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Executive Director

**Lehigh Valley Transportation Study
Minutes from the Wednesday, October 20, 2020
Joint Technical and Coordinating Committee Meeting
DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC THIS MEETING WAS HELD VIA
WEB AND/OR CALL**

Prior to the meeting being called to order, Ms. Ferguson stated that the agenda and materials for this meeting were posted on the LVPC website. She provided directions on how to participate in the virtual meeting and the protocol to allow the meeting to flow smoothly. Ms. Ferguson also stated that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the LVTS held a virtual public meeting on August 18, 2021. The meeting was advertised in the Lehigh Valley Press on Thursday July 8, 2021

Mr. Kufro chaired the meeting.

Mr. Kufro welcomed the members and the public participants and called the meeting to order.

Ms. Ferguson took Roll Call.

Attendees:

LVTS Coordinating Committee

City of Bethlehem	Michael Alkhal (Alt)
LVPC	Becky Bradley
Northampton County	Michael Emili (Alt)
PennDOT Central Office	Brian Hare
City of Easton	David Hopkins
PennDOT District 5	Chris Kufro
City of Allentown	Craig Messinger (Alt)
Lehigh County	Rick Molchany (Alt)
LANTA	Owen O'Neil

LVTS Technical Committee:

LVPC	Becky Bradley
LANTA	Brendan Cotter
City of Bethlehem	Darlene Heller
City of Easton	David Hopkins
PennDOT Central Office	James Mosca

Members Absent:

Ray O'Connell, Ryan Meyer, and Thomas Stoudt

Staff Present: Becky Bradley, Paul Carafides, Heather Ferguson, and Brad Stewart.

Public Present: Jacqueline Koons-Felion, Natasha Fackler, Scott Slingerland, Heather Heeter, Michael Rebert, Alfred Picca, Scott Vottero, Emily Watts, David Alas, Nicholas Miller, Vanessa Koenigkramer, Kim Schaffer, Jennifer Ruth, Sarah Cassi, Sherri PENCHISHEN, Jim Maloney, William Royer, Matthew Szuchyt, Richard Ames, Jr., and Brian Miller.

Courtesy of the Floor

Mr. Kufro opened the floor to the public who wish to speak on items not on the agenda. Scott Slingerland made an announcement that today is the first day of a Virtual Vision Zero Cities Conference hosted by Transportation Alternatives in NYC and listed available workshops.

Minutes

Mr. Kufro asks for approval of the minutes with Chair of the Technical Committee Mr. Cotter. Mr. Cotter states that we held our last technical committee meeting on September 15, 2021. Ms. Ferguson notes the actions voted on the technical September 15, 2021 meeting.

- Minutes from August 18, 2021
- Adjournment

Mr. Cotter ask for a motion to approve the minutes from the joint technical and coordinating committee meetings on September 15, 2021. Mr. Mosca makes the motion for approval, seconded by Mr. Hopkins. Mr Cotter asks if there are any questions or comments from the members and the public. Hearing none, Mr Cotter asks Ms. Bradley to call for a vote, the motion carries.

Mr Kufro thanks Chairman Cotter and moves on to the approval of the joint technical and coordinating committee minutes. Ms. Ferguson notes the actions voted on the August 18, 2021 joint technical and coordinating meeting.

- Minutes from June 16, 2021
- Amendment Action #1 MacArthur Road Resurface – Add \$2,100,846.00 increase to meet the low bid
- Adjournment

Mr. Kufro asks for a motion to accept the joint technical and coordinating minutes. Mr. Molchany makes the motion, seconded by Mr. O’Neil. Mr. Kufro asks if there are any comments or question from the members or the public. Hearing none, Mr. Kufro calls for a vote, Ms. Bradley calls the vote, the motion carries.

Old Business

PRESENTATION ITEM: PennDOT District 5-0 Highway Projects Report

Mr. Vottero highlighted the following items; US 22 Widening, SR 29 04S/Cedar Crest Blvd. Upgrade, SR 145 - Section MLT 7th Street Multimodal Corridor Project, SR 145 - Section 14S Route 145 Signal Improvements, SR 145 – Section 13S Route 145 Safety Improvements, SR 309 – Section 14M Betterment, SR 309 & Tilghman Interchange, SR 1004 Lehigh – Race St. Intersection, SR 1017 – Section 02S Mauch Chunk Signal Improvements, Easton Two Way St Conversions, SR 22 – Section 03M From Farmersville Rd to 512, SR 248 – Section 05S Route 248 Realignment, SR 248 – Section 06S Route 248 Signal Improvements

INFORMATION ITEM: PennDOT District 5-0 Transportation Improvement Program Modifications

Ms. Ruth reviewed the 19 Administrative Actions and 5 Statewide Administrative Actions. Ms. Ruth noted that these actions were to clean up fiscal year 2021 and maximize the use of the region's funds.

INFORMATION ITEM: Monthly Traffic Report

Mr. Stewart provided the details of the September traffic count update. Total vehicle counts at the two continuous counter locations, I-78 East of Route 33 and Route 309 North of Coopersburg. I-78 has trended down due to the end of summer and start of school. Route 309 is nearing pre-pandemic numbers.

New Business

INFORMATION ITEM: Extension of the LANTA Charter for Regional Transit Services

Mr. O'Neil gave an overview of LANTA's charter and the new charter process that LANTA is currently preparing for.

INFORMATION ITEM: Transit Investment Needs in the Lehigh Valley

Mr. O'Neil presented on the state of the transit in the Lehigh Valley, regarding growth in the region and how to meet the changing demands now and in the future. Information was presented about who LANTA is and what they do. Mr. O'Neil provided number of bus trips annually broken down into types of trips, total numbers of buses, and number of employees. Mr. O'Neil also spoke to their van transit program, noting how many vans are owned and how many passenger trips run annually. LANTA is maximizing efficiency of their current resources through innovation and Mr. O'Neil spoke to how they are able to do that. The presentation included new trends happening in the Lehigh Valley such as the population growth, employment growth, and growth in medical facilities. Mr. O'Neil showed what expansion would look like with increased funding.

INFORMATION ITEM: Alternative Fuels Deployment Plan for I-81 and I-78 in Pennsylvania

Jackie Koons-Felion presented on the Alternative Fuels Deployment Plan for I-81 and I-78. Ms. Koons-Felion gave a high-level background of the study which a timeline of the project. The study goals of the plan are to demonstrate a data-driven approach, establish a role for PennDOT or MPO/RPO's to play in planning and supporting future infrastructure, evaluate equitable methods of outreach, understand current business models, and collaborate with DEP funding programs. Ms. Koons-Felion reviewed what components are in the Study Report. Ms. Fackler presented on analysis highlights which included prioritizing locations and the exit scoring system. The main goal of the report is to determine who had what roles in AFC Deployment – Ms. Fackler gave a detailed overview of PennDOT's role. There was also information on the roles of MPO/RPO's and Clean Cities.

INFORMATION AND ACTION ITEM: PennDOT 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan and Freight Movement Plan Comments

Mr. Carafides gave an update on the comments for the Draft PennDOT LRTP and FMP, noting all comments were due to LVPC by October 19, 2021. Mr. Carafides referenced the October 13, 2021 letter that includes Draft PennDOT LRTP and FMP comments.

INFORMATION ITEM: Proposed Freight/Transportation-Based Development in the Lehigh Valley

Ms. Bradley presented information on the 2021 Third Quarter Plan Activity in both Lehigh and Northampton Counties for the private, public and non-profit sectors. The proposals consisted of 1,625 new housing units and 3.9M sq. feet of non-residential (commercial, retail, public, industrial, office, recreational). Ms. Bradley highlighted the 3M+ sq. feet of industrial proposals of which approximately 2.6M was warehouse, e-commerce, and logistics.

INFORMATION ITEM: Technical Committee Eastern PA Freight Plan Organizational Discussion Report

Ms. Bradley stated that she received calls from neighboring regions about the freight growth that they are experiencing and asked about infrastructure impacts in the Lehigh Valley, since growth here began a few years earlier. She stated that after many calls and meetings, it was apparent that all were experiencing changing traffic patterns, new industrial growth, and new challenges. The LVPC approached PENNDOT and the Federal Highway Administration who worked together to fund a new multi-regional freight plan. Ms. Bradley asked Mr. Carafides to continue the discussion.

Mr. Carafides stated that the LVPC is at the beginning stages of developing a new freight plan. A group of five MPO's came together to form the Eastern Pennsylvania Freight Alliance, which include Lackawanna/Luzerne Metropolitan Planning Organization (LLTS), Lebanon County Metropolitan Planning Organization (LEBCO), Lehigh Valley Transportation Study (LVPC/LVTS), Northeast Pennsylvania Alliance (NEPA MPO), and Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS), totaling 398 municipalities. He explained that the group developed a draft Memorandum, Funding Agreement, and draft Scope. Final edits are being done and working on getting it out to RFP to move the project forward.

Public Engagement and Participation

Mr. Carafides stated that the last Business Cycle column, was published Sunday, October 3. The next Business Cycle column will be published on Sunday, November 21.

Mr. Carafides detailed the October 4 Plan Lehigh Valley WDIY radio show which included Becky Bradley, Matt Assad, Executive Lamont McClure, and Executive Phillips Armstrong. The Executives discussed how the pandemic has changed the way they handle county services and discussed using the Federal Cares Act and American Rescue Plan Grants to lift thousands of struggling small businesses. The next show will take a close look at the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code and its many shortcomings and will feature Attorney Gary Asteak, whos is one of the region's most prominent defense attorneys and one of the most active municipal law attorneys. That show won't air until 6:30 pm, November 1, on WDIY 88.1 FM. All the past shows are currently streaming at wdiy.org.

Mr. Carafides detailed the upcoming November 1 Business Matters show, letting everyone know that Jill Seitz, Sr. Community Planner, will be appearing as an expert on Equity and Inclusion. This will air November 1 at 6:30 p.m., on Channel 69 WFMZ TV and will be available on the WFMZ's Business Matters webpage. This is a 30-minute episode, hosted by Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce CEO, Tony Iannelli.

Mr. Carafides let the committee know that 2021 virtual Gala tickets are on sale now, and the event will include a 60-minute video with an appearance by an expert panel that will take a look at the future of Planning, Government and Transportation Funding, and a 2021 FutureLV Heroes Award will be given to a group of inspiring students. Tickets are available at lvpc.org/lv-awards.

Mr. Carafides detailed LTAP's upcoming schedule of virtual classes through November 4. The classes are all free and you can still sign up at lvpc.org/ltap or call Brian Hite.

Adjournment

Mr. Kufro asked if there were any questions or comments. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Cotter made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Bradley seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by:
Becky Bradley, AICP, Executive Director
Heather Ferguson, Senior Advisor