

**Minutes of the Joint Meeting of the  
Southwestern Pennsylvania Corporation Board of Directors  
and the  
Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission Executive Committee  
Fay-Penn Economic Development Council  
Fayette County  
and  
Cisco WebEx Meeting  
3:00 p.m. – June 26, 2023**

The three hundred seventy-sixth meeting of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Corporation Board of Directors and the one hundred ninety-sixth meeting of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission Executive Committee was called to order by Chairman Osche.

SPC Board Members present: Mike Belding, Pat Fabian, Rich Fitzgerald, Ed Gainey, Sean Kertes, Leslie Osche, Loretta Spielvogel, Vincent Valdes, and Vince Vicites.

SPC Executive Committee Members present were: Mike Belding, Pat Fabian, Rich Fitzgerald, Ed Gainey, Lynn Heckman, Patrick Joyal, Sean Kertes, Larry Maggi, Leslie Osche, Larry Shifflet, Loretta Spielvogel, Gina Cerilli Thrasher, Vincent Valdes, and Vince Vicites.

Others: Darin Alvania, Armstrong County Planning Department; Art Capella, Fayette County Planning; Doug Chew, Westmoreland County Board of Commissioners; Amber Davis, Butler County; Dan Distler, Beaver County Planning Department; Scott Dunn, Fayette County Board of Commissioners; Mark Rafail; Fayette County; Mary Over, Fayette County; Kaylie Moore, Fayette County; Kevin Boozel, Butler County Board of Commissioners; Kim Geyer, Butler County Board of Commissioners; Mark Gordon, Butler County Planning and Economic Development; Ann Ogoreuc, Allegheny County Economic Development and Planning; Brandon Leach, PennDOT Central Office; Robert Lesnick, Fayette County;

Staff: Mary Brangan, Kirk Brethauer, Tiffany Cummings; Faith Collins, Ronda Craig, Dom D’Andrea, Linda Duffy, Margaret Fonner, Ryan Gordon, Chuck Imbrogno, Jennifer Lasser, Caitlin O’Connor, DJ Ryan, Ailisa Sobien, Josh Spano, Cathy Tulley, and Andy Waple.

1. Call to Order

Chairman Osche welcomed members and called the meeting to order.

2. Action on Minutes of the April 24<sup>th</sup> Corporation Board of Directors and Commission Executive Committee Meeting

Action on the minutes of the April 24, 2023 meeting of the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee were approved on a motion by Commissioner Vicites which was seconded by Commissioner Fabian. The affirmative vote was unanimous.

3. Public Comment – None.

4. Financial Report – Ailisa Sobien

Ms. Sobien gave a brief overview of the budget.

FY 22-23 Budget:	\$22,341,055
Revenue and Expenses:	\$ 8,003,025
Percent of Budget:	36.0 %

5. Action on Corporation Board Resolution 4-23 and Executive Committee Resolution 5-23 to Adopt the Annual Budget for FY 2023-2024 – Margaret Fonner/Ailisa Sobien

A RESOLUTION OF THE DIRECTORS OF THE SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA CORPORATION AND THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION to adopt a Combined SPC Annual Budget, as presented, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Directors of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Corporation and the Executive Committee of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission approve and adopt the FY 2023-24 SPC annual balanced budget of \$23,253,761 (Revenues) and \$23,253,761 (Expenditures) as presented, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023; and

RESOLVED FURTHER that the SPC President and Executive Director, or a designated representative, are hereby authorized to execute all transactions, as delineated in the above-mentioned budget, to carry out the business of SPC.

A motion was made to approve Board Resolution 4-23 and Executive Committee Resolution 5-23 by Commissioner Fabian which was seconded by Commissioner Vicites. The affirmative vote was unanimous.

6. Action on Corporation Board Resolution 6-23 to Solicit Proposals and Enter into Consultant Contracts to Support the Planning Studies included in the 2023-2024 Budget – Margaret Fonner

A RESOLUTION OF THE DIRECTORS OF THE SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA CORPORATION to solicit proposals as needed and enter into Consultant Professional Services contracts for various anticipated Transportation Planning and Economic Development Program projects and studies, any unanticipated projects, programs and studies, and Corporation business included in the SPC Annual Budget for FY 2023-2024.

WHEREAS, the adopted Southwestern Pennsylvania Corporation 2023-2024 Combined Budget and the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission's Unified Planning Work Program and Economic Development Work Program, including funding for projects, programs and studies to support the business of the Commission;

WHEREAS, the Southwestern Pennsylvania Corporation, on behalf of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, will continue to apply for and secure additional funding to support priority regional projects, programs and studies over the course of 2023-2024 not currently included the Combined Budget and Unified Planning Work Program and Economic Development Work Program;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Directors of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Corporation, acting on behalf of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, authorize its President to solicit proposals and statements of qualifications and enter into consultant contracts for the anticipated projects and studies included in the adopted SPC Annual Budget for FY 2023-2024 and any additional projects and studies identified throughout FY 2023-24.

A motion was made to approve Board Resolution 6-23 by Commissioner Vicites which was seconded by Commissioner Belding. The affirmative vote was unanimous.

7. Transportation Report – Dom D'Andrea

Mr. D'Andrea summarized the Transportation Report.

Mr. D'Andrea commented that as you know, we are bringing the Long-Range Plan to the full Commission for adoption today. Since we last met with you in April, we have completed our Air Quality Conformity analysis which concludes that our plan meets the requirements of the Clean Air Act. We have assembled and distributed the document and placed it on our website, and we had a 30-day public comment period from May 9<sup>th</sup> to June 11<sup>th</sup>. During those 30 days, we held one meeting in each county and one meeting with the City of Pittsburgh, total of 11 meetings (4 virtual, 7 in person). We also collected and responded to each public comment made to the plan. More details forthcoming at the full commission meeting.

After the Long-Range Plan, we jump right into a Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) update. We have scheduled one meeting in each PennDOT district for every month remaining in this year for a total of 15 meetings. These are meetings that your county planners, SPC staff, PennDOT, and others will be at.

First meeting will be a review of process and discussion of the goals and objectives of the future meetings and we will also be discussing the candidate project submittals from each member organization.

As part of our next TIP update, we have pushed forward with the opening of some of our competitive funding programs. Namely, we have opened up solicitation of project applications for our Transportation Alternatives Set Aside Program which primarily funds pedestrian and bicycle related projects and trail projects; our CMAQ Program (Congestion Management and Air Quality-projects that mitigate congestion and improve our air quality); and a new program that has come out of the IIJA transportation bill, the Carbon Reduction Program which I will talk about in the next slide. We have consolidated our solicitation and selection process to include all three of these programs so that 1) applications can compete across all three programs and 2) so that we can improve our performance measures by getting projects funded by the most appropriate funding yielding the highest benefits.

So similar to CMAQ, we are talking about projects like Traffic signal upgrades & modernizations, purchases of replacement buses, expansion of park-n-ride facilities

**Eligible Entities:** Any qualified government entity, including local governments, public transit agencies, port authorities, and state agencies is eligible to apply for CMAQ funding. Non-profits and private sector entities may partner with an eligible entity to apply for CMAQ funding; however, there must be a formal agreement in place with their partnering public agency in order to receive funding.

So, we have been asked by PennDOT to review our urbanized boundary designations which is based on data from the latest 2020 census. These boundaries eventually help determine how a road is designated, whether it is urban or rural and also help determine its functional classification. So these boundaries do have federal funding implications. We will be coordinating the review of these urbanized boundaries with your county planners and we wanted to let you know that. Eventually, we will be making a submission to PennDOT who will review it, and eventually it is PennDOT that makes a statewide submission of urbanized boundaries to Federal Highways.

## 8. Strategic Initiatives Report – DJ Ryan

Mr. Ryan gave brief update on the Strategic Initiatives Report.

### **General Updates**

- Work continues on Allegheny River Project
- Interviews in progress for new Water Resource Specialist
- Co-Hosted Duquesne Light Electric Fleet Expo with Duq. Light – Panel Discussion on Funding opportunities

### **Sponsored Programs Development:**

- Application period is now open for CMAQ, TA Set Aside, and Carbon Reduction. Please connect with us if you have project ideas!

### **Environmental Programs**

- Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) NOIP and Work Plan have been submitted to the EPA. Our consultant scope of work is in draft and we plan to finalize in the next few days.
- Completed 3 MS4 certification trainings; now a 5-year Certified Stormwater Permit Inspector for PA, with additional “qualified inspector” training for construction permits, low-impact development and green infrastructure.
- Participating in regional EV discussions with City of Pittsburgh, Allegheny Cty, Quaker Valley COG; attended SWPA Decarbonization Forum, SWPA Electric Fleet Expo and SWPA Energy Summit.

### **Freight Planning:**

- Army Corps Meeting held in May, progress being made on Allegheny River including possible SPC lead involvement
- Next Meeting is in mid-July

**Active Transportation:**

- Continue to support Delmont Borough and the City of Monongahela as they move forward with development of Active Transportation Plans
- Revision of draft Complete Streets Policy in progress -final draft to be shared with the Commissioners Active Transportation and Complete Streets working group for review/feedback
- 2023 Nonmotorized Data Collection Program -request for counts received from Pitt and Delmont Borough as of this date

9. Broadband Connectivity Report – Andy Waple

Kick off meeting held with PBDA and PREP partners on April 26<sup>th</sup>

Survey in final draft stage and will launch in July.

Survey Goals (15 questions):

- o Evaluate how businesses use (or don't use) high-speed internet in everyday operations.
- o Understand key factors that hinder business growth.
- o Understand what tools and resources would spur business growth.

Project on schedule to wrap up by the end of the year.

**Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority – Capital Projects Broadband Infrastructure Program**

- o \$200M from federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)
- o Open May 10 – July 10, 2023
- o Awards: \$500k - \$10M (25% match required)
- o Applicants: Businesses, Non-Profits, Local Governments, Economic Development Organizations
- o Projects: Broadband infrastructure projects delivering 100/100 service in unserved or underserved areas
- o **DEADLINE EXTENDED: August 9, 2023**

**Connectivity and Access Survey**

- Survey informs the 5-Year Action Plan and Digital Equity Plans, being prepared in 2023 by the Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority (Authority).
- Survey will provide critical feedback that will help the Commonwealth qualify for over \$1 billion in federal funding to invest in our communities.
- 10-15 minutes in length

**Upcoming Community Events:**

- Washington County Community Conversation: Thursday, June 29<sup>th</sup>, 11:30a.m.-1:00p.m. 150 W. Beau St. Washington, PA
- Greater Pittsburgh Digital Inclusion Alliance (GPDIA) is a network of over two dozen regional organizations that serve residents who need access to: devices, affordable internet, digital skills, and economic opportunity
- Session on 6/20, moderated by Kathryn de Wit (Pew Charitable Trust) to discuss upcoming funding opportunities, available resources and ongoing initiatives
- SPC and GPDIA beginning conversations and brainstorming on how to use GPDIA model to engage existing similar organizations in the region to bring awareness, create collaborative networks, share data and information, and prepare for funding opportunities across the region.
- Regional Digital Navigator Program Model – SPC exploring possibility of developing a model for use by the region.

10. Economic and Workforce Development Report – Jenn Lasser

Ms. Lasser gave an update on the Economic and Workforce Development Program.

- Continued focus on small business resiliency & growth
- Expanded Pathways to New Economy Careers
- ARC Area Development & Local Access Road – Regional Projects invited for application
- Strategic Planning with Local Government, DCED, EDOs, Workforce Development and Industry for future stimulus dollars
- Continued Broadband Discussions – Small Business Survey
- Actively Recruiting for PTAC Manager and Business Finance Manager
- Data represented for February/March 2023

**Assistance Provided:**

- 23 Companies Assisted
- 31 Counseling Sessions

**Work Orders:**

- 10 Companies
- 17 Overseas Work Orders
- 14 Countries
- Note – special funding applied for via DCED PREP and received to send 4 businesses to the Fancy Food Show in New York City Summer 2023

**Assistance Provided**

- 10 Companies Assisted
- 10 Counseling Sessions

**Contract Awards**

- 12 companies, 45 awards totaling \$4.3M

**Events**

- 4 events (7 attendees)
- Topics: Doing Business with ALCOSAN, Best Practices in Government Contracting, Strategic Marketing and COSTARS- Boost Customers Base

Current Opening: PTAC Manager – scheduling interviews now

**Assistance Provided**

- 26 Companies
- 30 Counseling Sessions
- 4 Loan Applications
- Presentation(S)

– Non-Traditional Lending (40 attendees)

- Current Opening: Manager of Business Lending – Scheduling Interviews

**Keystone Opportunity Zones (KOZ)**

- |                         |                      |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| - Inquiries – 5         | - Applications - 2   |
| - Business Served – 1   | - Investment – 3.2M  |
| - Jobs Created – 710    | - Jobs Retained – 65 |
| - Business Improved – 1 |                      |

•Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP)

- 5 classes held with 36 Attendees

**ARC Technical Assistance**

- Provided Technical Assistance to – 36 Projects (Area Development/POWER/ARISE)
- ARISE still open (multi-state projects)
- Area Development Open
- Local Access Road Open
- 
- Webinar 6/28 at 10am for ARC Applicants
- Construction/Non-Construction Projects and Local Access Road

- Can take 9+ months for approval
- Process:
  - Pre-Application (2 pages)
  - Review
  - Projects invited for Full Application
  - Applicant has appx 60 days for full grant (consultant support available)
  - Submission to SPC/DCED and ARC
- Pre-Apps due to SPC Community Capacity Coordinator Faith Collins by 8/7/23 to allow for submission to DCED by deadline.

11. Action on Corporation Board Resolution 7-23 and Executive Committee Resolution 8-23 to Adopt a Meeting Schedule for FY 2023-24 – Vincent Valdes

A RESOLUTION OF THE DIRECTORS OF THE SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA CORPORATION AND THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION to adopt a meeting schedule for 2023-2024.

WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania Sunshine Law 84 requires that a Schedule of all Board of Directors and Executive Committee Meetings for the ensuing year be adopted;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Corporation and the Executive Committee of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission adopts the following Meeting Schedule for 2023-2024:

**Corporation Board of Directors and Commission Executive Committee**

<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
August 28	February 26
October 23	April 22
December 11	June 24

A motion was made to approve Board Resolution 7-23 and Executive Committee Resolution 8-23 by Commissioner Fabian which was seconded by Commissioner Fitzgerald. The affirmative vote was unanimous.

12. Message from Executive Director - Vincent Valdes  
Next Meeting Date – **August 28, 2023**

Commissioner Vicites moved to enter Executive Session. Commissioner Fabian seconded. The affirmative vote was unanimous.

**Executive Session**

Commissioner Fabian moved to come out of Executive Session. Commissioner Vicites seconded. The affirmative vote was unanimous.

13. Corporation Board Action on Resolutions 9-23 and 10-23 to approve two loans was unanimous.

14. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Margaret Fonner  
Corporation, Secretary-Treasurer

Vincent Vicites  
Commission, Secretary-Treasurer