

Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission
Minutes of the Meeting of
April 25, 2011 – 4:30 p.m.

31st Floor • Regional Enterprise Tower • 425 Sixth Avenue • Pittsburgh, PA 15219

The eighty-ninth meeting of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission was called to order by Chairman Charles Camp.

Commission members present were: Charles Camp, Tom Ceraso, Daniel Cessna, Joe Grata, Robert Johnson, Dave Johnston, Patricia Kirkpatrick, Larry Maggi, Robbie Matesic, Kevin McCullough, David Miller, Mary Jo Morandini, William Peduto, A. Dale Pinkerton, Rod Ruddock, Kelly Shroads, Michael Silvestri, Joe Spanik, Anthony Spossey, and Wendy Stern.

Commission members absent were: Tony Amadio, Tom Balya, Shirl Barnhart, Stephen Bland, Andrew Boni, Bracken Burns, Jack Cohen, Steve Craig, Terry Daughenbaugh, Rick DeBlasio, Joseph Dubovi, Karl Eisaman, Patricia Evanko, Richard Fink, David Frick, Jim Gagliano, Jr., Kevin Gray, Jessica Greathouse, Dana Henry, Lynn Heckman, Jim Kennedy, Ted Kopas, James Lokhaiser, Robert Macey, Dan Onorato, Luke Ravenstahl, James Ritzman, Carmen Rozzi, Jim Scahill, Mark Schneider, Richard Shaw, Dan Shimshock, Renee Sigel, Mark Snyder, Pam Snyder, Byron Stauffer, Jr., Rob Stephany, Joe Szczur, Letitia Thompson, Archie Trader, Vincent Vicites, Daniel Vogler, Gealy Wallwork, Norma Wintermyer, Jake Wheatley, Jr., Vincent Zapotosky, and Yarone Zober.

Staff: Jim Hassinger, Kirk Brethauer, Chuck DiPietro, Chuck Imbrogno, Vince Massaro, Marge Nalesnick, Shannon O'Connell, Dee Pamplin, Matt Pavlosky, Rachel Roché, Lisa Kay Schweyer, Kay Tomko, Bob Villella, and Lew Villotti.

Others: Jon Smith, Allegheny County Transit Council; and John Verbanac.

1. Action on Minutes of the February 28th Meeting

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the February 28, 2011 meeting of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission by Michael Silvestri, which was seconded by Patricia Kirkpatrick. The affirmative vote to approve the minutes was unanimous.

2. Public Comment None

3. Action on Resolution 5-11 to Adopt Updated Public Participation Plan – Matt Pavlosky

Matt Pavlosky gave a brief summary of the Draft Updated SPC Public Participation Plan (PPP). The 2007 Plan served as a starting point. We enhanced the Plan by making it a full color document, making it more accessible, expanding the content, and adding an SPC Resource Center making it easier for people to contact SPC, our transit agencies and PennDOT. We reached out to the public through targeted outreach, including municipal public meetings. A presentation was made to GoBurgh, a community group in the Pittsburgh region focusing on transit, and the Community

Outreach Network that brings together service providers throughout the southwestern Pennsylvania region. A background video was included explaining what the Plan does and how it involves people. We included our “Go Paperless” initiative that asks our libraries to have computer services available for people to come to the libraries at a kiosk and download this information. The outreach meeting attendance was 65. Plan video downloads from our website totaled 115 since April 1. The actual Plan has been downloaded 406 times, and public comments totaled 4. We are here today for Commission approval of Resolution 5-11.

Commissioner Ceraso motioned to approve Resolution 5-11 the Updated Public Participation Plan:

WHEREAS, the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission has a shared obligation with the public to identify, define, evaluate and address the objectives, needs and alternatives for all modes of the region’s transportation system; and

WHEREAS, communication with the public contributes to more effective and innovative transportation planning that is representative of and responsive to the needs of the entire region; and

WHEREAS, a defined public Participation Plan is necessary and desirable as it provides a framework for the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission to conduct an open process that elicits the input and active involvement of all affected individuals, groups and communities from the earliest planning stages; and

WHEREAS, the procedures described in the updated Public Participation Plan help ensure that regional planning efforts “include a proactive public involvement process that provides complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and supports early and continuous involvement of the public in developing plans” (23CFR 450.316(b)(1)); and

WHEREAS, it is necessary and desirable to coordinate when appropriate public involvement activities with other transportation planning agencies; and

WHEREAS, the Commission recognizes that a Public Participation Plan is a required element of the Long Range Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program under the provisions of federal transportation planning legislation; and

WHEREAS, the Commission recognizes “Public involvement processes shall be periodically reviewed by the MPO in terms of their effectiveness in assuring that the process provides full and open access to all” (23CFR 450.316(b)(1)(ix)); and

WHEREAS, an approved draft updated Public Participation Plan has been made available for public review and comment for a period of 45 days, a public meeting was held, and comments were received and considered as required by federal transportation planning legislation and SPC’s existing Public Involvement Policy.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission hereby adopts the updated Public Participation Plan dated April 2011.

Joe Spanik seconded and the affirmative vote to approve Resolution 5-11 was unanimous.

4. Staff Profile – Chuck Imbrogno/Rachel Roché

Chuck Imbrogno introduced members of his staff starting with Rachel Roché, Ridesharing Coordinator, who will be talking about herself and what she does at SPC and the CommuteInfo Program. Other staff includes Bob Vilella and Lisa Kay Schweyer, who will give background on proclaiming May as CommuteInfo month. Prior to working at SPC, Rachel worked at a staffing agency and from that she learned that many people have difficulty in finding ways to work. As a ridesharing coordinator for the CommuteInfo Program, Rachel helps promote different commuting options including transit, vanpooling, carpooling, biking, and walking. CommuteInfo assists people on saving money on their commute. She meets with the vanpoolers and carpoolers to discuss their roster, making sure it's updated. She reviews the satisfaction of the program services, and reminds them of reporting and safety issues. Rachel also provides daily support to the poolers over the phone and via email, and takes care of customer complaints. There are currently 43 vanpools and 240 carpools on the road. Joe Grata asked if there has been any increase in service because of rising gasoline prices. Rachel responded that yes, there has been an increase in people interested in a better way to work.

5. Action of Resolution 6-11 to Proclaim May as CommuteInfo Commute Options Awareness Month – Lisa Kay Schweyer and Bob Vilella

Lisa Kay gave some background on the CommuteInfo Program stating that the main goal of the program is to get people to share a ride to work or school at least two times a week. One partner we work with in getting the word out to the 10-county region and beyond is the Brooke-Hancock-Jefferson Metropolitan Planning Commission. BHJ uses our program to provide ridesharing services to their regional employers and commuters. They have created a unique jingle and other promotional materials to help promote the program. The latest television commercial developed by BHJ was shown. We are helping people who can't afford to continue to work because of the increased gas prices.

Bob Vilella talked about more recent outreach strategies that CommuteInfo has worked on. We hold corridor outreach and partner meetings to bring together regional partners and organizations to help encourage people to try ridesharing. CommuteInfo has worked with the Pittsburgh Downtown

Partnership on a bike project in the Cultural District. The facility was opened in the summer of 2010. We've also worked with Oakland Transportation Management Association and University of Pittsburgh on a bike rack and locker project. This project will replace 100 lockers and bike racks by the end of June. CommuteInfo offers Park-n-Ride information, which can also be found on the CommuteInfo website. The program also offers an Emergency Ride Home (ERH) service, which is designed to get people more comfortable with ridesharing. The ERH service has been extended to two transit operators as a transit pilot program and will be offered through more transit operations after July 1, 2011. Finally, Bob asked the Commissioners to proclaim May 2011 as CommuteInfo Commute Options Awareness Month in Southwestern Pennsylvania. This month is used to focus more attention on commute options available in southwestern Pennsylvania with the goal of attracting more people to try an alternative commute.

Commissioner Spanik motioned to proclaim Resolution No. 6-11 - May 2011 as "CommuteInfo Commute Options Awareness Month" in Southwestern Pennsylvania.

WHEREAS, over 75 percent of the 1.18 million workers in the SPC region travel alone to work; and

WHEREAS, the region will have less traffic congestion and improved air quality if more commuters shared a ride to work; and

WHEREAS, sharing a ride to work will save commuters money; and

WHEREAS, the goal of SPC's CommuteInfo Program is for commuters within the 10-county SPC region to choose ridesharing at least twice a week; and

WHEREAS, over 500 commuters already ride to work daily in CommuteInfo's 43 registered vanpools and nearly 500 commuters ride to work daily in the 225 carpools registered with CommuteInfo; and

WHEREAS, to ensure that all employers and commuters in the region are aware of all available commuting options CommuteInfo, in addition to sponsoring volunteer vanpools and arranging carpools, provides information about transit, promotes biking and walking, provides commuter safety information, and provides information about the region's park-n-ride facilities through the program website www.commuteinfo.org or by calling toll-free 1-888-819-6110; and

WHEREAS, the month of May includes National Transportation Week, National Bike to Work Day, National Employee Health and Fitness Day, and National Clean Air Week;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Members of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission encourage the citizens of the region to welcome and emphasize the value of ridesharing by choosing ridesharing at least twice a week, and offer its support by proclaiming May 2011 as "CommuteInfo Commute Options Awareness Month" in Southwestern Pennsylvania.

Commissioner Kirkpatrick seconded and the affirmative vote to approve Resolution 6-11 was unanimous.

6. Financial Report – Vince Massaro

Mr. Massaro summarized the financial report for the reporting period July 1, 2010 through February 28, 2011 for 67 percent of the fiscal year completed. For total project related revenues relating to the current UPWP Projects 2010-2011, the actual and encumbered revenues to date are \$7.9 million. Compared to a revised budget of \$11.3 million or 69 percent of the budget recognized and encumbered for the reporting period. All revenue items conform with the budget for this time period. Other project cash match line item includes a \$50,000 match from PennDOT for the CommuteInfo Program. Carry-over project revenues to date are \$1.4 million compared to a revised budget of \$3.3 million or 41.8 percent of the budget recognized to date. The funding for the Regional Traffic Signal Design Project is in progress and will continue through September 2011. Rents continue to be received from tenants at this time with tenant occupancy at 65 percent. Total project expenditures of \$9.3 million recorded to date versus a revised annual budget of \$14.7 million or 63 percent of the budget expended and encumbered to date. RET expenses for operations including depreciation and amortization are \$3.8 million versus a revised annual budget of \$5.4 million recorded to date or 71 percent of the budget.

Commissioner Maggi motioned to approve the SPC Financial Report. Joe Grata seconded and the affirmative vote was unanimous.

7. Status Report on Draft 2013-2016 TIP – Chuck DiPietro

Chuck DiPietro reported that the Draft 2013-2016 TIP update is about to begin and that we anticipate requesting Commission action June 25, 2012. The State Transportation Commission public hearing on the 12 Year/TIP Update is August 25 in the Cranberry area; the preliminary SPC Draft TIP is due to Central Office by December 30. LPN Project Development/TIP Update Work Groups by PennDOT District started March 23 and will continue through TIP closure. Chuck

presented highlights of the April 12 PennDOT Statewide Planning Partners meeting in Harrisburg with new Transportation Secretary Schoch, whose first priority will be to address the funding crisis. The initial Statewide Financial Guidance Work Group Meeting is scheduled for April 28 in Harrisburg. The group is charged with developing recommended statewide and regional funding assumptions for the TIP update. The final Financial Guidance document will guide development of SPC's TIP update.

The 2013-2016 TIP Update will be guided by the New LPN Project Delivery Process. Primary objectives of this new project delivery process include: focus available funds and resources on needs; develop better and more accurate project scopes; increase accuracy in project scheduling and improved predictability for project delivery; and improve cost estimating for potential projects.

David Miller asked how Project Region is driving preparation of the next TIP update. Should we also be revisiting some of the principles of Project Region as part of performing and updating the TIP? Chuck responded that the 16 policy statements, recently reaffirmed by the full Commission, are integral to the various assessment mechanisms. For example, the CMAQ program visibly matches the Plan's policy statements to project selection. The SPC Regional Smart Transportation Initiative under development will also be an element of the TIP update. Again, funding is extremely limited for the TIP update and it will be hard to bring any new projects into it. David Miller responded that we also developed Project Region during different economic times. Chuck emphasized that the new Linking Planning & NEPA Project Delivery Process is designed to ensure the best investment given limited fiscal resources.

Jim Hassinger responded that in terms of the policies of the Plan we did bring those forward in the last meeting of the Commission and at our Annual Retreat. We affirmed that those 16 policies were still appropriate. Each continues to focus our resources in existing communities. The policies that we had in place as the result of understanding of the need for conservation of resources and communities were still very much a part of where we are in terms of the initial development on the process.

Commission Member discussion followed on the TIP update.

8. Staff Report/Other Business/Announcements

Next Meeting Date – June 27, 2011

9. Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Craig
Secretary-Treasurer