

TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes of the Meeting

March 27, 2025

The regular meeting of the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission was held March 27, 2025 via Zoom conferencing and in-person attendance. Mr. Kerschner called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members participating remotely were Mr. Jay Bratton, Mr. Frank Chlebnikow, Ms. Deb Everly, Ms. Nina Fitchet, Mr. Tom Graupensperger, Mr. Mike Hartley, Mr. Robert Hess, Mr. John Kerschner, Mr. Dan Robinson, Mr. John Schulze, Mr. Joel Seiders and Mr. Jim Turner. Mr. Robert Spandler attended in person. Ms. Ashley Wise from Conrad Siegel and Mr. Chris Tomlinson from CBIZ participated remotely. Mr. Andrew Bomberger, Ms. Diane Myers-Krug and Ms. Denise Dillman of staff were also present. Ms. Myers-Krug noted a quorum was met, with members in attendance announced for the record, and final attendance documented through the meeting minutes. Mr. Bomberger noted the meeting was being recorded.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public was in attendance to provide comment.

PRESENTATION

Ms. Wise provided a summary of the 2024 actuarial valuation for the defined benefit pension plan and shared her screen containing documents summarizing the results. Participants in the plan are unchanged, and the recommended employer contribution (REC) calculated under the aggregate cost method for 2025 decreased due to the good investment return experienced in 2024. The REC calculated under the minimum funding rules of Act 205 also generated a similar contribution recommendation.

Ms. Wise highlighted the funded ratio trend of the plan, as well as the rates of investment return over the past five years. She noted the funded status increased from 95% to 100% since last year and explained that the funded status is dependent on investment performance. Ms. Wise said the 100% is a great funding level, with the goal being somewhere in the range of 90-100%.

Ms. Wise also reviewed the sensitivity of the assumed interest rate and the effect of investment performance on recommended contribution levels. Given the plan assumptions, Ms. Wise showed the expected future benefit payments over the next 10 years and impacts of additional retirements and mortality factors over that time-period. She also reviewed the funded status comparing market value of assets, present value of accrued benefits, and actuarial liability.

Mr. Robinson asked the cost of the actuarial valuation for 2024. Ms. Myers-Krug answered that the bill for 2024 was \$6,000 and Ms. Wise confirmed that amount. Mr. Turner commented that the plan is in a much better position since it was restructured in 2014.

On a motion by Mr. Spandler, seconded by Mr. Turner, the 2024 Actuarial Valuation and GASB Reports were accepted unanimously for filing and audit. Mr. Chlebnikow abstained from the vote since he is one of the ten vested former members identified in the report.

Mr. Tomlinson provided a summary of the 2024 performance report for the defined benefit pension investments along with a 2025 year-to-date report. He said the approved investment mix was 70/30 stocks/bonds to meet the actuarial demand, and 2024 was a good year for both stocks and bonds.

The pension portfolio performed closer to the overall stock trend, as would be expected with the 70/30 investment mix. The 2024 return was 11.92%. He reviewed the performance of the portfolio for each fund in each sector, highlighted the variations, and showed the longer-term outlook still close to the actuarial goal of 7.5%. Mr. Tomlinson recommended changing to a 65/35 mix and reducing the targeted 7.5% down to 7% long-term return rate. Funds will be monitored to ensure the desired interest rate is achievable, without assuming more risk.

On a motion by Mr. Robinson, seconded by Mr. Hess, the change to the 65/35 investment mix for the pension was approved unanimously. Mr. Chlebnikow abstained from the vote.

Mr. Tomlinson also highlighted the 2024 performance of the investment account. It is invested more conservatively with a 50/50 stock/bond mix due to its shorter timeframe goal to have funds accessible if needed. The 2024 return was 8.66% and while the account started in 2022 which was a bad year for investments, 2024 shows a 1.81% increase since the starting balance.

On a motion by Mr. Chlebnikow, seconded by Ms. Everly, the 50/50 mix for the investment account was approved unanimously to continue.

MINUTES

On a motion by Mr. Spandler, seconded by Ms. Fitchet, the minutes of the January 23, 2025, meeting were approved for filing with the noted addition to attendance.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Ms. Myers-Krug reviewed the Financial Statements for January and February 2025. She noted that the budget figure of \$70,000 was allocated for the Sober Ride Home local match but it became a gift in kind by Lamar. For that reason, there will be no expense recorded on that line for the year since there will be no cost to the Commission. She highlighted that the budget is under the 8.3% expected percentage at 6.7% without the consultant in January. Perry County Support is under budget and Dauphin County Support is over budget which is a dramatic difference from history.

She highlighted revenues for January and February included the usual reimbursements from PennDOT for the transportation program, LPA fees from Perry County municipalities, first quarter increments, refund from Benecon for a loyalty credit, subdivision reviews, and PA DEP reimbursement for the CAP implementation program.

She also reported that expense items that were more or less than the expected budget are highlighted in the report. For the first two months of 2025, the expenses are within the expected range. Expenses that were over budget were outside services for additional cleaning, professional services which included \$6,000 for the actuarial valuation for 2024 and other regional expenses which included prepayment to the Sheraton Hotel for the annual luncheon.

Mr. Robinson inquired about the Benecon cost. Ms. Myers-Krug indicated that Benecon is a consortium of municipalities and that we get our health benefits through Capital Blue Cross. We receive lower rates because of the grouping. We can receive refunds at the end of the year if we don't spend over 120% of our premiums. Mr. Robinson suggested checking other sources to verify we are getting our best pricing. Ms. Myers-Krug agreed to check the marketplace to compare the rates.

On a motion by Mr. Graupensperger, seconded by Ms. Finchet, the Financial Statements for January and February 2025 were unanimously accepted for filing and audit. Copies of the Financial Statements are attached to the file copy of these minutes.

PAYMENT OF EXPENSES

Ms. Myers-Krug reviewed some general ledger items including CAP reimbursements to the conservation districts, payroll deductions for the pension, 457 plan, and AFLAC, health benefits, purchasing two (2) new traffic counting cameras and payments to consultants for special projects.

On a motion by Mr. Spandler, seconded by Mr. Turner, the payments for the January and February 2025 expenses were unanimously approved. Copies of the expenses are attached to the file copy of these minutes.

Ms. Myers-Krug noted the sweep account report was provided for informational purposes and compared the total interest earned to date against the fees charged. With the interest rate at 3.77%, the interest earned far exceeded the fees charged to date. This will continue to be monitored.

There was one (1) health reimbursement during February 2025, as well as a transfer to the HRA account from the TCRPC account to replenish it to the budgeted level. On a motion by Mr. Spandler, seconded by Mr. Graupensperger, the payment for the health reimbursement and account replenishment was unanimously approved.

Other information was provided regarding the Charles Schwab Investment Account, with reference to the performance report provided by Mr. Tomlinson at the beginning of the meeting. The SusqueCycle account information was also provided for informational purposes. SusqueCycle continued to show revenues. The rest of the fleet of bikes will be coming back out shortly.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEWS

Mr. Bomberger noted there was one intergovernmental review received when the agenda packets were distributed. Three additional requests were received for review a day or two prior to the meeting and were distributed separately through email. He gave an overview of the projects, which were all applications to the PA DCNR C2P2 program: East Hanover Township park renovations, Lower Swatara Township Georgetown Park improvements, Susquehanna Township Paxton Creek North Trail construction, and Middletown pool property improvements.

On a motion by Mr. Chlebnikow, seconded by Mr. Turner, approval for signature on all the consistency letters passed unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Bomberger shared four communications which included the Good Hope Road subpoena, CAP block grant allocation by year-county-project, East Hanover CAP subaward award letter and West Hanover CAP subaward award letter. Ms. Myers-Krug presented CAP project information listed in the report showing projects by County, year and total budget amount.

REPORTS

Mr. Bomberger highlighted several staff efforts for January and February 2025. Regional transportation plan update will be ready for review shortly, Regional CMP work continues, SusqueCycle program, I-81 Exit 37 ramp extensions, 2025 Greenway and Trails Summit, neighborhood outreach, and the 2025 traffic count season.

Mr. Bomberger discussed the Sober Ride Home program that started right before Christmas. The program was paused at the beginning of January. Revisions were made to the program, and it was re-activated for Saint Patrick's Day weekend with more limited hours and the voucher amount was reduced. These revisions had a much better result in voucher use for the intended purpose of the program. The program will be re-activated again for the Memorial Day weekend. It will continue through the various holidays until the grant funds are spent.

Mr. Bomberger also discussed the staff changes that have occurred and will be occurring. Rebecca Wenschhof started working as a full-time employee on 3/1/25 as a transportation planner. She previously worked for us as an intern from August 2024 through February 2025, graduated college in December 2024. Ben Warner resigned in February. We are actively in talks with another candidate for hire. The Regional Growth Management Plan (RGMP) will be the first assignment for the new hire. The recruitment of summer interns for GIS and traffic count will begin soon.

Ms. Myers-Krug stated the annual audit and single audit for 2024 were performed earlier in March, standard engagement and governance letters have been prepared and a draft report should be available by the next meeting. There was no indication of any findings.

Mr. Bomberger noted that the annual report is complete. It is located on the TCRPC website, and an article will be included in the newsletter coming out in the next few days.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Bomberger announced the Annual Lunch will feature a keynote address on affordable housing with Q&A by Morgan Boyd, Special Assistant to the Secretary of PA DCED and will be held on May 1. Details and registration are available on the website. Also, updated contacts were provided at the end of the agenda packet.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was provided.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Mr. Turner, seconded by Mr. Graupensperger, the meeting was adjourned at 4:46p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for
Thursday, May 22, 2025 at 3:30 p.m.
TCRPC Office, 320 Market Street, Suite 301E and remotely

Respectfully submitted,
Thomas A. Graupensperger
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Secretary