

Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission
Minutes of the Meeting
Northpointe – IUP, Armstrong County
and
Cisco WebEx Meeting
4:00 p.m. – April 24, 2023

The one hundred and sixty-first meeting of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission was called to order by Chairman Leslie Osche.

Members: Brian Allen, Darin Alviano, Brad Berlin, Kevin Boozel, Scott Bricker, Tom Ceraso, Douglas Chew, Amber Davis, Pat Fabian, Rich Fitzgerald, Kim Geyer, Shelia Gombita, Mark Gordon, Kelly Gray, Robert Griffin, Lynn Heckman, Sherene Hess, Fred Junko, Sean Kertes, Bill Kovach, Bob Lesnick, Clifford Levine, Bob Macey, Larry Maggi, Jack Manning, Jeff Marshall, Kevin McCullough, Don Myers, Leslie Osche, Johnna Pro, Mavis Rainey, Aurora Sharrard, Larry Shifflet, Loretta Spielvogel, Byron Stauffer, Jr., John Timney, and Vince Vicites.

Others: Ann Ogoreuc, Allegheny County Department of Economic Development; Dusty Elias Kirk, Reed Smith LLP; Mitchel Henderson; Seth Davis, PRT; Jeremy Dias, Senator Joe Pittman's Office; Vince Mankero, MARAD, Tretha Chraney, MARAD; Christina Koren, IUP; Rich Mutt, IUP; Dr. Rick Adkins, IUP; and Dr. Justin Fair, IUP.

Staff: Mary Brangan, Leann Chaney, Faith Collins, Ronda Craig, Dom D'Andrea, Linda Duffy, Margaret Fonner, Lillie Gabreski, Ryan Gordon, Chuck Imbrogno, Tom Klevan, Caleb Knudsen, Jenn Lasser, Caitlin O'Connor, DJ Ryan, Josh Spano, Ailisa Sobien, Cathy Tulley, Vincent Valdes, Sara Walfoort, and Andy Waple.

1. Chairman Osche called to order the April 24, 2023 meeting of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission.
 - a. Quorum – There being a quorum present the meeting proceeded.
 - b. Any Conflict of Interest Declaration on Action Items - None

2. Action on Minutes of the February 27, 2023 Meeting.

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the February 27th meeting by Commissioner Fitzgerald which was seconded by Commissioner Vicites. The affirmative vote was unanimous.

3. Public Comment – None

4. Presentation from Armstrong County, Makerspace Plan – Christina Koren, Director of Strategic Partnership, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Connecting Graduates with Regional Careers

Aims: Keep graduates in region.

Bridge the occupational skills gap between labor supply and job demand.

Build Out Existing Inter-Institutional Network

Including school districts, vocational schools, community colleges, universities, and intermediate units. Utilize programmatic strengths of partner institutions.

Build a Regional Corporate Consortium

Identify desired knowledge, skills, abilities, and certificates (KSAC) desired by employers. Provide job shadowing, paid internships, and job placement in regional high priority occupations.

Map Educational Programs onto Career Pathways

Embed KSAC into academic programs. Strengthen dual-enrollment and streamline credit for prior learning.

Provide S-STEM Scholarships to Students

Focuses on socio-economically disadvantaged rural and first-generation students. Available to STEM dual-enrolled HS students, undergraduates (AA, BA, BS), and graduate students.

Design Web-Based Infrastructure to Facilitate Workforce Development

Aim: Build the *Pathways in Sustainable Careers Educational System* (PiSCES).

Provide Career Education, Training, and Pathways

- Includes all 16 career clusters, starting at the 3rd grade through post-secondary.
- Focus on high priority occupations in middle school.
- Integrate PA Department of Education’s benchmark reporting for school districts.
- More cost-effective and instructionally flexible than current products.
- Provides students with a tailored career and educational pathways with partner institutions.
- Specifically built for regional workforce needs.

Student and Consortium Members Focused

- Students generate a career portfolio and can search for job shadowing, internships, and placements.
- Companies able to search for interns and employees.

5. Action Item on EPA Climate Pollution Grant Resolution 1-23 – Andy Waple

A RESOLUTION OF THE SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION (SPC) to endorse SPC staff, in partnership with our region’s planning partners, in applying to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Climate Pollution Reduction Program (CPRG) noncompetitive grant program. The CPRG provides grants to support the planning of broad, flexible, climate pollution reduction strategies that could be implemented by a range of eligible entities.

WHEREAS, the U.S. EPA, through the Inflation Reduction Act, has made up to \$3 million available per State, and up to \$1 million available to the 67 most populous Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA) in the Country to develop regional climate plans; and

WHEREAS, the SPC will lead the planning process on behalf of the seven County MSA, and the planning process will also include the contiguous counties of Greene, Indiana and Lawrence, all within the SPC region; and

WHEREAS, these plans include two major components, a Priority Climate Action Plan (due March 1, 2024) and a Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (due summer, 2025); and

WHEREAS, the planning process is required for local governments to be able to access \$4.6 billion in implementation grants through the U.S. EPA; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, recognizing its collective interests in a wide-ranging, comprehensive and inclusive approach to improving the environment as well as resident’s health and safety through meaningful collaboration with key regional partners and stakeholders, supports SPC staff and its partners in applying for a climate planning grant through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Climate Pollution Reduction Program.

A motion was made to approve Resolution 1-23 by Commissioner Gordon which was seconded by Commissioner Junko. The affirmative vote was unanimous.

6. Action Items on Federal Performance Measures PM2 and PM3 Resolution 2-23 and 3-23 – Dom D’Andrea

A RESOLUTION OF THE SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION (SPC), to accept PennDOT’s statewide National Highway System (NHS) pavement and bridge condition (PM2) performance targets as the regional PM2 performance targets that contribute to maintaining bridges and pavements on the NHS in a state of good repair.

WHEREAS, The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) established, and subsequent transportation acts have reinforced, a system of national goals and performance measures designed to resume the effective use of Federal transportation funds;

WHEREAS, federal regulations at 23 CFR 490.307(a) and 23 CFR 490.407(c), respectively, establish four NHS pavement condition and two NHS bridge condition performance measures:

- Percentage of Interstate pavements in good condition;
- Percentage of Interstate pavements in poor condition;
- Percentage of non-Interstate NHS pavements in good condition; and,
- Percentage of non-Interstate NHS pavements in poor condition
- Percentage of NHS bridges, by deck area, classified in good condition; and,
- Percentage of NHS bridges, by deck area, classified in poor condition

WHEREAS, collectively, these six measures are known as the PM2 Performance Measures; State DOTs and Metropolitan Planning Organizations are required to establish targets for each of the six PM2 performance measures that represent the anticipated performance outcome for NHS pavement and bridge conditions;

WHEREAS, on December 16, 2022 PennDOT established targets for the six PM2 performance measures in its State Transportation Asset Management Plan;

WHEREAS the MPO PM2 targets must be established within 180 days (June 16, 2023) of the State DOT’s (PennDOT) establishment of statewide targets by either agreeing to plan and program projects so that they contribute toward the accomplishment of the State DOT PM2 targets, or committing to quantifiable targets for the MPO planning area;

WHEREAS, Metropolitan Long-Range Transportation Plans and Transportation Improvement Programs adopted or amended after June 16, 2023 must include a description of how the Plans or TIPs support and contribute to achieving the established performance targets;

WHEREAS, the SPC has expressed concern about the shortfall of funds required to address adequately the needs of the region and the opportunity to improve our transportation infrastructure;

WHEREAS, the SPC is diligently working to establish appropriate targets recognizing the funding shortfalls, and work with PennDOT to allocate the available resources within the region; and

WHEREAS, at their April 13, 2023 meeting, the SPC Transportation Technical Committee recommended that SPC endorse PennDOT’s PM2 targets as the SPC region’s NHS pavement and bridge condition targets, and program projects so that the TIP and Plan contribute toward the accomplishment of PennDOT’s targets.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, in accord with federal regulations at 23 CFR 490.105(f), the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission adopts and supports the PennDOT pavement and bridge condition (PM2) targets, as depicted in the appended tables.

A motion was made to approve Resolution 2-23 by Commissioner Allen which was seconded by Commissioner Macey. The affirmative vote was unanimous.

A RESOLUTION OF THE SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION (SPC), to accept PennDOT’s statewide System Performance and Freight Movement Reliability (PM3) performance targets as the regional PM3 performance targets that contribute to the system

performance of the National Highway System (NHS) and movement of freight on the Interstate System;

WHEREAS, The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) established, and subsequent transportation acts have reinforced, a system of national goals and performance measures designed to ensure the effective use of Federal transportation funds;

WHEREAS, federal regulations at 23 CFR 490 Subparts E,F,G, and H) establish six performance measures to monitor system performance, freight movement and the CMAQ Program, three of which pertain to travel reliability:

- Percentage of Person-miles Traveled on the Interstate System that are Reliable;
- Percentage of Person-miles Traveled on the non-Interstate System that are Reliable;
- Interstate System Truck Travel Time Reliability Index;

WHEREAS, as defined in 23 U.S.C. 150(c) Each metropolitan planning organization serving a transportation management area (as defined in section 134) with a population over 1,000,000 people representing a nonattainment or maintenance area shall develop a performance plan that:

- Includes an area baseline level for traffic congestion and on-road mobile source emissions for which the area is in nonattainment or maintenance;
- Describes progress made in achieving the performance targets described in section 150(d); and
- Includes a description of projects identified for funding under this section and how such projects will contribute to achieving emission and traffic congestion reduction targets.

WHEREAS, State DOTs and Metropolitan Planning Organizations are required to establish targets that represent the anticipated performance outcome in carrying out the National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) and the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program;

WHEREAS, in December 16, 2022, PennDOT established PM3 performance targets;

WHEREAS the MPO PM3 targets must be established within 180 days (June 16, 2023) of the State DOT's (PennDOT) establishment of statewide targets by either agreeing to plan and program projects so that they contribute toward the accomplishment of the State DOT PM3 targets, or committing to quantifiable targets for the MPO planning area;

WHEREAS, Metropolitan Long-Range Transportation Plans and Transportation Improvement Programs adopted or amended after June 16, 2023, must include a description of how the Plans or TIPs support and contribute to achieving the established performance targets; and

WHEREAS, at their April 14, 2023 meeting, the SPC Transportation Technical Committee recommended that SPC endorse PennDOT's PM3 reliability targets as the SPC region's that contribute to the system performance of the National Highway System (NHS) and movement of freight on the Interstate System; and to program projects so that the TIP and Plan contribute toward the accomplishment of PennDOT's targets.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission adopts and supports the PennDOT System Performance and Freight Movement Reliability (PM3) targets as the region's targets in accord with federal regulations at 23 CFR 490.105.

A motion was made to approve Resolution 3-23 by Commissioner Shifflet which was seconded by Commissioner Ceraso. The affirmative vote was unanimous.

7. Action on National Bike Month resolution 4-23 – Leann Chaney

A RESOLUTION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE of the SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION to proclaim May 2023 as "National Bike Month" in Southwestern Pennsylvania.

Whereas, throughout the month of May, the Southwestern Pennsylvania region will celebrate biking and the freedom, the joy, and the well-being it imbues within us, as well as the power that more people riding bikes has in making life better for everyone; and

Whereas, May 15-21, 2023 is “Bike to Work Week” and May 19, 2023 is “Bike to Work Day”; and

Whereas, throughout the month of May, the residents of Southwestern Pennsylvania and its visitors will experience the joys of bicycling through group rides, races, commuting events, educational programs, charity events, and/or by simply getting out and going somewhere by bike; and

Whereas, bicycling has been shown to improve citizens’ health, well-being, and quality of life, growing the economy of the region, attracting tourism dollars and local business spending and reducing pollution, congestion and parking costs on our streets and roads; and

WHEREAS, the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission schools, parks and recreation departments, police departments, public health districts, hospitals, businesses and civic groups will be joining the League of American Bicyclists in promoting bicycling during the month of May 2023; and

Whereas, these groups are also promoting the use of the bicycle as both a means of transportation and recreation year-round to attract more visitors to enjoy our local parks and trail systems, as well as restaurants, hotels, retail establishments, and cultural and scenic attractions; and

Whereas, these groups are also promoting greater public awareness of bicycle operation and safety education during Bike Month and year-round in an effort to reduce collisions, injuries and fatalities and improve health and safety for everyone on the road; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Executive Committee on behalf of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission does hereby proclaim May 2023 as Bike Month in [insert city/county], and urges all residents to join in this special observance in Southwestern Pennsylvania.

A motion was made to approve Resolution 4-23 by Commissioner Bricker which was seconded by Commissioner Macey. The affirmative vote was unanimous.

8. Build Back Better Update – Jennifer Lasser

1. SME Robotics Adoption (Catalyst Connection)
2. Robotics Manufacturing Hub (ARM)
3. Expanded Pathways to New Economy Careers (SPC)
4. Applied Robotics Startup Factory (Innovation Works)
5. Expanded Pathways to Entrepreneurship (Innovate PGH)

Regional Job Creation, Training, Equity, Entrepreneurship, Business Support, Cluster Growth all significant areas of focus.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES:

Expand training & placement opportunities

- Certificate, Apprenticeships, Advanced Degrees

Build a vibrant & robust robotics ecosystem

- Conduct outreach, build partnerships – goal of rooted businesses

Clear pathways and wrap-around services for students & workers

- Understand and remove barriers to employment

Be responsive to needs of regional businesses

- Establish training needs and talent strategies and deliver.

Establish Regional Training Hubs

- Serve business & workers – Train & Retain!

PROJECT 3 UPDATES:

- SPC Partner Kickoff Meeting - February 24, 2022
- Grant Administration Plan Approved
- Bi-Monthly Meetings scheduled to keep project running (April 27)

- Grant reports due by partners 4/25
- Grant reports due to EDA 4/30
- Smaller Project Committees being formed (Workforce, Training)
- Curriculum development over Summer – Fall Semester Start
- CMU Block Center for Tech RFP June 2023

9. Port of Pittsburgh Brief – Caitlin O'Connor

Ms. O'Connor stated that her and her colleague, DJ Ryan have been working on the Port of Pittsburgh nominations. SPC actually gets to submit five nominations to the Governor's office, and Governor Shapiro will appoint three. SPC submitted and should have more of an update by the June meeting. The Governor's office will receive the nominations and reach out to the folks that we nominated. SPC tried to be strategic about whose district who represents which portions of the rivers, we want to make sure that people that we nominated were really invested and that they're aware of the issues that are facing the Port of Pittsburgh. Thank you to everyone that we turned to for help and consultation. We really appreciate it.

10. Status on SPC Move from the Executive Director – Vincent Valdes

Mr. Valdes remarked that as much as we're grateful to Commissioner Fabian, and we love coming out to the counties. We're really looking forward to having our home again. I just wanted to update everybody as to where we were with the build out of our new facilities at the Auction House. Construction is moving really well. They're moving wonderfully fast. Margaret, Kirk, and I meet with the contractors once a week to keep our tabs on how the progress is going. At this point, paint has been applied to the walls, they're redoing the floors. As we're speaking, the electrical systems are going in. We're really making great progress. Our initial schedule had been to move into these new facilities in late May. However, at the last meeting, we heard that there is a slip of a couple of weeks, there's still a supply chain issue.

Some of the electrical panels, that we need in order to have certificate of occupancy for this place have come in some of the lights that we're having made that are specific to this space, haven't come in and won't be coming in by the end of May because of those supply chain issues. We're pretty confident that mid -June is when we can consider actually having ourselves move in here. In fact, the basement is already complete and some of our equipment is now stored in the basement. Again, a completely different facility it's going to be very kind of collaborative. I think all of you are going to enjoy it. We're looking to put together an open house, a kickoff party for late summer. We can bring everyone in and celebrate moving into our new facilities, which we're very excited to do.

11. Other SPC Business

Commissioner Osche stated next meeting is going to be June 26, and we're thinking that that's going to be in Fayette County with Commissioner Vicites facilities support.

12. Next Meeting Date – **June 26, 2023**

13. Adjourn – 5:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Vincent Vicites, Secretary-Treasurer