

SCHUYLKILL RIVER PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY  
BOARD MEETING PACKET  
MARCH 27, 2023

CONTENTS:

AGENDA

DRAFT MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 27, 2022 MEETING

BILLS RECEIVED SINCE FEBUARY 27 MEETING

T4A FEBRUARY MONTHLY REPORT



## Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority

### Meeting Agenda

March 27, 2023, 3pm\*

1. Call to Order
2. Adoption of February 27 Minutes
3. Board Member Comments
4. Public Comment on Agenda Items
5. Federal Railroad Administration Corridor Program Application Update – Tom Frawley
6. Committee Reports
  - a. Finance – Commissioner Lawrence, Chair
    - i. FY 2022 Audit Update
    - ii. Motion to Pay Bills – *Action*
  - b. Marketing & Public Relations – Brian O’Leary, Chair
    - i. Committee Update
  - c. Planning – Scott France, Chair
    - i. Committee Update
  - d. Personnel – Commissioner Moskowitz, Chair
    - i. Committee Update
  - e. Community Engagement – Jim Gerlach, Chair
    - i. Committee Update
6. Interim Executive Director’s Report
7. Other Business
8. General Public Comment
9. Adjourn

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority will be conducted virtually at 3:00 PM on Monday, April 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](http://www.GoSRPRA.com)

SCHUYLKILL RIVER PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY  
BOARD MEETING PACKET  
MARCH 27, 2023

DRAFT MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 27, 2023 MEETING

# Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority Meeting

## DRAFT Minutes

February 27, 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

Peter Urscheler, Phoenixville Borough Mayor, Assistant Treasurer

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

David Zellers, Montgomery County Director of Commerce

Kenneth Lawrence, Jr., Montgomery County Commissioner, Treasurer

### **Authority Members Absent:**

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.

Mr. Dan Becker of Kozloff Stoudt Attorneys, legal counsel for the Authority, read the guidelines for making public comments.

### **2. Adoption of January 23, 2023 Minutes**

Christian Leinbach called for any corrections to the minutes.

- a. *As there were no corrections or objections to the draft minutes of the January 23, 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 submitted.*

### **5. Federal Railroad Administration Corridor Program Application Update**

Tom Frawley said that the FRA application’s text and appendices are almost complete, and he has shared them with Amtrak and PennDOT for their input. The application is on track to be complete and available for submission between one and two weeks prior to the March 27 FRA application due date. Jim Gerlach expressed appreciation for PA State Representative Joe Ciresi’s work on obtaining letters of support for the project. As well, Tom Frawley recognized Katie Cunfer’s efforts in this regard as well. Christian Leinbach recognized the contribution of Transportation for America, from which Steven Coleman Kenny was in attendance.

Vice-Chair Marian Moskowitz noted that the application doesn’t mention Washington D.C. as a destination for the proposed rail line. Tom explained that although the corridor was defined as

ultimately providing a single seat ride between Reading, Philadelphia and New York, connecting trips to Washington would be feasible as soon as operation begins on the Reading-Philadelphia segment, and that the possibility of a one-seat ride to Washington could be explored after the defined corridor is implemented. Steven Coleman Kenny of Transportation told the Board that service to D.C. could be considered in future years. Tom thanked the Board for their suggestions and welcomed their input on the draft application.

**a. Motion to Authorize Submission of Application – Action**

Tom Frawley asked the Board to vote on authorizing him to submit the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) application on behalf of the SRPRA.

*Marian Moskowitz motioned, and Jim Gerlach seconded, all voted unanimously, and the motion was carried to authorize Thomas E. Frawley, Interim Executive Director of the SRPRA, to submit the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) application on behalf of the SRPRA.*

**6. Subcommittee Reports**

**a. Finance – Peter Urscheler, Assistant Treasurer**

i. Auditor Solicitation Update

Mayor Peter Urscheler reported that the Finance Committee met on February 15, 2023. He said there are two action items presented today for the Board.

ii. Motion to Accept Engagement Letter and Authorize Direction to Begin 2022 Audit –Action

Mayor Peter Urscheler said this action would be to accept Maillie LLP's engagement letter and authorize them to begin the 2022 audit for the SRPRA.

*Peter Urscheler motioned, and Marian Moskowitz seconded, all voted unanimously, and the motion was carried to accept the engagement letter from Maillie LLP, and authorize them to begin the SRPRA's 2022 audit.*

iii. Motion to Pay Bills –Action

Mayor Peter Urscheler said there was one outstanding bill for the Authority to be paid in the amount of \$9,475.00 for Thomas E. Frawley Consulting, LLC for January 2023 service tasks provided as Interim Executive Director.

*Peter Urscheler motioned, and Jim Gerlach seconded, all voted unanimously, and the motion was carried to approve the payment of Invoice 2023-01 in the amount of \$9,475.00 payable to Thomas E. Frawley Consulting, LLC for January 2023 services.*

**b. Marketing & Public Relations– Brian O'Leary, Chair**

i. Committee Update

Brian O'Leary reported that the committee held their February meeting to prepare a Request for Proposal (RFP) to hire a consultant to help with the SRPRA's communications, primarily its social media, newsletters and press releases. Brian asked the Board if they had any suggestions regarding distribution of the RFP to let him or Tom Frawley know. The next committee meeting will be held on March 1<sup>st</sup>.

**c. Planning – Scott France, Chair****i. Committee Update**

Scott France reported that the committee has been working with Tom Frawley and Transportation for America on the FRA application. Meeting was held between Tom Frawley and Senator Fetterman's staffer, Madeleine Marr, who expressed their interest in assisting with the project. The committee has been coordinating with PennDOT on their letter of support. Scott gave a shout-out to David Hunter who is leading the APA National Conference's mobile workshop on the SRPRA project. The mobile workshop will visit and meet with local participants at three proposed rail stops in Phoenixville, Pottstown, and Reading on Sunday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Scott said community engagement meetings continue; last month a meeting was held in Pottstown with elected officials and staff on initial coordination.

Brian O'Leary added that the Phoenixville community meeting is scheduled for March 22<sup>nd</sup>. David Hunter said that March 7<sup>th</sup> is the Berks County meeting.

Christian added that Steven from Transportation for America posted in the chat box that his organization is meeting with Senator Fetterman's office this Friday (March 3<sup>rd</sup>) to discuss small rural transit funding and to please email him anything that the Authority would wish to share or emphasize with the Senator's staff.

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

Marian Moskowitz, Vice Chair, reported that the committee met a few weeks ago and will be meeting again next week to discuss a formal request to the Board regarding Tom Frawley's continued contact as Interim Director.

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

Jim Gerlach reported that there was a meeting on February 7<sup>th</sup> with Pottstown, primarily with council members and elected officials, including a round table discussion about the status of the project. The Berks County meeting will be held on March 7<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 at the Schmidt Center, Reading Community College. The Chester County/Phoenixville meeting will be held on March 22<sup>nd</sup> at 6:30 p.m., location to be determined.

**7. Interim Executive Director's Report**

Tom Frawley, Interim Executive Director, reported that a briefing was held on February 3<sup>rd</sup> for U.S. Representative Chrissy Houlahan and her staff. Tom said that as well as engaging a service to help with the SRPRA's communications, he anticipates that the Authority will need to engage the services of a planning/environmental/engineering consultant in the coming months.

**8. Other Business**

*There was no other business discussed.*

**9. General Public Comment**

Howard Brown, member of the public, asked if the SRPRA is tracking ridership numbers for the Amtrak Thruway bus service from Reading and Pottstown to Philadelphia. Christian said they are not.

**Adjourn**

*Jim Gerlach motioned and Peter Urscheler seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:45 p.m.*

**Next Board Meeting**

March 27, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. via Zoom

Respectfully submitted,



---

Ann Marie Meehan

SCHUYLKILL RIVER PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY

BOARD MEETING PACKET

MARCH 27, 2023

BILLS RECEIVED SINCE FEBRUARY 27, 2023 MEETING





# INVOICE

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

**DATE:** 2/2/2023  
**INVOICE #** 23-SGA-150  
**FOR:** SRPRA Rail consulting services  
**PROJECT NO.** 2213-SRPRA  
**ACCOUNT CODE:** 4100

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

**DUE DATE:** 3/4/2023

DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
Primary Services Tasks (January 2023)	\$ 3,500.00
<i>Please reference the above-mentioned invoice number on your</i>	

We prefer payment by ACH transfer  Bank: Capital One Bank 1800 M Street NW Washington, DC 20036	<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	\$ 3,500.00
	<b>TAX RATE</b>	0.00%
	<b>SALES TAX</b>	-
	<b>OTHER</b>	-
	<b>TOTAL</b>	\$ 3,500.00

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

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**



# INVOICE

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

**DATE:** 2/28/2023  
**INVOICE #** 23-SGA-151

**FOR:** SRPRA Rail consulting services  
**PROJECT NO.** 2213-SRPRA  
**ACCOUNT CODE:** 4100

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

**DUE DATE:** 3/30/2023

DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
Primary Services Tasks (February 2023)	\$ 3,500.00
<i>Please reference the above-mentioned invoice number on your payment.</i>	

We prefer payment by ACH transfer  Bank: Capital One Bank 1800 M Street NW Washington, DC 20036	<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	\$ 3,500.00
	<b>TAX RATE</b>	0.00%
	<b>SALES TAX</b>	-
	<b>OTHER</b>	-
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 3,500.00</b>

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

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

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: 06
Start Date: 26SEP2022	Invoice Number: 2023-02
	Invoice Date: 06MAR2023

Invoice for services performed as Interim Executive Director of the Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority for the period: Wednesday, February 1, 2023 through Tuesday, February 28, 2023.

LABOR, INCLUDING OVERHEAD AND FEE				
ELEMENT DESCRIPTION		TASK HOURS	CONTRACT RATE	TOTAL LABOR CHARGES
January 2023		109.50	\$100.00	\$10,950.00
				\$10,950.00

EXPENSES, AT COST			
DESCRIPTON OF EXPENSES		NOTES	EXPENSES INVOICED
Personal auto and parking			\$0.00

<b>TOTAL CHARGES THIS INVOICE - LABOR AND EXPENSES</b>		\$10,950.00
--	--	-------------

INVOICE LABOR, EXPENSES, AND HOURS SUMMARY AND STATUS			
	LABOR	EXPENSES	TOTAL
CHARGED PRIOR TO 01FEB2023	\$23,710.00	\$313.33	\$24,023.33
CHARGED DURING 01FEB2023 - 28FEB2023	\$10,950.00	\$0.00	\$10,950.00
OVERALL CHARGED TO DATE	\$34,660.00	\$313.33	\$34,973.33
PREVIOUS INVOICES OUTSTANDING	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
TOTAL INVOICES OUTSTANDING INCLUDING THIS INVOICE	\$10,950.00	\$0.00	\$10,950.00

	HOURS
HOURS EXPENDED PRIOR TO 01FEB2023	331.85
TOTAL HOURS CHARGED DURING 01FEB2023 - 28FEB2023	109.50
TOTAL HOURS CHARGED 01SEP2022 THROUGH 28FEB2023	441.35

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

06-MAR-2023  
DATE

Thomas E. Frawley, P.E., Esq., MBA - Interim Executive Director


Hours - Wednesday 01FEB2023 through Tuesday 28FEB2023

Invoice Number: 2023-02

Invoice Date: 06MAR2023

DAY	DATE	HOURS	DESCRIPTION OF PRIMARY ACTIVITIES PERFORMED (ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PROVIDED IN ATTACHED MONTHLY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT)
Wednesday	1	3.50	Prepare Monthly Report and Invoice; advance FRA application forms
Thursday	2	1.50	
Friday	3	3.00	Representative Houlahan briefing
Saturday	4	2.50	Advance FRA application forms
Sunday	5	4.00	Advance FRA application forms, letters of support
Monday	6	3.75	Advance FRA application
Tuesday	7	6.50	Pottstown coordination meeting
Wednesday	8	3.75	USDOT Grants Webinar
Thursday	9	3.50	
Friday	10	4.50	T4A Call; advance FRA application
Saturday	11	4.00	Advance FRA application
Sunday	12	1.75	
Monday	13	6.50	Planning Committee
Tuesday	14	5.50	
Wednesday	15	7.00	Finance Committee
Thursday	16	6.50	FRA CIDP Webinar
Friday	17	5.75	Madeleine Marr briefing (Sen Fetterman's staff)
Saturday	18	0.00	
Sunday	19	0.00	
Monday	20	4.00	
Tuesday	21	3.50	Executive Committee
Wednesday	22	3.50	
Thursday	23	5.50	Technical Committee
Friday	24	3.00	
Saturday	25	3.50	Call w/ Dan Becker; application forms; develop PPT presentation
Sunday	26	2.00	Develop PPT presentation
Monday	27	4.50	Board meeting; Technical Cmte meeting
Tuesday	28	6.50	Develop PPT presentation

Task Totals:	109.50
--------------	--------

Certified:  \_\_\_\_\_  
 Thomas E. Frawley, P.E., Esq. - Prinicipal

Date: 06-MAR-2023



SCHUYLKILL RIVER PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY  
BOARD MEETING PACKET  
MARCH 27, 2023

TRANSPORTATION FOR AMERICA (T4A)  
MARCH 2023 MONTHLY REPORT

## March 2023 Report to the Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority

---

### **Surface Transportation Board OKs CP-KCS Merger**

On Tuesday, March 14, the Surface Transportation Board (STB) [approved](#) the long-sought acquisition of Kansas City Southern Railway Company (KCS) by Canadian Pacific Railway Limited (CP). While not the first rail company merger that the STB has considered, this merger is the first to include hosting passenger rail as a primary consideration. As part of the proceedings, CP had to commit to the STB that they would be a strong partner to Amtrak in providing national passenger rail service. This decision sets a standard for other potential mergers and the focus on passenger rail as a criteria for consideration.

### **Federal legislation to prevent future train derailments**

In the wake of the Norfolk Southern derailment and resulting toxic waste spill on February 3 in and around East Palestine, OH, Senators Brown, Vance, Casey, Rubio, Fetterman, and Hawley introduced a bipartisan bill. [The Railway Safety Act of 2023](#), introduced on March 1, 2023, strengthens safety requirements for all trains carrying hazardous materials, including shippers and rail carriers exempt from the requirements for high-hazard flammable trains. The Act calls for expanded hotbox detector requirements, increased HAZMAT fees, and higher fines for safety violations. The legislation also requires railroads to operate with at least two-person crews, and increases the frequency of rail car inspections.

### **Amtrak to partner with Southern Rail Commission (SRC)**

On March 10, Amtrak confirmed its partnership with the SRC to seek funding through the [Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Rail](#) grant program to connect Meridian, Miss., to Dallas, Tex., through the I-20 Corridor initiative. This is the first time in over 30 years that Amtrak has made this kind of commitment to expanding long distance service, and should be seen as an opening for other regional entities like the SRPRA to deepen their partnerships with Amtrak.

### **FY24 Transportation Request**

The [proposed White House budget](#) released on March 9, 2023 includes \$4.77 billion for rail, an [increase of \\$1.36 billion](#) over what Congress enacted into law last year, and \$3.07 billion for Amtrak, a \$615 million increase over what Congress appropriated in FY23. Other rail requests included increases in funding for competitive rail grant programs such the Federal-State Partnership for Passenger Rail Program and the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program. Rail safety was also at the forefront with a request for \$250 million for the Railroad Crossing Elimination Program, to upgrade and eliminate at-grade crossings.

### **PA News**

#### **State legislation to prevent future train derailments**

On Monday, March 13, 2023, twelve days after the federal bipartisan Railroad Safety legislation was announced, state-level legislation was introduced in PA. The Railroad Safety Act of 2023 parallel legislation further requires state emergency personnel to be notified of what chemicals

[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](http://t4america.org)

are onboard train cars coming through their communities.

### **Strasburg six-track freight yard**

The Strasburg Railroad opened its [six-track freight yard](#) in February. The \$3.3 million project provides for tripling freight business, with capacity for 500 cars. The expansion will relieve pressure from the previously three-track, 60,000-square-foot freight yard, with space to spare, east of the passenger-station complex. In addition, the increase will minimize operational conflicts with Amtrak passenger service and the enormous tourist-railroad industry for which this area is known.

For questions or more information, please contact John Robert Smith at [jrsmith@t4america.org](mailto:jrsmith@t4america.org) or 601-527-5040.