

TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes of the Meeting

March 23, 2023

The regular meeting of the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission was held March 23, 2023 via Zoom conferencing and in-person attendance. Mr. Spandler called the meeting to order at 3:36 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members participating remotely were Mr. Frank Campbell, Ms. Dana Cotton, Ms. Deb Everly, Mr. Tom Graupensperger, Mr. Rob Hess, Mr. John Kerschner, Mr. Gary Lenker, Mr. Bill Lyons, and Mr. Jim Turner. Mr. Robert Spandler attended in person. Ms. Ashley Wise and Mr. Sean Gallen from Conrad Siegel were guests attending remotely. Mr. Steve Deck and Ms. Diane Myers-Krug of staff were also present. Ms. Myers-Krug noted a quorum was met, with members participating shared in the Zoom gallery, and final attendance documented through the meeting minutes. Mr. Deck noted the meeting was being recorded.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public was in attendance to provide comment.

PRESENTATION

Mr. Gallen provided a summary of the 2022 actuarial valuation for the defined benefit pension plan and shared a handout summarizing the results. He highlighted the funded ratio trend of the plan, as well as the rates of investment return. He noted the funded status decreased from over 100% to 84% since last year and explained that the funded status is dependent on investment performance. This, in turn, also helps determine the recommended employer contribution calculated each year, along with retirements experienced during the year and other plan assumptions. A calculation using Act 205 rules applicable to local governments was provided for comparison for the recommended contribution, which is a good check for contribution levels to make sure the investments are on the right path, and demonstrated the 2023 recommended contribution calculated for TCRPC was reasonable.

Mr. Gallen also reviewed the sensitivity of the assumed interest rate and highlighted the long-term nature of the pension plan and its 7.5% assumed return in calculating plan contributions over the life of the plan. Staff indicated the investment assumptions also would be reviewed with the investment adviser at the upcoming May meeting.

Given the plan assumptions, Mr. Gallen noted the expected future benefit payments over the next 10 years, as well as the funded status comparing market value of assets, present value of accrued benefits, and actuarial liability. The data demonstrates recommended contributions support the long-term nature of the pension plan.

Ms. Myers-Krug referred to the 2022 Performance Review report provided by the investment adviser, which indicated a 16% loss during the year. Mr. Tomlinson will be in attendance at the May meeting to review the report in detail, answer questions and provide guidance in pension investment for the remainder of 2023.

MINUTES

On a motion by Mr. Hess, seconded by Ms. Cotton, the minutes of the January 26, 2023 meeting were approved for filing.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Ms. Myers-Krug reviewed the Financial Statements for January and February 2023. She highlighted revenues for January and February included usual payment from PennDOT for the transportation program, reimbursement for the bike share program, LPA fees from Perry County municipalities, PA DEP reimbursement for the CAP implementation program, sponsorships, as well as receipt of the Counties' first quarterly increment payment. She noted that subdivision expenses exceeded revenues for plan reviews, which is unusual and will need to be monitored. There has been extra staff time spent on County approval plan review which could account for the excess cost, however. She also noted there was a coding error within the transportation financial report which will need to be adjusted prior to the next meeting.

Ms. Myers-Krug also reported notable expense items including meeting date advertising, software renewals, and promotional items. The overall budget remains under the expected level at the end of February.

On a motion by Mr. Kerschner, seconded by Mr. Lenker, the Financial Statements for January and February 2023 were unanimously accepted for filing and audit. Copies of the Financial Statements are attached to the file copy of these minutes.

Ms. Myers-Krug explained that PennDOT provided additional funding which required a budget adjustment. The additional funds included special funds from the bipartisan infrastructure bill for specific safety planning activities, as well as general planning funds that required a 20% local match of \$8,500. The normal budget process to request the local funds from the Counties would require some time to submit the request for the respective Boards of County Commissioner's consideration and action, and then an adjustment made to the quarterly increments. Another option would be for TCRPC to pay for the local match from its reserve funds as it did for the transportation increase in 2022. Ms. Cotton suggested to request the funds from the Counties and if they couldn't pay then TCRPC reserve funds could be used. Mr. Kerschner suggested TCRPC use its reserve funds to advance the local match to the Counties for the remainder of 2023 and request the repayment of those funds during the 2024 budget process. The PennDOT funds would then be available for use without any delay.

On a motion by Mr. Kerschner, seconded by Ms. Everly the budget adjustment, to use TCRPC reserve funds which are to be included in the requested local transportation match by the Counties during the next budget cycle, was unanimously approved.

PAYMENT OF EXPENSES

Ms. Myers-Krug reviewed some general ledger items including reimbursement for the bike share program and subsequent deposit into the SusqueCycle account, PA Downtown Center membership and refund, software renewals, County Planning Directors membership, new employee paychecks prior to direct deposit, and transfer of funds to the HRA account to meet the budgeted level. She also indicated the utility bill included a high amount for electricity, and noted the PPL billing issues experienced by the company in December. This will continue to be monitored and coordinated with the building landlord.

On a motion by Mr. Graupensperger, seconded by Mr. Campbell, the payment of the January and February 2023 expenses was unanimously approved. Copies of the expenses are attached to the file copy of these minutes.

There were two (2) health reimbursements during January 2023, as well as a transfer to the HRA account from the TCRPC account in February to replenish the HRA account to the budgeted level for 2023. On a motion by Mr. Turner, seconded by Mr. Hess, the payment of the January and February health reimbursements and account replenishment was unanimously approved.

Ms. Myers-Krug noted the sweep account report and investment account report were provided for information purposes. The ending balance for the sweep account appears high due to a sizable deposit that was made at the end of the month that wasn't "swept" to pay bills at the time of monthly closing. Once that transfer was made, the balance returned to the expected level. She also noted the interest rate increased to 1.25% starting in January.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEWS

Mr. Deck gave an overview of the Detweiler Park accessible loop trail project and the renovations for the Atlas Hudson Building on North 6th Street. Both projects were determined to be consistent with the Regional Growth Management Plan and recommended for funding support as requested by the applicants.

On a motion by Mr. Lenker, seconded by Ms. Everly, approval for Mr. Spandler's signature on the consistency letters passed unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Deck shared a letter regarding Finding of No Significant Impact and Request for Release of Funds from US HUD for the Dauphin County Library, Your Place to Belong project, as well as a letter of intent to collaborate with Penn State University regarding a project funded by the National Science Foundation focused on identifying improved rural transportation options. No action was needed.

Mr. Deck also reported on a letter received from PA DEP regarding the status of expenditures for the grant supporting the Countywide Action Plan and Implementation projects, as well as the additional funds requested for the implementation projects in the amount of \$1,035,915.

Ms. Myers-Krug stated the 2022 audit was completed earlier in March and the letters and final report typically provided by the auditors will be forthcoming.

REPORTS

Mr. Deck highlighted several staff efforts including completion of the 2022 Annual Report, re-opening of the bike share system, continued work on an active transportation plan, statewide award to be received for the Dauphin County Water Resource Enhancement Program (WREP), safe streets for all grant award, and formal adoption of the Perry County Comprehensive Plan, Picture Perry. Mr. Campbell expressed his appreciation for all of Jason Finnerty's hard work and dedication to Newport and the County.

Mr. Deck also noted the Annual Report was available on the website and asked Commissioners to contact staff if they had any comments or questions. He also announced the Annual Lunch, with the keynote panel to discuss Active Transportation, would be held on May 11. Details and registration would be available soon on the website.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Turner noted recent reports regarding Norfolk Southern (NS) blocking roadways in Dauphin County. He stated Perry County has historically had the same issue and requested the Commission take a position regarding safety and contact NS directly, citing the strength in numbers the Commission can offer, as well as the recent public relations NS has had to address lately might make NS more amenable to talking about this issue. Mr. Deck indicated there was a new contact at NS due to the retirement of Mr. Husband, so this would be a good time for staff to initiate that contact.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was provided.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Mr. Hess, seconded by Mr. Turner, the meeting was adjourned at 4:39 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for
Thursday, May 25, 2023 at 3:30 p.m.
TCRPC Office, 112 Market Street
2nd Floor Conference Room, and remotely

Respectfully submitted,
John A. Kerschner

John A. Kerschner, AICP
Secretary