eloise Hirsh, Karl Ishman, Dave Johnston, James Kennedy, Ellen Kight, Larry King, Allen Kukovich, Larry Maggi, Robbie Matesic, Larry Morris, Henry Nutbrown, Michael O'Barto, Dan Onorato, William Piper, Carmen Rozzi, Daniel Santoro, Larry Shifflet, Paul Skoutelas, Michael Silvestri, Bernie Smith, Mark Snyder, Pam Snyder, Joe Spanik, Anthony Spossey, Vincent Vicites, Joseph Widmer, Norma Wintermyer and Charles Zappala.

Commission Commissioners absent were: Tom Balya, Ann Bargerstock, Susan Borinsky, Eric Carlson, Orlando Capretto, James Cheatham, Dan Donatella, Rich Fink, Edward Fosnaught, David Frick, Joe Hardy, Dana Henry, Richard Hogg, Jay Jabbour, Patty Kirkpatrick, Scott Lowe, David Miller, Tom Murphy, William Peduto, Andrew Quinn, Rod Ruddock, James Saylor, Jim Scahill, Mark Schneider, Dick Shaw, Byron Stauffer, Joe Szczur, Dan Vogler, Vincent Vicites, Gealy Wallwork, and Angela Zimmerlink.

Others: Georgia Berner, Rob Lent, Maher Duessel CPAs; Jeffrey Arch, PB Farradyne; William Hunt, Cheryl Moon-Sirianni, PENNDOT; Lynn Heckman, Allegheny County Economic Development Department; Joe Grata, Pittsburgh Post Gazette; Jim Ritchie, Pittsburgh Tribune-Review; Harold Miller, Jan Lauer, Cecilia Cagni, and Dewitt Peart, Allegheny Conference; Marilyn Skolnick, Sierra Club; David Ginns, Sustainable Pittsburgh; Jon Smith, Allegheny County Transit Council; and John Verbanac and Marshall Bridgewater, SPC Consultants.

Staff: Jim Hassinger, Kirk Brethauer, Chuck DiPietro, Vince Massaro, Lew Villotti, Ken Flack, Chuck Imbrogno, Shannon O'Connell, Donna Riling, Kay Tomko, Debbie Tritsch, and Carol Uminski.

1. Action on Minutes of the December 6th Meeting:

The minutes of the December 6, 2004 meeting of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission were approved on a motion by Commissioner Smith which was seconded by Commissioner Ceraso. The affirmative vote was unanimous.

2. Public Comment:

There is no public comment.

3. Financial Report

Mr. Massaro presented the combined revenue and expense statement for the period from July 1, 2004 to December 31, 2004. It is for the Corporation, Commission and Regional Enterprise Tower. Total project related revenues recognized for the period were \$3.9 million or 44% of the revised annual budget. Carryover revenues from prior years were \$161,000 or 25% of the budget. Regional Enterprise Tower Operations rents were \$2.1 million or 43% of the budget. New line item entered into the financials is the anticipated drawdown from the Alcoa Endowment of \$425,000. Total revenues for the period were \$6.5 million or 43% of the budget.

Total project related expenditures were \$3.9 million or 44% of the budget. Total carryover project related expenditures were \$161,000 or 25% of the budget. Total Regional Enterprise Tower operations, before amortization or depreciation, were \$2.1 million or 44% of the budget.

Total SPC combined expenditures were \$6.9 million or 41% of the budget.

4. Action on Resolution 1-05 to Approve Draft 2005-2006 Unified Planning Work Program

This action is to approve submission of the 2005-2006 Draft Unified Planning Work Program to the appropriate funding agencies. The program covers July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006. We are requesting your action today. There was a discussion with the Executive Committee earlier today – they are recommending approval. The full document was part of the advanced mail out. The document outlines all the transportation planning activities we propose doing in the next fiscal year.

In developing this document, guidance comes to us in a variety of ways: original federal transportation legislation (TEA-21), annual FTA/FHWA guidance, and annual PennDOT guidance.

In addition, in mid-November a survey was sent to the Commissioners to seek priority guidance as we allocate time, human resources and funds in the UPWP to further the Commission's goals of being the planner for the region, doing planning that drives advocacy, and making the case for additional resources. Top priorities from the Commissioners' survey results included: support economic vitality, preserve existing system, project delivery and increase safety.

The draft 2005-2006 UPWP submission totals \$4.4 million (86% federal/state; 7% SPC; and 7% other local). Resources in the draft 2005-2006 are directed as follows: 40% to Maintaining Database and Modeling, 22% to Transportation Plans and Programs, 18% to Modal Planning and Systems Operations/Management, 11% to Projects to Assist PennDOT, and 9% to Program Administration.

Priority Activities in the 2005-2006 Draft UPWP include: Long Range Plan Update, TIP Undated, Coordination with the State's Mobility Plan, and Advance Planning Support for All Member Governments.

The request before the Commission, today, is for approval to submit the UPWP to Funding Agencies to ensure funding approvals are in place before July 1, 2005. The final 2005-2006 UPWP will be integrated with the overall SPC Budget in June 2005.

Commissioner Camp moved:

WHEREAS, the 2005-2006 Unified Planning Work Program documents all transportation and transportation-related planning activities to be undertaken within the SPC region from July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006; and

WHEREAS, the 2005-2006 Unified Planning Work Program identifies planning tasks to be performed by SPC staff and the staffs of the member Counties, the City of Pittsburgh, and the Port Authority of Allegheny County using planning assistance funding from the Federal Highway Administrative, the Federal Aviation Administration, the Federal Transit Administration, and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission approves submission of the 2005-2006 Unified Planning Work Program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Executive Director, on behalf of SPC, is hereby authorized to enter into Agreements and/or Supplements with the Federal Transit Administration and the Federal Aviation Administration of the Department of Transportation, and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation relating to the 2005-2006 Unified Planning Work Program and pursuant to application requests; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Executive Director, on behalf of SPC, is authorized to enter into Contracts with the Counties of Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Lawrence, Washington, Westmoreland, the City of Pittsburgh, and the Port Authority of Allegheny County covering work items delineated in the 2005-2006 Unified Planning Work Program.

Commissioner Silvestri seconded and the affirmative vote was unanimous

Commission Coder welcomed new members: Governor's Office, Allen Kukovich and Lawrence County, Carmen Rozzi, Citizen Representative and Georgia Berner, Private Sector, Southwestern Pennsylvania Corporation.

5. Action on Resolution 2-05 to Amend the 2005-2008 Transportation Improvement Program in Response to Governor Rendell's Request to Flex \$3.5 Million in Federal Highway Funds currently on TIP to the Port Authority of Allegheny County.

Just before Christmas, the Governor asked for our help to advance an interim solution to the transit crisis that is faced across the state by all the transit operators. We have been working through January with your planning departments to respond to the Governor's request for stop gap funding assistance to the Port Authority Transit and the crisis they are now facing. The Governor's request before the Commission is to flex \$3.5 million in Title I highway program funds to the Port Authority of Allegheny County. The detailed project sources are listed in the

resolution. The Governor is working with the general assembly to come up with a permanent dedicated solution.

Commissioner Kukovich moved:

WHEREAS, transit agencies throughout the Commonwealth and all of southwestern Pennsylvania are facing a funding crisis; and

WHEREAS, Governor Rendell has requested the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission to flex \$3.5 million in federal highway funds to the Port Authority of Allegheny County to provide interim assistance to the Port Authority's immediate operating budget crisis; and

WHEREAS, the Governor has stated that the amount of money taken out of the statewide highway program over the past two years will reach \$40 million with this request (\$13.5 million from southwestern Pennsylvania alone) at a time when the highway budget is under great strain and cannot adequately repair and maintain the roads and bridges that we have now; and

WHEREAS, the Governor has further stated that using highway program funding to close the entire transit agency funding shortfall is not a responsible action for a number of clearly defined reasons – that the request to flex the highway funds is a last resort – and that approval of any future flex requests by the MPO or federal government will be even more uncertain to deliver; and

WHEREAS, this request is a last resort, stop-gap public transit funding strategy designed to forestall fare increases and service cuts until the Governor, working with the General Assembly, can create legislation to put in place a permanent dedicated funding program for public transit; and

WHEREAS, SPC's Transportation Technical Committee members have worked carefully and conscientiously with the SPC member Planning Directors on a regional response to the Governor's \$3.5 million highway flex request so as to close the transit funding gap while minimizing the impact on existing programmed projects as much as possible; and

WHEREAS, that in the future our limited highway dollars should first be used to repair our existing roads and bridges, not close holes in the transit budget; and

WHEREAS, the SPC Executive Committee has reviewed these recommendations and recommends the flexing of a total of \$3.5 million (federal) in Title I highway program funds to the Port Authority of Allegheny County as an interim response to the transit funding crisis. Project sources are identified in the following list:

Federal Amount to Flex

| | |
|---|-------------|
| I-79 from Route 910 to the Butler County line | \$2,677,500 |
| Project Management 2, City of Pittsburgh | 400,000 |
| Mansfield Bridge, Allegheny County | 261,500 |
| Green Garden Road Bridge, Beaver County | 15,000 |
| Spaces Corner 3R, Armstrong County | 15,000 |
| Route 228 Improvements, Butler County | 15,000 |
| SR-21 Kiwi Road/I-79 Intersection, Greene County | 16,000 |
| I-70 Master Plan, Washington County | 25,000 |
| SR 31 @ Turnpike exit 9, Donegal, Westmoreland County | 75,000 |

WHEREAS, the proposed amendments have been reviewed by the Transportation Technical Committee and recommended for approval in accordance with SPC's TIP amendment policies and public involvement process; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendments maintain overall TIP fiscal balance; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendments will not interfere with the implementation of any STIP project; and

WHEREAS, approval of this amendment to the 2005-2008 TIP will not alter the finding of conformity between 2005-2008 TIP and the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission approves the requested amendment to the 2005-2008 TIP.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Executive Director is authorized to work with PennDOT, the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration so that the category of funding meets federal flex requirements.

Commissioner Snyder seconded and the affirmative vote was unanimous with one nay vote cast by Commissioner Ceraso.

6. Action on Resolution 3-05 to Amend the 2005-2008 Transportation Improvement Program

The Transportation Technical Committee at its January 20th meeting recommended Commission approval of the following amendments to the TIP:

1. Add the Center Avenue (New Stanton Borough) right of way phase (\$500,000 State FFY 2005 and (\$5,000,000 State) FFY 2006.

This project consists of widening Center Avenue from two to three lanes from the intersection with Byers Avenue to near Broadview Avenue with the new construction of a two lane roadway over the PA Turnpike tied to Arona Road.

The source of funds for this increase are from reducing the construction costs from the Three Mile Hill project by (state \$500,000) FFY 2005, (state \$2,050,000 FFY 2006 and (state \$2,950,000) FFY 2006.

2. Increase the SR 22 (BO2 Export to Delmont) construction phase (\$111,000 federal \$27,750 state) FFY 2005, (\$200,000 federal \$50,000 state) FFY 2006, (\$2,000,000 federal \$500,000 state) FFY 2007 and (\$2,480,000 federal \$620,000 state) FFY 2008.

This project involves reconstruction to four lanes with an eighteen foot median with a two foot concrete median barrier and installation of a new traffic signal and upgrade of four existing signals. This costs increase will provide funding to match the low bid. The source of funds for this increase are from deferring the construction costs from the SR 30/981 Intersection project by (\$111,000 federal/state \$27,750) FFY 2005 and (\$200,000 federal/state \$50,000) FFY 2006 and deferring by 1 year Parnassus Triangle Phase 2 (\$2,000,000 federal/state \$500,000) FFY 2007 and decreasing SR 4002 North Greengate Road (\$2,480,000 federal/state \$620,000) FFY 2008.

Commissioner Balya moved:

WHEREAS, PENNDOT District 12-0 requests the following amendments to the region's 2005-2008 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP):

1. Add the Center Avenue (New Stanton Borough) right of way phase (\$500,000 State) FFY 2005 and (\$5,000,000 State) FFY 2006.

This project consists of widening Center Avenue from two to three lanes from the intersection with Byers Avenue to near Broadview Avenue with the new construction of a two lane roadway over the Pennsylvania Turnpike tied to Arona Road.

The source of funds for this increase are from reducing the construction costs from the Three Mile Hill project by (state \$500,000) FFY 2005, (state \$2,050,000) FFY 2006 and (state \$2,950,000) FFY 2006.

2. Increase the SR 22 (BO2 Export to Delmont) construction phase (\$111,000 federal \$27,750 state) FFY 2005, (\$200,000 federal \$50,000 state) FFY 2006, (\$2,000,000 federal \$500,000 state) FFY 2007 and (\$2,480,000 federal \$620,000 state) FFY 2008.

This project involves reconstruction to four lanes with an eighteen foot median with a two foot concrete median barrier and installation of a new traffic signal and upgrade of four existing signals. This cost increase will provide funding to match the low bid.

The source of funds for this increase are from deferring the construction costs from the SR 30/981 Intersection project by (\$111,000 federal/state \$27,750) FFY 2005 and (\$200,000 federal/state \$50,000) FFY 2006 and deferring by 1 year Parnassus Triangle

Phase 2 (\$2,000,000 federal/state \$500,000) FFY 2007 and decreasing SR 4002 North Greengate Road (\$2,480,000 federal/state \$620,000) FFY2008.

WHEREAS, the proposed amendments have been reviewed by the Transportation Technical Committee and recommended for approval in accordance with SPC's TIP amendment policies and public involvement process; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendments maintain overall TIP fiscal balance; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendments will not interfere with the implementation of any STIP project; and

WHEREAS, approval of this amendment to the 2005-2008 TIP will not alter the finding of conformity between 2005-2008 TIP and the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission approves these amendments to the 2005-2008 TIP.

Commissioner Widmer seconded and the affirmative vote was unanimous.

7. Hometown Streets/Safe Routes to School Program Status Report

In December 2004, we submitted 16 projects that totaled \$7.1 Million. The State Transportation Commission took action on Thursday, January 27, 2005 and approved 19 projects in the region. They funded \$9.9 million worth of projects. We did quite well in the first round of programs. We used about one third of our allocation with the action we took last month. This is a robust program across our ten counties. We plan to continue to aggressively pursue funding for our region in the next cycle.

8. Staff Report/Other Business/Announcements

SPC is making progress with things that are important to you as you have told us. You have been successful with programs like Hometown Streets because your staff has worked together to develop strategies that are very effective. We received double the funding of other areas because of the teamwork.

You worked together to create a response at a regional level however difficult the task to fill the gap that was urgent for transit funding. We did that as a region. The majority of the region was able to find projects that could be deferred to meet the emergency and you in fact did better than our colleagues in Southeastern Pennsylvania. Only two counties in southeastern Pennsylvania were able to find money to do that. So we have done better than other places we do look on occasion for examples. So you are to be congratulated.

We have the Intergovernmental Committee that has been developed and we are working very hard with all of the members to identify key regional priorities that need to be advanced through our representatives in Washington, DC and in Harrisburg. We will work with our advocate partners and you to advance projects.

As we develop the new plan, we will seek first to understand your concerns, opportunities, input from public participation panels, civic groups and look for opportunities throughout the entire region. We will have meetings where we get invited to participate to seek input (do this as early as May – a major meeting that Sustainable Pittsburgh has planned). We want you to know that our staff is committed to what you are committed to in working together to make cooperation both more effective and more visible for you and we will continue to do that. Again, you are to be congratulated in your hard work.

Lew Villotti provided an update on where we stand with the development of the plan. He emphasized the substantive and recent input from the individual county public participation panels through workshops.

At the Public Participation Panel workshops, we give a brief presentation on what the plan process is and give the participants a chance to comment. We also walk the participants through a series of questions in a questionnaire and have them concentrate not on the answers at this phase but on the questions themselves. Each time we go back and change the questions a little bit based upon what we are hearing as feedback. We are using a hardware/software combination called Turning Point. It allows interactive voting and that technology seems to be a good conversation generator. The process is going very well and we continue to look at the other regions across the country and incorporate what they do and come back to you for your suggestions. We look forward to hopefully giving you a report when we go to Nemaquin.

The next meeting of the Commission will be on April 25, 2005 at 4:30 p.m.

9. Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the Commission or the Executive Committee, the meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan Onorato
Secretary-Treasurer