

SCHUYLKILL RIVER PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY
BOARD MEETING PACKET
FEBRUARY 26, 2024

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Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority

Meeting Agenda

February 26, 2024, 3pm*

1. Call to Order
2. Adoption of January 22 Minutes
3. Board Member Comments
4. Public Comment on Agenda Items
5. Election of Officers – *Action*
6. Change in Committee Structure – *Action*
7. Committee Membership and Chairs – *Action*
8. Report on Progress Regarding FRA CIDP
9. Committee Reports
 - a. Finance – Mayor Urscheler, Acting Chair
 - i. Committee 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 – Mayor Urscheler, Acting Chair
 - i. Committee Update
 - f. By-Laws – Scott France, Chair
 - i. Report on revision of Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation
10. Executive Director’s Report
11. Other Business
12. General Public Comment
13. Adjourn

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority will be held virtually at 3:00 PM on Monday, March 25, 2024. Public participation is available via the public registration link provided on the website. All SRPRA Board meetings are open to the public.

*Public participation in SRPRA virtual meetings can be accomplished via the registration link provided on the website. Please visit the Authority website for more information and the registration link. www.GoSRPRA.com

SCHUYLKILL RIVER PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY
BOARD MEETING PACKET
FEBRUARY 26, 2024

DRAFT MINUTES FROM JANUARY 22, 2024 MEETING

Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority Meeting

DRAFT Minutes

January 22, 2024

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
Peter Urscheler, Phoenixville Borough Mayor, Assistant Treasurer
Brian O’Leary, Executive Director, Chester County Planning Commission
Eddie Moran, Mayor of Reading
Stephanie Henrick, Mayor of Pottstown
David Hunter, Executive Director, Berks County Planning Commission

Authority Members Absent:

None

1. Call to Order

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 December 18, 2023 Minutes

Christian Leinbach called for any corrections to the minutes. There were no corrections to the minutes.

As there were no corrections to the minutes, Christian Leinbach announced that the minutes were approved unanimously.

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. Election of Officers – Action

Mr. Scott France, SRPRA’s Secretary, proposed to postpone the election both of SRPRA officers and committee assignments until February, when there will be a full roster and the process can be conducted collaboratively. In February, the positions that will be voted upon will be Treasurer, Deputy Treasurer, Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and Deputy Chair.

Mr. Scott France moved to postpone the election of both SRPRA officers and committee assignments until the February SRPRA Board meeting; Mayor Eddie Moran seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

6. **Committee Membership and Chairs – Action**

See item 5; Mr. Scott France moved to postpone both the election of SRPRA officers and committee assignments until the February SRPRA Board meeting; Mayor Eddie Moran seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

7. **Report on Progress Regarding FRA CIDP**

Tom Frawley reported that SRPRA representatives met twice with representatives of the Federal Rail Administration (FRA) since acceptance of SRPRA into the FRA’s Corridor Identification and Development Program (CIDP). Documentation necessary to for use as an attachment to the Grant agreement was completed on January 11, 2024 and is under review by FRA. It should be finalized within the next week or two, enabling the FRA to obligate funds for the grant, which will in turn enable SRPRA to execute the contract with AECOM, the SRPRA’s selected consultant on the project. Another meeting with FRA will take place tomorrow, which should yield an update on the status of the review and provide guidance on specific next steps required.

Mr. Frawley welcomed Mr. David Hunter, who joins the SRPRA as a new Board member. David was one of the original three planners who played a key role in developing this rail project. David thanked the Board and told them he is looking forward to working as a team on the project and bringing passenger rail back to the corridor.

8. **Committee Reports**

a. ***Finance – Mayor Peter Urscheler, Acting Chair***

- i. Committee Update
- ii. Motion to Pay Bills – *Action*

Mayor Urscheler reported that the committee will address some annual banking “housekeeping” items, including updating banking signatories, once the new member from Montgomery County is appointed. In anticipation of incoming grant funding, the committee will determine whether it is appropriate to open separate accounts so that funds aren’t comingled.

Mayor Urscheler said there were three bills paid and five bills due and presented for payment, subject to the Board’s approval.

Mayor Urscheler motioned, Mr. Brian O’Leary seconded, all voted unanimously, and the motion was carried to approve the payments of eight bills presented in the SRPRA’s January 22, 2024 Board meeting packet.

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

- i. Committee Update

Brian O’Leary reported that the committee met earlier in January and members are working with the SRPRA’s consultant on redesigning the Authority’s website to be more user-friendly and to appeal to both the general public and various organizations with which they will be working.

c. ***Planning – Scott France, Chair***

- i. Committee Update

Scott France reported that as a result of the SRPRA’s acceptance into the Corridor ID Program, his committee will be launching into next phases of discussions with major stakeholders including host railroads. They’ll meet with PennDOT on February 6th and with Norfolk Southern on February 7th; a

meeting with SEPTA is also in the works to discuss early-stage service plan development. To bring Montgomery County's two new Commissioners up to speed on the project, an info session will be held on January 30th. In March, DVRPC asked for a presentation on an overview of the project. Scott informed the Board that the Impact (formerly *Railvolution*) National Conference will be coming to Philadelphia this October, noted that their impact as a nationwide organization concerned with public transit and development issues, and encouraged the Board to look into connecting with them regarding potential participation in the conference.

d. Personnel – Comm. Moskowitz, Chair

i. Committee Update

Commissioner Moskowitz, Chair, said that the Committee had no news to report.

e. Community Engagement – Mayor Urscheler, Acting Chair

i. Committee Update

Mayor Urscheler reported that public stakeholder meetings would be scheduled in the coming months, now that the SRPRA project has been accepted into the CIDP, and that these would be publicized well in advance. Mayor Urscheler noted that although not strictly part of the community engagement effort, the Board meeting for April 2024 will be an in-person meeting to be held in Phoenixville.

f. By-Laws – Scott France, Chair

i. Revision of Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation– Action

Scott France said the Bylaws have been updated and are available on the SRPRA's website. The Articles of Amendment (to the Articles of Incorporation) are expected to soon be filed with the State; resolutions have been obtained from all three counties (Berks, Chester and Montgomery counties), as well as affidavits or proofs of publication. Tom Frawley and SRPRA's Solicitor are working on getting the Articles filed after they are advertised, which must be three days in advance of the filing; this should be wrapped up by next month's meeting.

9. Executive Director's Report – 2023 Year in Review and 2024 Look Ahead

Tom Frawley, Executive Director, provided a review of what occurred re the SRPRA project in the past year and what he anticipates will be tackled in 2024. Tom reported on the grant application and the various grants received. The Authority continues to build upon working relationships forged with Congressional and State delegations who supported the grant application. Work continues on the local level with partners in the anchor communities in Pottstown, Reading and Phoenixville and with stakeholder organizations to broaden awareness up and down the corridor. Social presence was established on social media. Finally, the project was accepted into the Federal Corridor ID Program on December 8th, and AECOM was selected as consultant.

Tom said looking forward in the immediate term we will see finalization of the grant agreement with FRA and finalization of the consultant agreement with AECOM. He hoped that by end of 2024, the Service Development Plan will be close to complete, with the project well defined and ready to advance into preliminary design and engineering, and preparation of environmental documentation. Christian Leinbach commended Tom on his summary and suggested Tom compile a printed report that could be posted to the website for folks who were unable to attend.

David Hunter added that it might be helpful to add a list of all conferences SRPRA representatives have attended to promote the return of passenger rail to build credibility and get the word out. Christian asked that the Marketing Committee handle this, as they are tasked with managing the website.

Brian O’Leary, Chair of the Marketing Committee, said he would share this idea with them and said he would await Tom’s written report. Tom said he would get that to Brian within the next day or two.

Tom reminded the Board that completed statements of financial interest for 2023 will soon be due from all Board members as well as from himself and Dan Becker in the beginning of March. Christian acknowledged that the Authority would need to keep a set on file. He asked that the statements be emailed to Tom or sent via hard copy, and copy Dan Becker. Deadline is March 1st, but please submit by Monday, February 26th.

Marian Moskowitz commented that during the first CIDP meeting with FRA, the attendees were very positive and anxious to move forward with the SRPRA project.

10. Other Business

There was no other business.

11. General Public Comment

Howard Brown from Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation asked that it be mentioned in the Year in review document (See Item 9) that Pottstown was awarded a DOT thriving communities grant, which is a 2-year technical assistance grant that will lay the groundwork for Pottstown’s residents to equitably benefit from transit-oriented development.

12. Adjourn

Christian Leinbach called to adjourn the meeting.

Christian Leinbach motioned, Peter Urscheler seconded, and all voted unanimously, to adjourn the January 2024 meeting of the SRPRA Board.

Next Board Meeting

February 26, 2024 at 3:00 p.m. via Zoom

Respectfully submitted,



Ann Marie Meehan

SCHUYLKILL RIVER PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY

BOARD MEETING PACKET

FEBRURY 26, 2024

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority Annual Election of Officers

BACKGROUND

The Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority (SRPRA) postponed its “Annual Meeting” from the January 22, 2024 Board Meeting until the February 26, 2024 Board Meeting, to conduct its election of officers after the Montgomery County Commissioners appointed a new member of the SRPRA Board to fill the seat vacated by Commissioner Ken Lawrence upon his retirement. Berks County Commissioners had previously appointed David Hunter, Executive Director of the Berks County Planning Commission, to fill the seat vacated by Jim Gerlach upon his retirement.

ELIGIBLE POSITIONS AND CURRENT OFFICEHOLDERS

The Chairperson serves for a term of two years. Consistent with the recently amended SRPRA Bylaws, Commissioner Christian Leinbach, who has served as Chairperson since the formation of the SRPRA in June of 2022, will continue to serve through the end of calendar year 2024. The other five officer positions have a one-year term, and all must be filled for the remainder of calendar year 2024. Persons serving in any of these five officer positions may succeed themselves if they wish to be considered for re-election.

POSITION	CURRENT OFFICEHOLDER
Vice Chairperson	Commissioner Marian Moskowitz
Treasurer	Vacant (Formerly Commissioner Ken Lawrence)
Secretary	Scott France
Assistant Treasurer	Mayor Peter Urscheler
Assistant Secretary	Vacant (Formerly Jim Gerlach)

SCHUYLKILL RIVER PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY
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PROPOSED CHANGE IN COMMITTEE STRUCTURE
AND
2024 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND CHAIRPERSONS

Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority Annual Election of Officers

BACKGROUND

The Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority (SRPRA) has, over the twenty months since its creation in June 2022, operated with several committees, membership of which has included Board Members and staff from the three constituent Counties. Currently there are six committees, the future operation of which is proposed to change as described below, upon approval by the Board.

COMMITTEES AND PROPOSED CHANGES

The following changes in committee structure are proposed to align SRPRA's operations with its evolution from a primary mission of advocacy to one of planning and engineering to implement intercity passenger rail service.

COMMITTEE	PROPOSED CHANGES
Executive	Change to informal information session
Finance	Change to public meeting starting in March 2024
Personnel	No change
Planning	Change to informal staff coordination
Marketing & PR	Change to informal staff coordination
Community Engagement	Move to monthly discussion in Board Meeting
Bylaws	Temporary committee; sunset in March 2024

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND CHAIRPERSONS

Assuming the proposed structure is approved by the Board, membership must be established for the Finance and Personnel Committees, and Chairpersons elected by the membership of each Committee. It is proposed that the Bylaws Committee, as an ad hoc committee, continue unchanged through its anticipated sunset at the end of March.

SCHUYLKILL RIVER PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY
BOARD MEETING PACKET
FEBRUARY 26, 2024

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT
FROM
FEBRUARY 21, 2024 MEETING



**SCHUYLKILL RIVER PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY
 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT TO THE FINANCE COMMITTEE
 PREPARED FEBRUARY 19, 2024; REVISED FEBRUARY 21, 2024**

This report summarizes financial actions since the January 22, 2023 Board Meeting. This report is provided in anticipation of the February 21, 2024 meeting of the Finance Committee and the February 26, 2024 meeting of the Board. The Finance Committee regularly meets on the third Wednesday of every month at 4:00 PM. Starting with the March 20, 2024 meeting and subject to Board approval, meetings of the Finance Committee are proposed to be public.

Banking – Appointment of Montgomery County Commissioner Tom DiBello to the SRPRA Board brings the Board to a full complement of nine members. For this reason, and to reflect the results of the anticipated election of SRPRA Officers at the February Board meeting, the list of authorized signers for the Authority’s accounts must be updated as soon as practicable after the February 26 Board meeting.

In anticipation of the execution of multiple grant agreements, including for the initial \$500k in CIDP funding and the \$250k in state LSA grant funds received by Montgomery County for the project, two new dedicated accounts are proposed to be opened to avoid comingling of funds. Both of these new accounts are proposed to be opened concurrent with the update of authorized signers, as soon as practicable after the February 26 Board meeting.

Payment of Bills – Since the January 22, 2024 Board Meeting, three routine monthly bills have been received and paid, and one non-routine and previously received invoice has been paid; these charges remain to be ratified by the Board. In the same general timeframe, two routine monthly bills have been received and one is anticipated; all three of these bills are due and will become payable subject to Board approval.

BILLS RECEIVED AND PAID

AMOUNT	PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	PAYMENT DATE
\$33.00	AnsweringService.com	Monthly Fee	01/31/2024
\$57.24	Google	Google Suite Monthly Fee	02/02/2024
\$21.19	Adobe	Acrobat Pro Monthly Fee	02/05/2024
\$300.00	Railway Age Magazine On-Line	Consultant RFP Advert, OCT 2023	02/21/2024
\$411.43	TOTAL		

BILLS DUE AND PAYABLE

AMOUNT	PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	BILL DATE
\$11,472.50	Thomas E. Frawley Consulting	ED Compensation, January 2024	02/08/2024
\$4,595.86	Smart Growth America T4A	January and February Fee (FINAL)	02/05/2024
\$2,400.00	Virtual Farm Creative, Inc	February Fee	02/23/2024*
\$18,468.46	TOTAL		

* Anticipated

Upon payment of these outstanding bills, the remaining balance in the Authority's accounts, inclusive of interest earned, will be \$354,987.61. Note that this amount does not reflect Montgomery County's 2024 contribution of \$75,000 receipt of which is anticipated by the end of February.

Anticipated Expenditures

- Monthly charges from Google, Adobe and AnsweringService.com, which total \$111.43, are anticipated to continue unchanged through calendar year 2024. (Note that AnsweringService.com raised their monthly rate from \$29.00 to \$33.00 effective with their latest invoice, which was paid on January 31, 2024.
- Monthly expenditure for the Executive Director's compensation is anticipated to remain relatively consistent at the current level for the next several months. However, a significant portion of the Executive Director's time will become reimbursable after the FRA CIDP grant funds are obligated and Notice to Proceed (NTP) is received, on or about March 1, 2024.
- Monthly expenditures for media and marketing services from Virtual Farm Creative are fixed for calendar year 2024 at \$2,400 per month. Although this is less than the \$2,500 per month expended last year, the current monthly expenditure of \$2,400 exceeds the amount of \$1,717 per month budgeted through the end of calendar year 2024.
- SRPRA's contract with Transportation 4 America (T4A) was terminated effective February 5. This eliminates \$3,920 in monthly expenses.
- Depending upon actions taken by the Personnel Committee and the Board regarding engagement of administrative support for the Executive Director, the cost of those services would increase monthly costs by some yet to be determined amount.

SCHUYLKILL RIVER PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY
BOARD MEETING PACKET
FEBRUARY 26, 2024

BILLS RECEIVED SINCE JANUARY 22, 2024 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: 17
Start Date: 26SEP2022	Invoice Number: 2024-01
	Invoice Date: 08FEB2024

Invoice for services performed as Executive Director of the Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority for the period: Monday, January 1, 2023 through Wednesday, January 31, 2024.

LABOR, INCLUDING OVERHEAD AND FEE				
ELEMENT DESCRIPTION		TASK HOURS	CONTRACT RATE	TOTAL LABOR CHARGES
January 2024		88.25	\$130.00	\$11,472.50
				\$11,472.50

EXPENSES, AT COST			
DESCRIPTON OF EXPENSES		NOTES	EXPENSES INVOICED
			\$0.00

TOTAL CHARGES THIS INVOICE - LABOR AND EXPENSES	\$11,472.50
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INVOICE LABOR, EXPENSES, AND HOURS SUMMARY AND STATUS			
	LABOR	EXPENSES	TOTAL
CHARGED PRIOR TO 01JAN2024	\$141,276.50	\$1,931.38	\$143,207.88
CHARGED DURING 01JAN2024 - 31JAN2024	\$11,472.50	\$0.00	\$11,472.50
OVERALL CHARGED TO DATE	\$152,749.00	\$1,931.38	\$154,680.38
PREVIOUS INVOICES OUTSTANDING	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
TOTAL INVOICES OUTSTANDING INCLUDING THIS INVOICE	\$11,472.50	\$0.00	\$11,472.50

	HOURS
HOURS EXPENDED PRIOR TO 01JAN2024	1,288.65
TOTAL HOURS CHARGED DURING 01JAN2024 - 31JAN2024	88.25
TOTAL HOURS CHARGED 01SEP2022 THROUGH 31JAN2024	1,376.90

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

08-FEB-2024
 DATE

Thomas E. Frawley, P.E., Esq., MBA - Executive Director
 Hours - Monday, January 1, 2024 through Wednesday, January 31, 2024
 Invoice Number: 2024-01
 Invoice Date: 08FEB2024

DAY	DATE	HOURS	DESCRIPTION OF PRIMARY ACTIVITIES PERFORMED (ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PROVIDED IN ATTACHED MONTHLY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT)
Monday	1	0.00	
Tuesday	2	1.00	Marketing Committee meeting
Wednesday	3	3.50	Greater Reading Chamber Alliance / StanTec meeting
Thursday	4	7.00	Proposal Evaluation Manual Booklet and Scoring Spreadsheet
Friday	5	5.50	GRCA Forum; FRA call prep call; DB ECO NA debriefing
Saturday	6	0.00	
Sunday	7	2.00	Update presentation
Monday	8	8.00	BCTV session; Planning Committee meeting
Tuesday	9	5.50	CIDP kickoff meeting; FRA grant agreement appendix meeting
Wednesday	10	5.50	AECOM meeting; grant agreement appendix 2
Thursday	11	5.50	Grant agreement appendix; host railroad outreach
Friday	12	5.00	Phoenixville station planning call; MontCo Commissioners briefing prep
Saturday	13	0.00	
Sunday	14	0.00	
Monday	15	1.00	
Tuesday	16	3.00	Executive Committee meeting
Wednesday	17	2.50	Finance Committee meeting
Thursday	18	4.00	Commissioner Santoni briefing; Effectiv introductory meeting
Friday	19	5.00	Dan Becker call re meeting policy; Marian Moskowitz call; board packet
Saturday	20	0.00	
Sunday	21	0.00	
Monday	22	5.00	Board meeting
Tuesday	23	4.00	FRA CIDP bi-weekly call; SEPTA Youth Advisory Cmte call
Wednesday	24	4.00	Amtrak call; AECOM contract meeting
Thursday	25	2.25	
Friday	26	0.00	
Saturday	27	0.00	
Sunday	28	0.00	
Monday	29	1.00	Franklin Street Working Group meeting
Tuesday	30	3.50	Virtual Farm meeting
Wednesday	31	4.50	Dan Becker call re AECOM contract

Task Totals:	88.25	
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Certified:  Date: 08-FEB-2024
 Thomas E. Frawley, P.E., Esq. - Prinicpal

Attn: AR Accounting
1152 15th Street NW, Ste 450
Washington, DC 20005
Telephone: 202-955-5543
Fax: 202-955-5543
Federal EIN: 27-0038938

DATE: 02/05/2024
INVOICE # 24-SGA-122
Task ID: 000
FOR: SRPRA Rail consulting services
PROJECT NO. 1061
ACCOUNT CODE: 4100
Vendor Contract # (if applicable):
Customer ID: C-10194
Department ID: 320
BILL TO: Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority
Attn: Attn: Thomas E. Frawley
Company Name 633 Court Street
City, State, Zip Reading, PA 19601
Email: tom@frawleyconsulting.com
Phone

Billing Period Start:	Billing Period End
1/1/2024	2/5/2024

DUE DATE: 3/6/2024

DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
Primary Services Tasks (January)	\$3,920.00
Primary Services Tasks (February)(Prorated 5 of 29 days)	\$675.86
Please reference the above-mentioned invoice number on your payment.	

We prefer payment via ACH
ACH INFORMATION
ABA#: 065000090
Beneficiary Acct #: 3316957006
Beneficiary: Smart Growth America
Reference: 24-SGA-122

SUBTOTAL	\$ 4,595.86
TAX RATE	0.00%
SALES TAX	-
OTHER	-
TOTAL	

ALERT! OUR BANK INFORMATION HAS CHANGED! PLEASE REMIT PAYMENT USING THE UPDATED BANK DETAILS PROVIDED ABOVE. THANK YOU.

Check Writing: Please be sure to reference the Invoice and Project #'s above on ALL checks.



VFC, Inc.

31A Ridge Road, Suite One
Phoenixville, Pennsylvania 19460

VirtualFarm.com

Invoice

Date	Invoice No.
2/25/2024	14719

SRPRA
Thomas Freawley

Terms
Net 30

Description	Amount
ANNUAL MARKETING PARTNERSHIP: March 2024	2,400.00
Refer to proposal for defined plan elements and reactionary marketing (1/1/24 - 12/31/24)	
Billed monthly \$2400.00	
Sales Tax	0.00
Total	\$2,400.00

To remit payment via ACH: Phoenixville Federal Bank and Trust 533 Kimberton Rd. P.O Box 1046 Kimberton, PA 19442
 ACH# 231374916, Account: Virtual Farm Creative, Account # 0041033796 *Please email ideas@virtualfarm.com with invoice #'s and invoice amounts
 paid for ACH payments.
 INVOICES ARE DUE UPON RECEIPT
 THANK YOU FOR YOUR BUSINESS!

SCHUYLKILL RIVER PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY
BOARD MEETING PACKET
FEBRUARY 26, 2024

TRANSPORTATION FOR AMERICA (T4A)
FEBRUARY 2024 MONTHLY REPORT

February 2024 Report to the Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority

FY 2024 Appropriations Update

On January 7, 2024, House Speaker Mike Johnson and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer announced that they had reached a deal on topline spending numbers for FY2024, in line with an earlier agreement set by former speaker Kevin McCarthy. Following the announcement of this new topline deal, Congress and the White House quickly passed another Laddered Continuing Resolution on January 18, 2024. This new laddered CR extended funding for Transportation, Energy, and other domestic programs through March 1 and the military and larger entitlement programs through March 8.

On January 26, 2024, Senate Appropriation Chair Patty Murray and House Appropriations Chair Kay Granger reportedly reached a consensus for topline numbers for 12 FY2024 spending bills, whose totals have yet to be disclosed but are likely to be passed in a series of minibus packages leading up to the March deadlines. Between now and March, there will likely be struggles in Congress to determine policy riders and funding levels for individual programs in this zero-sum environment. Progress on FY2024 appropriations may be delayed by other battles in the House, including an upcoming effort to [impeach](#) Homeland Security Secretary Mayorkas.

Should a CR be in place beyond April 30th, a forced sequestration of 5% will be applied to all non-defense programs including the DOT and DOE. For general and formula budgets, the sequestration will feel like a 20% cut, considering it will be $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way through FY24 once implemented.

Upcoming Funding Opportunities

RAISE Program NOFO

As a reminder, a NOFO for the RAISE grant program was published on November 30th, 2023. The RAISE program makes \$1.5 billion available for transportation projects with significant local or regional impact, including passenger rail projects. The NOFO can be found [here](#). Applications are due on February 28, 2024.

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