

Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority Meeting

DRAFT Minutes

December 23, 2024

3:00 p.m.

The following members were in attendance:

Authority Members in Attendance:

Christian Leinbach, Berks County Board of Commissioners, Chair
Tom DiBello, Montgomery County Commissioner, Assistant Treasurer
Marian Moskowitz, Chester County Commissioner, Vice Chair
Peter Urscheler, Phoenixville Borough Mayor, Treasurer
Scott France, Executive Director, Montgomery County Planning Commission, Secretary
Eddie Moran, Mayor of Reading
Stephanie Henrick, Mayor of Pottstown

Authority Members Absent:

David Hunter, Executive Director, Berks County Planning Commission

1. Call to Order

Christian Leinbach, Chair of the SRPRA, called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.

2. Adoption of November 25, 2024 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 SRPRA's November 25, 26, 2024 meeting minutes stand approved as presented.

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. Committee Reports

a. Finance – Mayor Peter Urscheler, Chair

i. Committee Update

Mayor Peter Urscheler reported that the SRPRA Finance Committee met last week. The banking signature authority documents and banking information have been updated to reflect Brian O'Leary's recent retirement.

Peter said that the SRPRA's PA DCED LSA grant application was submitted on November 29th.

ii. Motion to Pay Bills – Action

Peter indicated the Finance Committee recommends that the Board ratify the SRPRA's five prepaid bills paid between October 1st and 7th, 2024 totaling \$1,067.21 and three invoices dated between December 2nd and December 6th totaling \$41,281.21. Peter noted that two of the four monthly bills were slightly higher: there was one-time cost of the annual Zoom account, and the addition of a

new monthly bill for QuickBooks. The Finance Committee recommends the ratification of the prepaid bills in the amount of \$1,067.21 and the approval of payment for the outstanding bills in the amount of \$41,281.21.

Peter Urscheler motioned, Mayor Eddie Moran seconded, all voted unanimously, and the motion was carried to approve the payments of prepaid and outstanding bills presented in the SRPRA's December 23, 2024 Board meeting packet.

Peter reminded attendees that as the Finance Committee meetings are public and can be attended via Zoom. He encouraged everyone interested to attend the meeting and said proposed dates for the 2025 meetings were included in the Board packet and asked that the proposed meeting dates for 2025 be approved.

Peter Urscheler motioned, Commissioner Marian Moskowitz seconded, all voted unanimously, and the motion was carried to approve the proposed dates for the 2025 SRPRA Finance Committee meetings.

b. Personnel – Comm. Moskowitz, Chair

i. Committee Update

Marian Moskowitz, Committee Chair, reported that there were no updates for the Personnel Committee.

6. CIDP Update

a. Recent Progress – Tom Frawley

Tom Frawley reported that all steps in Step 1 have been completed with the exception of one deliverable: the budget for Step 2. The one element of the budget that remains unresolved is the amount which would cover Norfolk Southern's participation reimbursement. Parties did meet to discuss the topic and Norfolk Southern representatives promised to provide a formal cost proposal with supporting documentation. Regarding the Step 1 budget, he anticipates a minor reallocation between tasks in the Step 1 budget; funds will need to be reallocated between tasks to make funds available by task for reimbursement. He continues to prepare for entry into Step 2 by preparing forms and the attachment for the new grant agreement. Tom added that he is working with the FRA on a blanket nondisclosure agreement for Norfolk Southern which could be used as a template on all 26 corridor projects on the Norfolk Southern system. Norfolk Southern identified the need for a service development agreement in Step 2, and he is looking forward to receiving that document once it is developed.

Tom said that he has submitted a grant request to the PA DECED for a \$1m statewide LSA grant to be used as a local match for Step 3 of the Corridor Program; the results of the awards will be announced in October 2025.

b. Motion to Exercise Option to Extend AECOM Contract – Action

Tom explained that the Authority's contract with AECOM expires December 31, 2024, and includes a few predefined options for one-year periods. Tom asked that the Board consider exercising one of them, and presented a copy of a unilateral contract amendment document which he could execute and transmit. He explained that the scope of work and the budget would not be altered by the document; that would remain to be done in a bilateral amendment which cannot be effected until the budget has been finalized with Norfolk Southern, as it would be the last required step for FRA's

approval of the overall Step 2 budget, which includes AECOM's budget. He asked the Board to consider the proposed motion regarding the extension of AECOM's contract.

Peter Urscheler motioned, Stephanie Henrick seconded, all voted unanimously, and the motion was carried to exercise the option to extend AECOM's contract for one year with the SRPRA.

7. Executive Director's Report – Tom Frawley

a. Motion to Adopt 2025 SRPRA Board Meeting Schedule

Tom reminded attendees that SRPRA Board meetings are public and advertised. The proposed SRPRA 2025 Board meeting dates were included in the Board packet and website. The meetings typically scheduled and held via Zoom on the fourth Monday of each month do not appear to pose conflicts with holidays except for Memorial Day on May 28, requiring the May meeting to be held on the 21st. The next meeting to be held both in-person and via Zoom will be hosted by and held in Pottstown in April; Phoenixville will host the October meeting. He asked that the proposed meeting dates for 2025 be approved.

Scott France motioned, Mayor Eddie Moran seconded, all voted unanimously, and the motion was carried to approve the proposed dates for the 2025 SRPRA Board meetings.

b. Motion to Authorize Request for Reaffirmation Resolutions from Constituent Counties – Action

Tom Frawley reminded the Board that June 2025 will mark the 3 year anniversary of the formation of the SRPRA. Upon that date, the reaffirmation by the three constituent counties (Berks, Montgomery and Chester) will be required with formal resolutions reaffirming the creation and extension of the Authority. Three templates are being created for the three county's Boards of Commissioners; he asks today for formal authority from the SRPRA Board to request the individual Boards of Commissioners in all three counties, to provide them with resolution templates for their consideration and hopefully their favorable action.

Christian reminded the Board that while the deadline for all three county's approval is June 15th, each county needs to have this on their agenda for January or February.

Dan Becker, Esq., of Kozloff Stoudt advised that today's Board action is important as the three executed county resolutions and the three corresponding meeting minutes will be submitted to the Department of State to effect the extension of the Authority for an additional 47 years through 2072.

Peter Urscheler motioned, Scott France seconded, all voted unanimously, and the motion was carried to authorize the request for reaffirmation resolutions from constituent counties.

8. Marketing Team Report–Tom Frawley

On behalf of David Hunter, Chair of the Marketing Team, Tom Frawley reported that social media updates continue to be the focus. Another meeting was held with Lamar Advertising of Reading a few days ago to finalize content for four digital images to be presented as public service announcements on a space available basis, and he encouraged everyone in the 422 corridor to keep an eye out for SRPRA messages appearing on the digital billboards. Tom added that the project was briefly mentioned in a recent article in Philadelphia Magazine.

9. Planning Team Report–Scott France

Scott France thanked Tom Frawley for presenting an update on the SRPRA project before the Montgomery County Board of Commissioners' public meeting last Thursday. Scott reported the

team would be working with their local partners on the planning for the 2025 SRPRA proposed in-person Board meetings in Pottstown and Phoenixville. He feels these venues would provide nice settings to acknowledge and hopefully celebrate efforts on behalf of the project.

10. Authority Election of Officers for 2025 – Action

Scott provided a summary of how the Authority's officers are selected, as an annual election is required. The formal annual meeting for the SRPRA, as defined in the bylaws, takes place in January. Officers and committee assignments are established on an annual basis. The Chair and Vice Chair are required to rotate by county. There are 4 one-year positions to be decided: Treasurer, Secretary, Assistant Treasurer, and Assistant Secretary. The bylaws state that any appointees will serve until a replacement is named or reappointment is made.

Christian suggested that Scott send out this information to the nine Authority members, and asked that members let Scott know whether they were interested in serving or continuing to serve prior to the January meeting, at which the election of officers and appointment of committee members would take place. Christian stated for the record that he hoped to exercise the privilege of making a motion to nominate Commissioner Moskowitz for SRPRA Chair, and said he thought she would do a great job.

11. Other Business

There was no other business discussed.

12. General Public Comment

There was no general public comment.

13. Adjourn

Christian Leinbach wished everyone happy holidays and happy new year, and he reminded attendees that next year will mark the three-year anniversary of the SRPRA Authority. He said it was a privilege working with everyone from the two boroughs and the City of Reading and commended them on their unity in their goal of restoring passenger rail service to the tri-county region.

Christian called to adjourn the meeting.

Marian Moskowitz motioned, Stephanie Henrick seconded, and all voted unanimously, to adjourn the December 2024 meeting of the SRPRA Board.

Next Board Meeting

January 27, 2025 at 3:00 p.m. via Zoom

Respectfully submitted,



Ann Marie Meehan