

**Northern Tier Regional Transportation Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes**

Date: Monday, April 3rd, 2023
10 AM – 11 AM
NTRPDC Conference Room
Towanda, PA

Attendees: Brian Baker, NTRPDC
Brett Voloshin, NTRPDC
Frank Thompson, NTRPDC
Allan Hall, Susquehanna County
Chuck Dillon, Senator Yaw
Brian Hoffman, Sullivan County
Bob Getz, Sullivan County
Fred Jugan, Sullivan County
Frank Hampton, PennDOT Central Office
Alexandra Allen, Representative Fritz
Julie Williams, Representative Tina Pickett
Deb Bigley, Tioga County
Justin Batiuk, PennDOT District 3.0
Steve Fisher, PennDOT District 4.0

I. Items For Discussion

A. Approve February 13, 2023 meeting minutes

Brian Baker started the meeting by asking if any of the attending members had any comments or concerns with the February meeting minutes. Hearing none, Brian Baker mentions that there are not enough attending members to hold a quorum today and the committee will not be able to vote or take action on any topics mentioned today.

B. 2023 – 2026 TIP Administrative Actions & Amendments

PennDOT District 3.0: Admin Actions & Amendments

Justin Batiuk explains that the actions were shared with the committee via email and that most of the actions listed are for informational purposes only. Justin Batiuk mentions that most of the actions listed are cost increases, especially during pre-construction phases with consultants due to price increases. Justin Batiuk offers to take any questions at this time. Bob Getz mentions that the actions are usually organized by PennDOT District and by County, but this document is unorganized. Brian Baker comments that he shares the documents with the committee exactly as he receives them from Dean Roberts at Central Office. Frank Hampton offers to remind Dean Roberts that the committee would prefer the admin actions to be sent this way.

Frank Hampton asks Justin Batiuk if there was an amendment to be discussed at this meeting. Justin Batiuk was unsure of any amendments to be taken at this time, but Frank Hampton reminded Justin Batiuk of the Northern Tier PED Count-down signal. Frank Hampton explains that it is an amendment that needs to be voted on since it was a project that was added to the TIP and uses federal funds. Justin Batiuk explains that District 3.0 received funds from Central Office to update pedestrian crossings and count-down signals. District 3.0 had applied to Central Office to utilize Safety Set-Aside funding, which District 3.0 will use to upgrade the pedestrian count-down signals on SR 1069 in Sayre Borough. Justin Batiuk comments to Brian Baker that the committee does need to vote on this amendment, and Brian Baker reminds Justin Batiuk that unfortunately there are not enough voting members present. Brian Baker comments that this will be sent out

in the E-ballot as well, and asks Justin Batiuk for the information on the amendment to be sent out in the email with the E-ballot. Justin Batiuk offers to send Brian Baker an email after the meeting with the information on the amendment.

PennDOT District 4.0: Admin Actions & Amendments

Steve Fisher offers to take any questions at this time, but the committee does not offer any questions at this time.

C. Performance Measures – PM 2 and PM 3 approval

Brian Baker mentions that the committee should have received a document detailing the performance measures in the email for this meeting. The document details the performance measures for pavements, bridges, and interstates. Brian Baker mentions that the Northern Tier RPO typically adopts the state recommended numbers for the Northern Tier region instead of calculating their own. Brian Baker mentions that unfortunately there are not enough voting members present to vote to accept the performance measures, but Brian Baker will send out an email ballot after the meeting and the voting members will have one week to respond.

D. Local Bridge Subcommittee

Brian Baker continues by discussing that the Local Bridge Subcommittee held a meeting last month to discuss how the subcommittee voted on which criteria will be used to rank local bridges. Brian Baker mentions that the next steps are more on the GIS side to collect local bridge data for the region and ranking said bridges against the criteria. This process will help both the planners in the region to explain why certain bridges were prioritized over others and help to repair the bridges that need it the most. Brian Baker explains that there is no scheduled meeting date for the subcommittee at the current moment, but a meeting will be scheduled to update the committee once enough progress has been made.

E. Northern Tier Municipal Summit

Brian Baker mentions that Northern Tier Regional Planning & Development Commission is hosting two Municipal Summits this year on Friday, May 5th, in Bradford County, and on Thursday, May 18th, in Susquehanna County. Brian Baker asks Frank Thompson if the topics for the summits are confirmed yet, and Frank Thompson comments that it is still a work in progress. Brian Baker asks the committee to share the event with anyone who might be interested in attending. Brian Baker mentions that District 3.0 and District 4.0 will be attending the summits to discuss projects and construction that will be starting in the near future. Frank Thompson explains that he has been reaching out to county planners for advice on topics to be discussed at the summits. Some of these topics include watershed and stream stabilization, EMS, grant opportunities currently available, broadband, and solar panel ordinances. Allan Hall mentions that Susquehanna County has already passed ordinances regarding the use and disposal of solar panels. Brian Hoffman comments that the solar panel discussion might be of interest for Senator Yaw's office. Allan Hall agrees and comments that he has sent the ordinances to both Senator Yaw and Lisa Baker's office. Allan Hall explains some of the issues surrounding the installation and the removal of the solar panels on someone's property. Fred Jugan asks how would solar panels work during the winter season when they are covered in snow, and Allan Hall comments that it is beyond his area of expertise.

F. 12 Year Program (TYP) Update

Brian Baker comments that a document detailing the 12-year program update was sent out in the email for this meeting. Brian Baker encourages the committee to explore the document and take the survey. There have already been one hundred and sixty-five thousand responses to the survey and the more that come from the Northern Tier region means the larger the voice the region has. Brian Baker asks the committee to send this survey to anyone who might be interested in filling out the survey.

G. District 3.0 Department Force Activities

Brian Baker asks if everyone on the Microsoft Teams meeting can see the document being shared on the screen. Allan Hall, who is physically in the room and not on the Teams meeting, comments that he can see the document on the screen which is being displayed on the TV screen behind Brian Baker and Brett Voloshin. Brian Baker explains he received this from District 3.0, and the document lists the paving, bridge, and seal coat projects as well as the state route number and the municipality to give the project relevance to a physical location. Brian Baker asks Justin Batiuk if these projects will be occurring during the spring and summer seasons this year. Justin Batiuk agrees that the projects will mostly occur during the spring and summer season. Justin Batiuk comments that there are more projects occurring during this time period than what is listed in the documents. Brian Baker comments that these documents are only detailing District 3.0 while District 4.0 will be holding a Legislative Outreach meeting where District 4.0 will be discussing this for their region.

H. Supplemental Funding Update: Marsh Creek, Tunkhannock Mobility

Deb Bigley comments that the rails and ties demolition is complete and a new bid package for the southern section will be out to bid that Tioga County will open on Monday, April 10th. Deb Bigley is hoping for some competitive bidding once that package opens, and comments that the northern section is now around 12 months behind with the PennDOT Right-of-way process at this time. The Marsh Creek Greenway was awarded an LSA grant for one million dollars recently, but still have funding from three federal sources that are currently pending which are ARC, EDA, and a congressional earmark. Deb Bigley comments that they will be putting in a DCNR grant shortly as well.

No one present at this time to update the committee on the Tunkhannock Mobility project.

I. NTRPDC Full Commission Meeting

Brian Baker mentions the committee should have received a flyer detailing the date and times for the NTRPDC Full Commission Meeting. The meeting will be held on Friday, April 21st at the Shadowbrook Resort outside of Tunkhannock. Brian Baker encourages the committee to attend the meeting.

J. LTAP

Brian Baker comments that various virtual courses have been held which are available to municipalities in the region. Brian Baker mentions that Brett Voloshin has been in contact with PSATS to discuss and schedule fall classes within the region, and comments that in the past it has been difficult to find enough attendees during the summer due to the heightened road maintenance so fall classes tend to work better.

K. GIS Report

Brett Voloshin provides a quick report regarding the agency's use of GIS software. Brett Voloshin explains that he has been using the software to develop maps for grants the agency has been assisting with, and for the development of a gravel bikepacking loop through Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna, and Wyoming Counties.

II. County & Agency Reports

A. Legislative Report

Chuck Dillon mentions that back in 2016, legislature had restricted the amount of liquid fuels money that state police received and would be decreased to five million over a ten-year period. Senate Bill 121 passed in February makes that legislature permanent and will speed up the process to become effective immediately.

Alexandra Allen comments that there are no updates from the House at this time.

Julie Williams comments that there are no updates aside from Tina Pickett getting reacquainted with the Wyoming County residents.

B. FHWA Report

No one present at the meeting to provide an update at this time.

C. PennDOT Reports

1. Central Office

Frank Hampton mentions that the DCED Multimodal Transportation Fund Grant available right now and the application deadline is June 31st. The Walk for Work round is now open and the deadline for that funding opportunity is May 24th. A new round is starting this summer for the Transportation Alternative Set-Aside funding source. Brian Baker asks if Central Office will announce when the TA Set-Aside officially opens, and Frank Hampton confirms that Central office will announce when the round opens.

2. District 3.0

Justin Batiuk comments that he meant to say this earlier, but he asks if on the February meeting minutes if it was intentional to have District 4.0 and Steve Fisher's name during the discussion on the New Milford Borough bridges, and if it was intentional to have District 3.0 and Justin Batiuk's name for a meeting with Allan Hall and Lisa Baker's office. Brian Baker explains it must have been an error on his part, ensures it will be fixed, and thanks Justin Batiuk for catching that error.

3. District 4.0

Steve Fisher comments that he does not have any updates to provide at this time. He received an email regarding the Safe Streets and Roads for All NOFO is now available, and he will forward the information onto Brian Baker and the committee. Brian Baker asks Steve Fisher if there were plans for a road to be repaired in Montrose Borough after a water company tore up the road. Allan Hall comments that they are going to repair the road sometime in the spring or summer season. Steve Fisher asks Allan Hall if the repairs are being completed through a contractor or through PennDOT, and Allan Hall confirms that the repairs are being completed through a contractor.

D. County Reports

1. Bradford County

No one present to provide an update at this time.

2. Sullivan County

Brian Hoffman mentions that Sullivan County was awarded a multimodal transportation grant, and wants to share his appreciation with Senator Yaw's office for their help in the process. The grant will go towards funding Sullivan County's first bus passenger shelter in Laporte, PA on their fixed bus route. Brian Hoffman asks Frank Thompson which meeting did the down trees topic come up that it was removed from the list of topics for the Municipal Summits. Brian Baker comments that he and Frank Thompson heard from Nancy Kulick, who heard from Matt Williams in a general conversation, that the downed trees topic was brought up at a Bradford County meeting where the conversation got a bit heated between interested parties. Allan Hall comments that he has sat in on exhausting meetings with PennDOT and other interested parties on the topic. Brian Hoffman comments that the topic has become a situation with no clear answers or solutions and thus became a difficult topic to discuss and everyone agrees with his statement. Bob Getz asks Allan Hall how much money he receives from room tax for the Visitor's Bureau? Allan Hall comments that it was around 220 to 230 last year, but they are looking to augment that through running more promotions in an attempt to get more money in the county. Bob Getz asks what there is to promote, and Allan Hall responds that there is everything to promote in Susquehanna County. Bob Getz asks if Susquehanna County has a Chamber of Commerce. Allan Hall explains that they do have one, he has met with them in the past, and the Chamber of Commerce is currently rebranding into a county wide chamber instead of a focusing on a single town.

Fred Jugan comments to Justin Batiuk that Cherry Township still has not received any funds yet for the Kelly bridge, and the new secretary mentioned that they had a sign a document at the next municipal meeting to receive the funds. Justin Batiuk believes the document they need to sign is most likely a confirmation of funds owed to the township, and he believes that should be on track to get the funds. Fred Jugan mentions that he has a bridge that needs to go on the TIP. There are gas companies doing work in the region and a roadmaster approached Fred Jugan regarding the issue of heavy equipment and trucks driving over the bridge. Justin Batiuk asks if the bridge is posted, and Fred Jugan confirms the bridge is posted, but the gas companies are bringing heavy equipment over the bridge that the bridge cannot handle. Allan Hall comments that he had a similar experience in Susquehanna County, and he told the gas company if they want to use the bridge for their heavy equipment then the gas company would need to pay for the repairs. Justin Batiuk agrees and comments that it has worked for state bridges and roads as well. Justin Batiuk offers that Fred Jugan should get the state police out there. Fred Jugan asks how to get the bridge on the TIP. Brian Baker explains that the municipal secretary will have to write a letter to request the bridge be put on the TIP and can commit their portion of funds for the project, and offers to share a letter template with the municipal secretary. Justin Batiuk asks Fred Jugan how long the bridge is, and Fred Jugan believes it is around 20 feet. Justin Batiuk explains the townships best bet is probably with the retroactive bridge program, which the township has been through that process multiple times. Justin Batiuk explains that now is a good time to start the process since the work for the 2025 TIP will begin soon.

3. Susquehanna County

Allan Hall comments that it has been a crazy time in Susquehanna County so far this year due to multiple weather events causing downed trees and power outages. Allan Hall mentions that he is looking forward to the District 4.0 meeting on Wednesday, April 5th, to learn more about the progress on Interstate 81 due to black top and patches completed last year beginning to fall apart. However, Allan Hall is excited that Route 29 in Susquehanna County is being worked on this year.

4. Tioga County

Deb Bigley comments that she does not have any updates to share at this time.

5. Wyoming County

No one present to provide an update at this time.

E. BEST Report

No one present to provide an update at this time.

F. BMTS Report

No one present to provide an update at this time.

G. NTRPDC Report

No updates to be shared with the committee at this time.

III. Other Items for Discussion

Justin reminds Brian Baker that he will send the information requested after the meeting today, and for Brian Baker to send over the letter from Cherry township so he can start the process.

Allan Hall provides a quick update on the Rails & Trails on the eastern side of the County, and he heard that the director recently quit due to organizational and financial issues.

IV. Public Discussion

No other topics were discussed at this time.

V. Adjournment & Next Scheduled Meeting

Brian Baker reminds the committee that the next meeting will be held in a hybrid format on Monday, June 12th, and for the committee to be on the look out for the e-ballot later today.