

# Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority Meeting

## Approved Minutes

October 24, 2022

3:00 p.m.

The following members were in attendance:

### **Authority Members**

Christian Leinbach, Berks County Board of Commissioners, Chair

Marian Moskowitz, Chester County Commissioner, Vice Chair

Kenneth Lawrence, Jr., Montgomery County Commissioner, Treasurer

Scott France, Executive Director, Montgomery County Planning Commission, Secretary

Jim Gerlach, President, GRCA, Assistant Secretary

Peter Urscheler, Phoenixville Borough Mayor, Assistant Treasurer

Brian O'Leary, Executive Director, Chester County Planning Commission

Eddie Moran, Mayor, City of Reading

### **1. Call to Order**

Commissioner Christian Leinbach, Chair of the SRPRA, called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Ms. Anne-Marie Yocum-Grill, Berks County staffer, read the guidelines for making public comments.

### **2. Adoption of September 19, 2022 Minutes**

Christian Leinbach called for any corrections to the minutes.

*As there were no corrections or objections to the draft minutes of the September 19, 2022 SRPRA meeting submitted, the minutes were approved.*

### **3. Board Member Comments**

*There were no Board member comments.*

### **4. Public Comment on Agenda Items**

*There were no public comments submitted.*

### **5. Subcommittee Reports**

#### **a. Finance – Comm. Lawrence, Chair**

##### **i. Banking Update**

Commissioner Ken Lawrence reported that the SRPA's bank account set up is complete.

##### **ii. Signature Authority-Action**

Commissioner Lawrence said that there is one action before the Board. In the interest of the Authority to delegate certain duties and to assist in making timely payments of its expenditures, the resolution before the Authority's Members would delegate certain duties and confer signing authority on SRPRA's Executive Interim Director, Tom Frawley. Provision would be for payments that have been ratified by the Authority's Board and in the amount not to exceed \$2,000.00.

*Commissioner Lawrence motioned, and Scott France seconded, all voted unanimously, and the motion was carried to delegate certain duties and certain signing authority to SRPRA's Executive Interim Director, Tom Frawley.*

**b. Marketing – Brian O’Leary, Chair****i. Committee Update**

Brian O’Leary reported that the SRPRA website: [goSRPRA.com](http://goSRPRA.com) is up and running and content is being developed from various sources. Chester County is handling its development. Some items still being worked on are the Authority’s Constant Contact and email accounts, and social media. Christian Leinbach, Chair, said that the Committee and Chester County had done a good job on the website, and reminded attendees that it is a good source to find SRPRA’s core documents and approved minutes.

**c. Planning – Scott France, Chair****i. Consultant Update-Action**

Scott France welcomed Tom Frawley and said that in a short time he has expanded the Authority’s operational capacity and effectiveness, and will be actively engaging with each committee.

**ii. Outside Agency Coordination**

Scott France announced that an agreement has been reached with Transportation for America to become the SRPRA’s consultant to guide the Authority through the process of advocating and applying for federal funding and make necessary improvements to establish passenger rail service along the designated corridor. The Authority’s solicitor provided input, the final iteration of the contract has been returned from the consultant and he asked the Board for a motion to finalize the proposed agreement.

*Jim Gerlach motioned, and Peter Urscheler seconded, all voted unanimously, and the motion was carried to approve the SRPRA entering into a consulting agreement with Transportation for America, based on the terms of the agreement.*

Scott asked that a press release be prepared announcing the SRPRA’s affiliation with Transportation for America. He provided update on agency coordination: 1) Amtrak said that they would be sending a representative to the SRPRA monthly meetings; 2) will have Tom Frawley schedule a meeting with the Authority’s Commissioners and Andrew Batson, Acting Deputy Secretary for Multi-Modal Transportation at PennDOT; 3) Scott made a presentation to the Pottstown Health and Wellness Foundation, and has an upcoming presentation with the Greater Reading Chapter of the American Society of Civil Engineers to share information on the rail project.

**d. Personnel – Comm. Moskowitz, Chair****i. Committee Update**

Marian Moskowitz, Vice Chair, reported that she did not have any updates for the committee.

**e. Community Engagement – Jim Gerlach, Chair****i. Committee Update**

Jim Gerlach reported that there is no update on Engagement activity yet. The committee will sit down with the Marketing Committee to identify key regional stakeholders. He said a working group from Berks County to select the most appropriate train station location in Reading and examine how the city and its citizens view transit-oriented development. Mayor Moran added that he was meeting with U.S. Senator Bob Casey to advocate for federal TOT grants this Thursday.

**6. Interim Executive Director’s Report**

Tom Frawley, Interim Executive Director of the SRPRA reported that 3 invoices for the SRPRA have been received. The Board received copies in their meeting packet for review and he is seeking authorization of payment for: 1) KMRD Partners for the Authority's annual director's and officer's liability insurance, \$1,975.00; 2) Thomas Frawley Consulting, LLC, for providing September consulting services \$2,331.95; and 3) Kozloff Stoudt Attorneys October services, \$12,795.23. He added that the anticipated monthly expenditures with Transportation for America will be \$3,500.00.

*Commissioner Lawrence motioned, and Peter Urscheler seconded, all voted unanimously, and the motion was carried to authorize three payments of invoices to KMRD Partners, Thomas Frawley Consulting, LLC, and Kozloff Stoudt Attorneys incurred by the SRPRA.*

Tom Frawley said that the Authority will need to obtain the services of an auditor to prepare a report for 2022 state filing due on May 1, 2023. He asked the Board to vote to authorize the search and said that he would send 4 proposals to them for their consideration.

*Jim Gerlach motioned, and Peter Urscheler seconded, all voted unanimously, and the motion was carried to authorize Tom Frawley to conduct a search and request proposals for auditor services for the SRPRA.*

Tom advised the Board that he would refine the proposed 2023 budget for the Authority. As well, he has had some inquiries from citizens who would like to volunteer their support for the SRPRA. He suggested the creation of a voluntary advisory panel. He will work on registering the SRPRA with the Department of Economic Development and obtaining a Dunns and SAMs numbers, and will need a statement of Financial Interest for the Authority. He thanked John Weidenhammer for his work on acquiring domain names for the Authority. He updated the Board on grant application and corridor identification program. He mentioned the need for the Board to complete their Statements of Financial Interests as it relates to their municipality and affiliation with the Authority.

#### **7. Formation of Executive Committee**

Tom said the formation of an Executive Committee has been proposed and should be formalized. The Authority's three Commissioners and Tom Frawley would work together to foster coordination with the three counties (Berks, Montgomery and Chester). Tom will head this effort and would find a regular time slot for the meetings to serve as a "first level committee" to review matters outside the roles of the various committees, before bringing them to the Board.

*Peter Urscheler motioned, and Jim Gerlach seconded, all voted unanimously, and the motion was carried to formally create an Executive Committee for the SRPRA.*

#### **8. Other Business**

Christian Leinbach, SRPRA Chair, announced that the annual APA Conference will be held in April 2023 in Philadelphia. David Hunter of Chester County is organizing a mobile workshop bus ride from Philadelphia to Reading for attendees, with stops in Phoenixville, Pottstown and Reading; each municipality will be responsible for their own presentation. Christian believe this is an ideal opportunity for the SRPRA to tell its story and planners can see cooperation between three counties. He said David would reach out to his counterparts in Berks and Montgomery counties, and he will coordinate with the APA. On behalf of the SRPRA's Community Engagement Committee, Jim Gerlach requested that David Hunter keep him informed of the details of the event and community

engagement activities planned. Mayor Moran requested that David and Jim schedule a conversation with him, and Christian asked that David let him know when he has any updates.

Tom Frawley asked to amend the resolution just passed for signatory authority action to include the following language: the SRPRA Executive Director shall have signing authority up to \$2,000.00 with Board ratification; for action on payments in the amounts over \$2,000.00 and \$10,000.00, two authorized signers are required with email communication between signers approving the use of the 2<sup>nd</sup> signers' signature; and for payments exceeding \$10,000.00, two signatures on a paper check will be required.

*Commissioner Lawrence motioned, and Scott France seconded, all voted unanimously, and the motion was carried to amend the terms of signing authority for the SRPRA.*

**9. General Public Comment**

*There was no public comment.*

**10. Adjourn**

Chairman Christian Leinbach adjourned the meeting at 3:41 p.m.

**Next Board Meeting**

November 28, 2022 at 3:00 p.m. via Zoom

Respectfully submitted,



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Ann Marie Meehan