

SCHUYLKILL RIVER PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY
BOARD MEETING PACKET
JUNE 26, 2023

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T4A MAY MONTHLY REPORT



Schuykill River Passenger Rail Authority

Meeting Agenda

June 26, 2023, 3pm*

1. Call to Order
2. Adoption of May 22 Minutes
3. Board Member Comments
4. Public Comment on Agenda Items
5. Authority Membership: Adopt Ongoing Appointment Durations – *Action*
6. Report: Congressionally Mandated \$750k Grant – Tom Frawley, Executive Director
7. Committee Reports
 - a. Finance – Commissioner Lawrence, Chair
 - i. Motion to Pay Bills – *Action*
 - b. Marketing & Public Relations – Brian O’Leary, Chair
 - i. Report: Social Media Consultant Contract
 - c. Planning – Scott France, Chair
 - i. Amtrak Meeting Report
 - ii. Request Authorization to Solicit Consultant Proposals - *Action*
 - d. Personnel – Commissioner Moskowitz, Chair
 - i. Committee Update
 - e. Community Engagement – Jim Gerlach, Chair
 - i. Committee Update
8. Executive Director’s Report
 - a. Internet Domain Name Renewals - *Action*
9. Other Business
10. General Public Comment
11. Adjourn

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Schuykill River Passenger Rail Authority will be conducted virtually at 3:00 PM on Monday, July 24, 2023. The same public registration link will be available for that meeting.

*Meeting will be held virtually and open to the public. Please visit the Authority website for the registration link. www.GoSRPRA.com

SCHUYLKILL RIVER PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY
BOARD MEETING PACKET
JUNE 26, 2023

DRAFT MINUTES FROM MAY 22, 2023 MEETING

Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority Meeting

DRAFT Minutes

May 22, 2023

3:00 p.m.

The following members were in attendance:

Authority Members in Attendance:

Christian Leinbach, Berks County Board of Commissioners, Chair
Marian Moskowitz, Chester County Commissioner, Vice Chair
Scott France, Executive Director, Montgomery County Planning Commission, Secretary
Jim Gerlach, President, GRCA, Assistant Secretary
Kenneth Lawrence, Jr., Montgomery County Commissioner, Treasurer
Peter Urscheler, Phoenixville Borough Mayor, Assistant Treasurer
Eddie Moran, Mayor, City of Reading

Authority Members Absent:

Brian O’Leary, Executive Director, Chester County Planning Commission
David Zellers, Montgomery County Director of Commerce

1. Call to Order

Commissioner Christian Leinbach, Chair of the SRPRA, called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.
Mr. Dan Becker of Kozloff Stoudt Attorneys, legal counsel for the Authority, read the guidelines for making public comments.

2. Adoption of April 24, 2023 Minutes

Christian Leinbach called for any corrections to the minutes.

As there were no corrections or objections to the draft minutes of the April 24, 2023 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 on agenda items.

5. Report: Congressionally Mandated \$750k Grant – Tom Frawley, Executive Director

Tom Frawley, Executive Director of the SRPRA, reported that a meeting was held on May 10th with the Federal Railroad Administration FRA and their consultants relating to the congressionally mandated \$750k grant awarded to Berks County, to discuss the project and how the funds would be used. He reminded the Board that this grant application preceded the FRA Corridor program application, so integration and coordination will need to be discussed. He also reminded the Board that this grant originated with our Congressional Delegation, and expressed the Authority’s appreciation for their commitment to the project.

Tom reported that FRA staff urged SRPRA to begin work on a service development plan (SDP) while awaiting results of the SRPRA's FRA application. He was advised this could give the project a "head start" that could amount to as much as a half year.

Christian Leinbach, Chair, added that before SRPRA obligates funds, FRA clearance to use funds would be needed, and that the cost will exceed \$750k, and that the estimated cost to prepare the service development plan is \$2 million. He said the FRA staff said they are there now to work with the SRPRA on this.

Tom concurred with Christian and added that the FRA staff suggested ongoing monthly conversations to move along the process and provide guidance.

6. Subcommittee Reports

a. Finance – Commissioner Kenneth Lawrence Jr., Chair

i. Motion to Pay Bills –Action

Commissioner Lawrence said there two bills presented for payment, subject to the Board's approval.

Commissioner Lawrence motioned, and Vice Chair Marian Moskowitz, seconded, all voted unanimously, and the motion was carried to approve the payments of two bills presented in the SRPRA's May 22, 2023 Board meeting packet.

b. Marketing & Public Relations– Peter Urscheler, Assistant Treasurer

i. Recommendation to Award Social Media Consultant Contract–Action

Peter Urscheler reported that the committee met on May 3rd and based on their review, they recommend the SRPRA Board award the social media consultant contract for the project to Virtual Farm.

Assistant Treasurer Peter Urscheler, motioned, and Commissioner Ken Lawrence, seconded, all voted unanimously, and the motion was carried to award and execute a 3 year term, \$2,500.00 monthly, at-will contract for SRPRA's social media management to Virtual Farm.

Christian Leinbach, Chair, thanked Stephanie Weaver of Berks County for her work on the subcommittee, and announced that she would be departing from the committee and that Jonathan Heitzman of Berks County would be the new Berks County representative.

c. Planning – Scott France, Chair

i. Committee Update

Scott France reported that Amtrak will be partnering with SRPRA on the project as they have data and materials in-house to support our efforts. He said he had nothing new to report on the consultant side of the process yet as he does not have the SDP guidelines yet. He received the paperwork last Friday for the \$250k state grant for a feasibility study, but this will be held until the FRA grant results comes through.

Scott France explained that PA House General Assembly Bill 902 which relates to local transportation funding could be an important tool in generating revenue for passenger rail service projects.

Christian Leinbach shared his thoughts on potential for participation by 2nd class counties and authorities in which 1st and 2nd class counties participate and asked for Board members to consider and share their thoughts prior to the Board's next meeting.

Jim Gerlach, Assistant Secretary, asked that implementation at the county level tied to the authority, specifically in support of transportation, might be recommended.

d. Personnel – Comm. Moskowitz, Chair

i. Committee Update

Marian Moskowitz, Vice Chair, said she had no news to report.

e. Community Engagement – Jim Gerlach, Chair

i. Committee Update

Jim Gerlach reported that his committee hasn't met since the SRPRA's last Board meeting, and that his committee is awaiting the FRA results re further action.

7. Executive Director's Report

Tom Frawley, Executive Director, said that a Washington D.C. visit is being arranged for the first week of June, with a delegation of SRPRA representatives to meet members of our Congressional Delegation, and chairs and ranking members of key House and Senate committees. He is also planning a June 8th meeting with two Amtrak officials, Dennis Newman, Executive Vice President of Planning and Strategy, and Nicole Bucich, Vice President of Network Development. Tom said he is also at work developing the statement of work, budget and schedule to be used as attachments for the grant agreement associated with the \$750,000 Congressionally Mandated Grant.

8. Other Business

Chair Christian Leinbach said that although the public link through the SRPRA website seems to be working, there seemed to be some confusion over the non-public attendees' Zoom link. He asked Tom to provide the SRPA Board meeting Zoom information again and include it in upcoming Board packets. Tom agreed and asked that anyone who had trouble to get in touch with him.

9. General Public Comment

Christian Leinbach, Chair, announced that there was no public comment.

Adjourn

Christian Leinbach called to adjourn the meeting.

Assistant Treasurer Peter Urscheler, motioned, and Scott France, Secretary, seconded, all voted unanimously, to adjourn the May 2023 meeting of the SRPRA Board.

Next Board Meeting

June 26, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. via Zoom

Respectfully submitted,



Ann Marie Meehan

SCHUYLKILL RIVER PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY
BOARD MEETING PACKET
JUNE 26, 2023

BILLS RECEIVED SINCE MAY 22, 2023 MEETING

FROM: THOMAS E FRAWLEY CONSULTING, LLC

551 Daventry Road
Berwyn, PA 19312-1740
Attention: Thomas E. Frawley

Thomas E. Frawley Contact Information:
Tom@FrawleyConsulting.com
610-724-5028 (Mobile)

TO: SCHUYLKILL RIVER PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY
Berks County Courthouse and Government Services Center
633 Court Street
Reading, PA 19601
Attention: Finance Committee

Contract Date: 20SEP2022	Sequential Payment Request Number: 09
Start Date: 26SEP2022	Invoice Number: 2023-05
	Invoice Date: 13JUN2023

Invoice for services performed as Executive Director of the Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority for the period: Monday, May 1, 2023 through Wednesday, May 31, 2023. This invoice reflects the change in hourly billing rate approved by the Board at the March 27, 2023 meeting.

LABOR, INCLUDING OVERHEAD AND FEE				
ELEMENT DESCRIPTION		TASK HOURS	CONTRACT RATE	TOTAL LABOR CHARGES
May 2023		76.30	\$130.00	\$9,919.00
				\$9,919.00

EXPENSES, AT COST			
DESCRIPTON OF EXPENSES		NOTES	EXPENSES INVOICED
Personal auto and parking			\$65.40

TOTAL CHARGES THIS INVOICE - LABOR AND EXPENSES	
	\$9,984.40

INVOICE LABOR, EXPENSES, AND HOURS SUMMARY AND STATUS			
	LABOR	EXPENSES	TOTAL
CHARGED PRIOR TO 01MAY2023	\$55,405.00	\$493.43	\$55,898.43
CHARGED DURING 01MAY2023 - 31MAY2023	\$9,919.00	\$65.40	\$9,984.40
OVERALL CHARGED TO DATE	\$65,324.00	\$558.83	\$65,882.83
PREVIOUS INVOICES OUTSTANDING	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
TOTAL INVOICES OUTSTANDING INCLUDING THIS INVOICE	\$9,919.00	\$65.40	\$9,984.40

	HOURS
HOURS EXPENDED PRIOR TO 01MAY2023	628.10
TOTAL HOURS CHARGED DURING 01MAY2023 - 31MAY2023	76.30
TOTAL HOURS CHARGED 01SEP2022 THROUGH 31MAY2023	704.40

I have personally examined this billing statement. All entries are correct and reasonable for the services performed and allowable costs incurred, and no item on this statement has been previously billed.

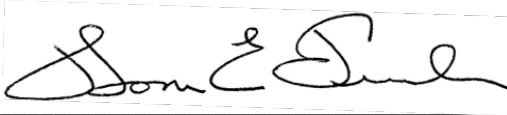
Thomas E. Frawley, P.E., Esq. - Principal

13-JUN-2023
DATE

Thomas E. Frawley, P.E., Esq., MBA - Executive Director
 Hours - Monday 01MAY2023 through Wednesday 31MAY2023
 Invoice Number: 2023-05
 Invoice Date: 13JUN2023

DAY	DATE	HOURS	DESCRIPTION OF PRIMARY ACTIVITIES PERFORMED (ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PROVIDED IN ATTACHED MONTHLY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT)
Monday	1	2.50	Meeting w/ Pan Shupp to prep for FRA meeting May 10
Tuesday	2	2.00	Meeting w/ Senator Fetterman's staff
Wednesday	3	2.75	Marketing & PR Cmte Meeting; T4A Coordination Meeting
Thursday	4	0.00	
Friday	5	0.00	
Saturday	6	0.00	
Sunday	7	0.00	
Monday	8	5.50	Meeting w/ Pan Shupp and David Hunter to prep for FRA meeting May 10
Tuesday	9	5.00	
Wednesday	10	6.00	Meeting in Reading with FRA
Thursday	11	0.50	
Friday	12	1.50	
Saturday	13	0.00	
Sunday	14	0.00	
Monday	15	4.00	Planning Committee Meeting; Executive Cmte Report; PPT update
Tuesday	16	5.00	Audit letter; Finance Cmte and Board Reports
Wednesday	17	3.75	SRTB Presentation; FSWG Meeting; Finance Cmte Meeting
Thursday	18	7.00	FSWG Meeting; Tech Cmte Meeting; Jim G and Scott F calls
Friday	19	0.00	
Saturday	20	0.00	
Sunday	21	0.00	
Monday	22	5.30	Amtrak Meeting; Board Meeting; Technical Cmte Meeting
Tuesday	23	6.50	Professional services contract development
Wednesday	24	4.50	Professional services contract development
Thursday	25	2.00	FSWG Meeting
Friday	26	3.50	FRA Grant Agreeent Attachments
Saturday	27	0.00	
Sunday	28	0.00	
Monday	29	0.00	
Tuesday	30	2.50	Professional services contract development
Wednesday	31	6.50	Professional services contract development

Task Totals:	76.30	
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Certified: 

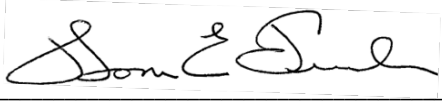
Date: 13-JUN-2023

Thomas E. Frawley, P.E., Esq. - Prinicpal

Thomas E. Frawley, P.E., Esq., MBA - Executive Director
Expenses - Monday 01MAY2023 through Wednesday 31MAY2023
Invoice Number: 2023-05
Invoice Date: 13JUN2023

EXPENSES THIS INVOICE			
DATE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	NOTES
10-May-23	Personal Auto: Berwyn-Reading RT	\$58.95	90 miles at \$0.655
10-May-23	Parking - Reading	\$6.45	Courthouse Garage

Task 1 Total: \$65.40

Certified: 
Thomas E. Frawley, P.E., Esq. - Principal
Date: 13-JUN-2023



INVOICE

1152 15th Street NW, Ste 450
Washington, DC 20005
Telephone: 202-207-3355
Fax: 202-207-3349
Federal EIN: 27-0038938

DATE: 5/15/2023

INVOICE # *is assigned

FOR: SRPRA Rail consulting services

PROJECT NO. 2213-SRPRA

ACCOUNT CODE: *for accounting use only

BILL TO: Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority
Attn: Thomas E. Frawley
633 Court Street
Reading, PA 19601
tom@frawleyconsulting.com

DUE DATE: 6/14/2023

DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
Primary Services Tasks (April 2023)	\$ 3,500.00
<i>Please reference the above-mentioned invoice number on your payment.</i>	
SUBTOTAL	\$ 3,500.00
TAX RATE	0.00%
SALES TAX	-
OTHER	-
TOTAL	\$ 3,500.00

We prefer payment by ACH transfer

Bank: Capital One Bank
1800 M Street NW
Washington, DC 20036

ABA #: 255071981
Beneficiary Acct #: 1574304640
Beneficiary: Smart Growth America
Reference: Invoice Number

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

SCHUYLKILL RIVER PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY
BOARD MEETING PACKET
JUNE 26, 2023

CONSULTANT SOLICITATION FOR
PLANNING, ENGINEERING AND ENVIRONMENTAL
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority
Consultant Solicitation For
Planning, Engineering and Environmental
Professional Services

BACKGROUND

The Berks County Department of Community and Economic Development has been awarded a Congressionally Mandated grant for \$750,000 to advance the planning for the restoration of intercity passenger rail service between Reading and Philadelphia and beyond to New York. Based upon guidance received from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), the Authority plans to use these funds to advance creation of its Service Development Plan, starting with preparation of a Route Alternatives Analysis. This work will require access to professional service capabilities not currently available within the Authority or its constituent counties.

PROPOSED SCOPE

The scope is proposed to consist of the aforementioned Alternatives Analysis, followed by optional additional tasks to be undertaken upon Authority direction, either to utilize funds remaining in the previously identified grant, or to perform additional work associated with the Authority's potential acceptance into the FRA's Corridor Identification and Development Program (CIDP). Requisite experience and skills include: rail operations planning; rail operations simulation using Berkeley Simulation Software's Rail Traffic Controller (RTC) model; rail infrastructure engineering including track and structures; rail systems engineering including signals and Positive Train Control (PTC); environmental analysis and documentation preparation; and, rail station planning and design. Optional tasks may also require experience and skills related to rail access agreements and negotiations.

PROPOSED BUDGET

The proposed budget is up to \$750,000 (exact amount to be determined) to prepare the Alternatives Analysis, with additional amount(s) to be incorporated subject to the Authority's acceptance into the FRA's CIDP.

SCHUYLKILL RIVER PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY
BOARD MEETING PACKET
JUNE 26, 2023

AUTHORITY DOMAIN NAME RENEWALS

Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority
Current Internet Domain Names

DOMAIN	ANNUAL COST
GoSRPRA.com	\$21.99
GoSRPRA.info	31.99
GoSRPRA.net	22.99
GoSRPRA.org	20.99
RideSRPRA.com	21.99
RideSRPRA.info	31.99
RideSRPRA.net	22.99
Ride SRPRA.org	20.99
ConnectSRPRA.com	21.99
ConnectSRPRA.info	31.99
ConnectSRPRA.net	22.99
ConnectSRPRA.org	20.99
SchuylkillRail.com	21.99
SchuylkillRail.net	22.99
SchuylkillRail.org	20.99
SchuylkillRiverPasengerRailAuthority.com	21.99
SchuylkillRiverPassengerRailAuthority.net	22.99
SchuylkillRiverPassengerRailAuthority.org	20.99
	\$425.82

SCHUYLKILL RIVER PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY
BOARD MEETING PACKET
JUNE 26, 2023

TRANSPORTATION FOR AMERICA (T4A)
JUNE 2023 MONTHLY REPORT

June 2023 Report to the Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority

Senate considers Amtrak board nominees

On Wednesday June 21, the Senate Commerce Committee heard testimony from three nominees to the Amtrak board: the board's current chairman [Anthony Coscia](#), Mayor [Christopher Koos](#) of Normal, IL, and [Joel Szabat](#), who previously served as the Assistant Secretary of Transportation for Aviation and International Affairs under President Donald Trump. [This video captures the hearing](#), which saw Senators Jerry Moran (R-KS), Jon Tester (D-MT), and Jacky Rosen (D-NV) strongly advocate for expanding long distance service along the national network.

This comes after President Biden's first round of nominees was rejected by a bipartisan group of Senators amidst criticism that his nominees were mostly from communities along the Northeast Corridor. This new slate of nominees was drawn from that first group, and are thus subject to the same criticism for a lack of geographic diversity.

FAA Reauthorization presents new opportunities for passenger rail

On Wednesday, June 14, the House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I) [unanimously approved](#) the *Securing Growth and Robust Leadership in American Aviation Act*, a bill to reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and aviation safety and infrastructure programs for the next five years. The Senate is currently debating their version of the bill, which when passed will kick off negotiations between the House and Senate over the final text to be sent to President Biden for his signature. T4A is working with House and Senate staff to ensure that intermodal connectivity between airports and passenger rail is considered within the bill. As it stands now, the FAA and Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) are limited in their ability to collaborate with states on intermodal projects.

I-95 explosion draws attention to limited transit and rail alternatives

The crash and explosion that triggered the collapse of a bridge on I-95 in Philadelphia has sparked a conversation in southeast Pennsylvania about transportation system redundancy via public transit and passenger rail. To that end, [SEPTA has requested](#) that the state legislature allow counties to raise taxes for public transit. The agency made this request in order to raise matching funds to pursue federal infrastructure dollars.

Debt ceiling deal

The [Fiscal Responsibility Act](#) was signed into law by President Biden on June 3. The new law raises the nation's debt ceiling while slashing several categories of federal spending. One provision claws back several categories of unobligated federal dollars, but the only impact to passenger rail funding is a \$2 million rescission from Amtrak. All in all, this bill will not impact the work of the SRPRA.

Federal support for small and rural transit gains momentum in Congress

[Transportation for America \(T4America\)](#) is an alliance of elected, business and civic leaders from communities across the country, united to ensure that states and the federal government step up to invest in smart, homegrown, locally-driven transportation solutions – because these are the investments that hold the key to our future economic prosperity. t4america.org

Transportation for America (T4A), in partnership with several rural transit providers in Pennsylvania via the National Campaign for Transit Justice (NCTJ), is working with a bipartisan group of lawmakers within Congress to reform the way the federal government funds rural transit agencies. This would include provisions to streamline federal funding to rural agencies, improve procurement processes, and increase the federal funding share for rural transit operations from 50% to 80%. If passed, this bill would make transfers between rural passenger rail stations and local transit routes easier for riders.

Politico article on freight rail obstinacy

On May 19, Politico released an [article about the obstacle that freight rail companies pose to the expansion of passenger rail](#). The article quotes T4A Chairman John Robert Smith, who said that “data, which freights generally consider proprietary, ought to be readily available to FRA, on demand, from any of the freight railroads.”

Minnesota passes \$195 million for Northern Lights Express

As part of a landmark transit funding bill, the Minnesota legislature approved \$195 million for the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) to develop and construct the [Northern Lights Express \(NLX\)](#), which will provide intercity passenger rail service between Minneapolis and Duluth.

For questions or more information, please contact John Robert Smith at jrsmith@t4america.org or 601-527-5040.