

Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission
Minutes of the Meeting of
September 24, 2007 – 4:30 p.m.
31st Floor – Regional Enterprise Tower – 425 Sixth Avenue – Pittsburgh, PA 15219

The sixty-fourth meeting of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission was called to order by Chairman Bracken Burns.

Commission members present were: Stephen Bland, Andrew Boni, Bracken Burns, Charles Camp, Daniel Cessna, Robert DeLotto, Lynn Heckman, James Kennedy, Phil Light, Jack Machek, Larry Maggi, Robbie Matesic, Kevin McCullough, David Miller, Dan Onorato, Jim Ritzman, Carmen Rozzi, Rodney Ruddock, Mark Schneider, Michael Silvestri, Pam Snyder, Joe Spanik, Vincent Vicites, Gealy Wallwork, Norma Wintermeyer, and Yarone Zober.

Commission members absent were: Glenn Anderson, Tom Balya, Orlando Capretto, Eric Carlson, Tom Ceraso, James Cheatham, Dave Coder, Steve Craig, Dan Donatella, Joseph Dubovi III, Patricia Evanko, Richard Fink, Patrick Ford, Edward Fosnaught, David Frick, Jim Gagliano, Jr., Judy Gardner, Kevin Gray, Joseph Hardy, Dana Henry, David Johnston, Patricia Kirkpatrick, Allen Kukovich, Mark Lay, Scott Lowe, Terry McMillen, Larry Morris, Henry Nutbrown, William Peduto, Andrew Quinn, Luke Ravenstahl, Daniel Santoro, James Scahill, Richard Shaw, Mark Snyder, Anthony Spossey, Byron Stauffer, Jr., Joe Szczur, Letitia Thompson, Daniel Vogler, Jake Wheatley, and Angela Zimmerlink.

Others: Jon Smith, ACTC; Marilyn Skolnick, Sierra Club; and John Verbanac, SPC Consultant.

Staff: Jim Hassinger, Kirk Brethauer, Jill Byers, Jamie Colecchi, Chuck DiPietro, Chuck Imbrogno, Vince Massaro, Shannon O'Connell, Dee Pamplin, Doug Smith, Kay Tomko, Debbie Tritsch, and Lew Villotti.

1. Action on Minutes of the June 28th Meeting

The minutes of the June 28, 2007 meeting of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission were approved on a motion by Commissioner Camp which was seconded by Commissioner Boni. The affirmative vote was unanimous.

2. Public Comment

None.

3. Financial Report

Mr. Massaro highlighted the financial report for the SPC Corporation, SPC Commission and the operations of the Regional Enterprise Tower through June 30, 2007. Total project related budgeted revenues and expenditure items for the current year are \$10,071,913 and actual to-date accounted for is \$9,687,000 or 96% of the budget accounted for. The Regional Enterprise Tower operations total budgeted revenues are \$5,491,000 including \$200,000 from the endowment. The amount budgeted for the endowment was \$200,000 and we actually drew down, including interest, \$204,171. The Regional Enterprise Tower is at 86% occupancy through June and cash flow remains positive through June.

The auditors from Maher & Duessel are starting the annual audit for SPC and we should have a draft audit report to the SPC Audit Committee by the first week of November.

David Miller asked if in future years will there be enough cash flow that we can continue to make requisite investments in the building or as the rate of depreciation is greater than our cash flow is that going to be a problem. Mr. Massaro responded that it should not be a problem as long as we continue to have occupancy above 83%.

Chairman Burns asked Mr. Massaro at a future meeting to present to the Commission the history of the occupancy since SPC took ownership.

The financial report was approved on a motion by Commissioner Kennedy which was seconded by Commissioner Maggi. The affirmative vote was unanimous.

4. Economic Development Plan Implementation: Economic Development Committee Work to Evaluate Economic Development Projects

Mr. Villotti reported how the Economic Development Strategy Committee discussed the implementation of the Plan and how to assure that projects are consistent with the Plan. The Committee's three major tasks are assembling the appropriations project to take to the IGA Committee and when available to assemble and review at the RCAP program. The second task is to look at the economic development review of transportation projects. The final task is the CEDS, EDA and ARC project evaluation. The EDA funds projects selected by SPC in its role as the Economic Development District. EDA gives approximately \$1M each year for economic development projects and they look for one project submission a year. EDA does a pre-screening for eligible projects. One of the two requirements that has to be met is per capita income or unemployment rate. The location of the project has to be at 80% of the per capita income for a 24-month period. The unemployment rate has to be one point worse than the national average for a 24-month period. Additionally, it should match at least one Plan policy statement. In project evaluation 50% of the weight for a project is on the Plan policy statements.

Chairman Burns welcomed Yarone Zober, Chief of Staff for Mayor Ravenstahl, who is a new member and Jack Machek, representing DCED who is attending his first meeting.

5. Transportation Plan Implementation: Congestion Management Process and Technical Project Evaluation

Mr. Smith delivered a presentation illustrating how transportation and economic development continue to be integrated as SPC moves forward with Plan implementation. Two policy statements included in the Plan are "the region's transportation system will be actively managed and operated to allow the system to function at its full potential," and, "transportation and development choices will reflect a priority on multimodal and intermodal networks for both people and goods." One of the planning programs that SPC conducts that is directly aimed at these two goals is our regional Congestion Management Process (CMP). Mr. Smith provided an overview of this process. What SPC will be doing over the next month or two is convening four work groups throughout the region where we will provide background on the CMP process, review the data and analysis that we've gathered over the last few years, and get input on appropriate congestion management strategies for each CMP corridor. These working group meetings will be geared to the transportation practitioners who deal with these corridors on a daily basis – the municipal managers, PennDOT, transit agencies, and county planners.

Ultimately, what we are asking is their assessment of congestion management strategies for the corridors in their area so we can identify which strategies are likely to have the most benefits and how easy or difficult each strategy is likely to be implemented, which will help us in prioritizing strategies for each corridor. The prioritization of these strategies will then be used as input to the technical project evaluation processes for the TIP, including the CMAQ program. By being part of regional planning programs like the Congestion Management Process, local officials and transportation practitioners can weigh in on the congestion strategies they think should be the highest priority for the corridors in their area, which will have a direct influence on the TIP development process. Also, the CMP is set up to monitor the effectiveness of these different strategies as they are implemented in order to provide a feedback loop back into the planning process, which will help us in the next Plan update.

6. Transportation Plan Implementation: 2009-2012 TIP Development

Mr. DiPietro summarized the 2009-2012 TIP Development activities already underway, including the May/June PPP public meetings, the member planning departments initial work sessions in September, the September 13th joint meeting of the TOC and TTC, and the August 29th STC Public Hearing at Southpointe.

The TIP is the delivery mechanism for advancing all transportation investments in the 2035 Plan. The new TIP will be in place by summer of 2008. The 2035 Plan will drive investment decisions in this TIP update.

The September member planning department work sessions focused on: 1) identifying critical schedule deadlines; 2) advancing coordination consistent with statewide process; 3) advancing early coordination between all programming partners; 4) beginning TIP update tasks; and 5) focusing on database needs. A second round of planning department work sessions is scheduled for October.

The joint TOC/TTC meeting on September 13th coverage included: 1) statewide schedule; 2) statewide general & procedural guidance; 3) statewide financial guidance; 4) project evaluation of candidate projects; 5) CMAQ process & Evaluation Committee; 6) air quality non-neural projects; 7) SAFETEA-LU compliance checks; 8) public involvement coordination; 9) TIP revision procedures; and 10) year of expenditure.

Finally, key statewide schedule deadlines were highlighted:

- October 2-3 – Statewide Planning Partners –Altoona
- October 15 – Updated project scopes/costs/schedules due
- January 25, 2008 – Preliminary Draft TIP to Harrisburg
- February 29, 2008 – Harrisburg response (including “Spike”)
- March 28, 2008 – Closure on Draft TIP
- May/June 2008 – Public Comment on Draft TIP (plus Air Quality & EJ documentation)
- June 30, 2008 – Request Commission TIP adoption

SPC has been asked to host the Statewide Planning Partners meeting in October of 2008.

7. Action on Resolution 16-07 to Amend the 2007-2009 Unified Planning Work Program

Mr. DiPietro presented an amendment request to a current UPWP project that was brought to the Commission last January. The Access-to-Work Intergovernmental Cooperative (ATWIC) provides assistance to the region's urban and rural JARC Program project sponsors. The budget was originally at \$50,000 for staff support services only. This amendment will transfer an additional \$160,000 to SPC for grant management and consultant contracting of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Public Transit-Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan. It comes from federal Job Access Reverse Commute (\$80,000), and New Freedoms Initiative (\$80,000). No local match is required. Originally, SPC was going to only manage the contract, with payment by the Port Authority. At the end of July, the Port Authority approved SPC handling both management and payment of the contract.

Resolution 16-07 was approved on a motion by Commissioner Light which was seconded by Commissioner Maggi. The affirmative vote was unanimous.

8. Staff Report/Other Business Announcements

Dr. Hassinger noted a number of upcoming workshops with member staff based on presentations made today. Reminder that December 10th is the meeting date in which we conduct annual business of the Commission and Corporation.

Next meeting date – December 10, 2007 Annual Meeting

9. New Business

None.

10. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles A. Camp
Secretary-Treasurer