

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

Date: Monday, October 3, 2022
10 AM – 11 AM
NTRPDC Conference Room
Towanda, PA

Attendees: Brian Baker, Northern Tier
Brett Voloshin, Northern Tier
Kaye Aumick, Tioga County
Todd Wright, BeST Transit
Gerald Wertz,
Rick Biery, Bradford County
Dean Roberts, PennDOT Central Office
Mark Hamilton, Tioga County Commissioner
Justin Batiuk, PennDOT District 3.0
Michael Gismondi, PennDOT Central Office
Emma Pugh, PennDOT District 4.0
John Petrini
Bob Getz, Sullivan County
Brian Hoffman, Sullivan County
Jack Conroy, Susquehanna County
Steve Fisher, PennDOT District 4.0
Al Quimby, Tioga County

I. Items For Discussion

A. Approve April 4, 2022 and June 6, 2022 meeting minutes

Brian Baker inquired regarding any questions for the April or June meeting minutes. Hearing none, a motion was made by Rick Biery to approve the meeting minutes, seconded by Jack Conroy, and the motion carried unanimously.

B. 2021 – 2024 TIP Administrative Actions & Amendments

District 3.0 – Amendments & Admin Actions

Admin Actions –

Justin Batiuk explains the report of admin action for district 3.0 provided for the meeting.

He describes that at the end of a TIP year, PennDOT offices will complete various adjustments to utilize funding is unspent or remains in the line-items in hopes to free up funds for the next TIP document.

Amendment Actions –

Justin Batiuk explained how the 6M36 project on SR 6, which is being let this year, roughly had a 2.4 million dollar increase due to some changes done to the project and to account for increasing costs. The money is being transferred from the remaining balance in the reserve line-item fund, and from extra funding for the SR6/187 intersection project. A motion was made by Brian Hoffman to approve this amendment, seconded by Bob Getz, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Justin Batiuk went on to discuss project SR 15/187 located on Tioga River to SR 2005. This project also received roughly 2.4 million dollars. This increase is in response to

similar issues like the increased costs associated with inflation. The money is coming from two projects: SR 220 section 71, SR199 to New York state line, where this project is being downgraded to a resurfacing project, and from Lycoming County to Sonestown in Sullivan County SR 220/197 project since the project is being reevaluated since the pavement is in good shape.

Bob Getz asks Justin Batiuk a couple questions regarding these projects. Bob Getz's first question is regarding the scope of the resurfacing project and wonders if the project will go any further into Lycoming County. Justin Batiuk does not know the specifics of the project or if another project coincides and will get back to Bob Getz with more accurate information. Bob Getz next question regards how far the project will travel into Sonestown. Justin Batiuk explains the project will go as far as the bridge in Sonestown. Getz expresses his concerns about the rock ledge between Sonestown and the legion building as he believes the ledge is continuing to erode away and increasing the probability of a landslide in that region. Justin Batiuk promises to get in touch with the project manager for updates on the situation. Bob Getz asks Brian Hoffman for his opinion on the situation, and Brian Hoffman was unaware of the issues at the time. Mark Hamilton inquired about the road name of SR 2005, and Justin Batiuk responded that he believes the road is named "Old Route 15" and helps to describe the location using local, well-known landmarks in the region.

A motion was made by Brian Hoffman to approve the amendment, seconded by Rick Biery, and the motion was passed unanimously.

District 4.0 – Amendments & Admin Actions

Admin Actions –

Steve Fisher described how the admin actions for District 4.0 are similar to District 3.0. District 4.0 is also conducting adjustments to utilize unspent funding or remaining funds held within any line-items.

Amendment Actions –

C. 2023 – 2026 Transportation Improvement Program

Brian Baker explains the TIP approval process to inform all attending members that the Northern Tier executive committee approved the document, and it was sent off to PennDOT's Central office to be added to the statewide TIP document. Brian Baker thanks everyone involved, especially those involved from PennDOT. Brian Baker goes on to explain that Carey Mullins, Northern Tier's liaison at PennDOT central office, has moved into a new position with District 8.0 and has been replaced by Dean Roberts. Both Brian Baker and Dean Roberts are unsure if the new positions will be permanent or not.

D. Multimodal Transportation Fund

Brian Baker reminds members of the committee, in reference with the newsletter he sent out, that PennDOT Multimodal Grants are now open for applications. Brian Baker encourages everyone in attendance to share this information with any parties that may be interested in applying like local municipalities. Brian Baker addresses the website link in the newsletter as a way for members to locate more information on the Fund for application guidelines, applicable projects, and required dollar matches.

E. Local Bridge Subcommittee

Brian Baker provides an update on the progress of the local bridge subcommittee meetings. The last meeting was held after the June RTAC meeting in the Bradford County EOC building in

Towanda, PA. Another meeting has been scheduled in which SEDA-COG and Amy Kessler from the North Central region will provide their insight on local bridge management. Brian Baker explains that the subcommittee will be using website called “Decision Lens” to help facilitate the criteria voting process that will occur at the end of this month.

Steve Fisher references the bridge Brian Baker mentioned while discussing PennDOT’s Multimodal Fund and explains that the project also received Multimodal funds from DCED. He encourages those in attendance to apply for additional funding sources, and Brian Baker provides an anecdote of a different project to encourage anyone applying to keep trying if they are not awarded the grant on the first application.

F. Supplemental Funding Update: Marsh Creek, Tunkhannock Mobility

Brian Baker explains that Lynelle Farber, who is on the Tunkhannock Mobility committee, is unable to attend this meeting due to attending a conference, however he plans to share an email with Lynelle’s update to Dean Roberts since he had requested one. Brian Baker describes that the Tunkhannock Mobility committee has a draft document ready and plans to host a public meeting for comments in the near future.

Kaye Aumick does not have an update at this time. Brian Baker describes that Marsh Creek did receive another supplemental fund, and that Northern Tier’s financial advisor is drafting a MOU for Aumick. Mark Hamilton expresses his disappointment to the committee that the Marsh Creek committee did not make it through to round two of the national Build Grant, but they have submitted two alternative grant applications in the meantime.

G. LTAP Planning Partners meeting

Brett Voloshin provided a report from the annual Planning Partners meeting held the week before this meeting. The Planning Partners meeting started with a discussion regarding the PA HSIP local road force account process, and why it was important to LTAP partners. Voloshin described a list of classes that are on the horizon for 2023 including classes focusing on stormwater management, winter maintenance, equipment worker safety, and traffic signal basics. There was an open discussion held during the meeting to brainstorm ideas for potential class ideas. Voloshin finishes his report by describing changes made to the LTAP website in order to make the website more user friendly.

H. GIS report

Brett Voloshin also provided a report on how Northern Tier is utilizing GIS for the region. Aside from using GIS for the 2023-2026 TIP document, Voloshin has been utilizing GIS software to aid in the development of the Endless Mountains Gravel Bicycle/Backpacking Loop. It is a 400-mile bicycle loop through Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna, and Wyoming Counties. Voloshin has developed multiple static pdf and interactive web-based maps to allow cyclist the resources they need to plan trips through the region.

II. County & Agency Reports

A. Legislative Report

No members present to provide a report.

B. FHWA Report

No members present to provide a report.

C. PennDOT Report

1. Central Office

Roberts expresses that PennDOT is hosting a Planning Partners meeting later this year, and encourages members to attend as the IIJA-BIL will be a hot topic of discussion. Roberts explains that central office has worked with their consultant to put documents together describing the different grant programs that are available.

2. District 3.0

Justin Batiuk does not have any updates for the committee at the current moment.

3. District 4.0

Steve Fisher explains that it is the end of the Federal Fiscal year and wishes to give kudos to Alan Hall for his efforts in Susquehanna County as the project on SR 29 went out to bid.

Brian Baker explains that Alan Hall reached out to members of PennDOT District 4.0, Deputy Director Larry Shifflet, and Northern Tier RPO to drive around the worse roads within Susquehanna County in a state van. The project mentioned runs from the New York state line down into Wyoming County.

Getz inquires if PennDOT District 4.0 has any plans for SR 118 in Luzerne County. Fisher replies that they are conducting road safety audits in that region, so District 4.0 is working towards fixing the issues in that region. Jack Conroy asks about Route 7 coming out of New York into Pennsylvania. Steve Fisher and Brian Baker are unsure of the SR number of that road, but Brian Baker makes a comment that they did take that road during the drive around Susquehanna County with Alan Hall. Bob Getz asks Steve Fisher if he took a ride to the top of Red Rock Mountain. Bob Getz describes that some of the S-curves when descending the mountain have some large potholes that are concerning.

D. County Reports

Bradford County – Rick Biery does not have any updates at this time except a question regarding the construction date of the Athens Township creek bridge. Justin Batiuk offers to look up the construction date for the project. Justin Batiuk describes that the let date for the project was moved to December of this year, and the construction date would realistically be moved to April of next year.

Sullivan County – Brian Hoffman explains that the county is in the process of creating a project on the Hillsgrove covered bridge to hopefully preserve the deck of the bridge. The county has local funding for the bridge and an engineer has approved that this is an applicable project for the funds. Brian Hoffman is unsure of the BeST representative will mention this update, but the mandatory minimum age for bus drivers and mechanics in that industry have been reduced. This will allow for the opportunity of internships within the industry. Steve Fisher asks if these internship opportunities will work with high school or colleges. Hoffman believes it can go either way depending on the resources available like the Northern Tier career center and the workforce development office in NTRPDC.

Susquehanna County – No updates to report at the current meeting.

Tioga County – Mark Hamilton describes the successful raising of the abutments after losing a county bridge last year. Tioga County has completed a study and believe a bridge will not be constructed in that area in the near future. Mark Hamilton continues on to talk about the economic summit held in Tioga County last week where two representatives from Tioga County's BeST staff attended the summit. Mark Hamilton announces that Tioga County has received a 500,000\$

grant for the Tioga Works program. The program allows students to obtain stackable credits in internships for different skills that different businesses need.

Al inquires about the 4-mile drive project on I-99 in reference to the completion of a greenway project nearby. Justin Batiuk believes the project is still on track for 2026 and that is the latest update he has regarding the project. Dean Roberts offers to look up the project in MPMS to assess if any new updates occurred for the project. Bob Getz speaks his peace about the crossover installed during the project. Dean Robert reports that the project is aiming to be let in late August of 2023, and the estimated completion of construction on the project will occur in late 2026 or early 2027.

Wyoming County – No members present to provide a report.

E. BEST Report

Todd Wright explains the progress on the wash-bay project in Tioga County. Preliminary designs are complete and BeST is currently waiting on a cost estimate in order to gain approval from PennDOT to bid for the project. The location in question currently does not have any wash stations for transit vehicles which can be an issue with the coming changing of the season and weather. BeST transit is currently working with Sullivan County for a CFA Multimodal grant application for a bus shelter in Laporte, PA as well as some sidewalk improvements. Wright further explains that BeST is in the process of designing a bus route that extends a current route from Dushore to Mildred to Laporte. BeST is researching into the potential of new vehicles that use alternate fuel sources like propane and what possible vendors are in the region. Wright announces that BeST is in the process of developing an app for mobile devices for riders to have better access to fixed route details and to purchase tickets as well.

F. BMTS Report

No members present to provide a report.

G. NTRPDC Report

No updates to report at the current meeting.

III. Other Items For Discussion

No other items for discussion at this time.

IV. Public Discussion

Dean Roberts comments about the use of the meeting owl and his enjoyment of the product. Brian Baker and Brett Voloshin agree with its usefulness for hybrid meetings such as this meeting.

V. Adjournment & Next Schedule Meeting

Brian Baker reports that the next RTAC meeting will occur on December 12, 2022 from 10 AM to Noon. These meetings will continue to follow a hybrid format in the future. This meeting was adjourned at 10:58 AM.