

Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority Meeting

DRAFT Minutes

November 28, 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

1. Call to Order

Commissioner Christian Leinbach, Chair of the SRPRA, called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.

Mr. Scott France, Secretary of the SRPRA, read the guidelines for making public comments.

2. Adoption of October 24, 2022 Minutes

Christian Leinbach called for any corrections to the minutes.

As there were no corrections or objections to the draft minutes of the October 24, 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/Signature Authority

As the banking has been completed, Commissioner Ken Lawrence asked Tom Frawley to report on the payment of the SRPRA’s bills.

ii. Motion to Pay Bills-Action

SRPRA’s Executive Interim Director, Tom Frawley, said there was one outstanding bill for the Authority to be paid for \$9,760.00 for his October, 2022 services provided as Interim Director.

Commissioner Lawrence motioned, and Commissioner Moskowitz seconded, all voted unanimously, and the motion was carried to approve the payment of Invoice 2022-10 in the amount of \$9,760.00 payable to Thomas E. Frawley Consulting, LLC for October 2022 services.

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

Brian O’Leary reported that the committee is still gathering content, and Peter Urscheler and Tom Frawley have completed work on the Authority’s email account.

c. Planning – Scott France, Chair**i. Consultant Update/Smart Growth America T4A**

Scott France reported that his presentations to the Pottstown Health and Wellness Foundation and the Greater Reading Chapter of the American Society of Civil Engineers to share information on the rail project were well received. He said that a kick-off meeting with Transportation for America was held and their first monthly report was included in the Board meeting packet. A key takeaway was the impact of the recent election results and the need for Board outreach with Senator Elect Fetterman’s staff before year’s end. A Washington D.C. trip should be planned for February 2023, for SRPRA Board members and their consultants.

ii. Outside Agency Coordination

Scott France said Tom Frawley has scheduled a meeting with the Executive Committee and Andrew Batson, Acting Deputy Secretary for Multi-Modal Transportation at PennDOT on December 13, 2022. The meeting with Amtrak will be scheduled once the Corridor ID program is in effect. The application for the APA Mobile Workshop has been submitted.

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 the committee met last week and will soon meet with officials from Reading, Pottstown and Phoenixville. They are currently compiling an invite list to be completed by the 1st week of December, send out the invites by the 2nd week in December for the mid/late January 2023 meeting. He asked Board members to please send him any suggestions for possible invitees.

6. Interim Executive Director’s Report

Tom Frawley, Interim Executive Director of the SRPRA reported that he would add the 2023 SRPRA Board meeting schedule to December’s agenda for approval. Meetings will continue to be held on the 4th Monday of each month at 3 p.m., with the exceptions of September and December, when the meetings will be held on the 3rd Monday of those months because of holidays (Yom Kippur and Christmas).

Tom said he would present an updated, detailed SRPRA 2023 budget at the Board at the December meeting. He also reminded the Board that he would shortly begin a search of auditing firms for the SRPRA, and post an RPF on the county websites with a view to presenting 2-3 firms to the Board for final consideration. Tom Frawley said the FRA will release funding opportunities in early December and he will be exploring these opportunities with the FRA.

Christian Leinbach added that he would convene the 1st Executive Committee meeting of the SRPRA (Commissioners Lawrence, Moskowitz, Leinbach) shortly, to keep things moving forward. To be discussed: 1) the Authority’s FRA (Federal Railroad Administration) application; 2) planning for a delegation of SRPRA officials to go to Washington D.C. in February 2023 to meet with elected officials re the project.

Tom Frawley introduced John Robert Smith and Giancarlo Valdetaro of Transportation for America. John Robert Smith made a presentation on ways in which Transportation for America plans to provide technical assistance, advocacy and leadership for the SRPRA. Next steps include: examining upcoming funding opportunities; developing a corridor ID timeline; identifying stages of development; planning the 2023 Washington D.C. visit; preparing for corridor ID and Federal-State partnership grants; reaching out to local governments.

7. Other Business

There was no other business discussed.

8. General Public Comment

There was no public comment.

9. Adjourn

Chairman Christian Leinbach adjourned the meeting at 3:58 p.m.

Next Board Meeting

December 19, 2022 at 3:00 p.m. via Zoom

Respectfully submitted,



Ann Marie Meehan