1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Kufro called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m.

2. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 7, 2019

Mr. Kufro asked if there were any questions or comments to the November 7, 2019 Technical Committee minutes.
MOTION: Mr. Golembiewski made a motion to accept the November 7, 2019 Technical Committee minutes. Mr. Kilmer seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

3. NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr. Piper said that normally officers are nominated in November and elected at the January meeting. He said the current slate of officers is the Assistant District Executive for Design as the Chairman and the PennDOT Central Office representative as Vice Chairman.

MOTION: Mr. Piper made a motion to re-nominate and elect the current slate of officers. Mr. Kilmer seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

4. UPDATE ON 2020 LOCAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LTAP)

Mr. McGough gave a brief update on the Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP). This program is sponsored by PennDOT and the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors. It provides technical training assistance to the municipal road crews and officials on transportation related issues such as snow removal, salt application, and active transportation, etc.

We began offering the program locally back in 2016. This year ten program classes were locally scheduled. The program has been very successful in fostering a lot of communication with the municipalities. They are well received throughout the county. We usually get the maximum allotment of participants, which is thirty people per class. Interested parties can either sign up at LTAP’s website or by contacting the Planning Commission office.

Mr. McGough sends a survey each year to the municipalities letting them know the classes that are available. Classes are scheduled bases on the survey responses.

Classes are taught by professional trainers in the different subject areas. By attending the classes, you can gain certifications. If you attend ten classes in three years, you receive a Road Scholar certificate. The same stands for the Road Scholar II classes except only eight classes need to be attended in three years.

Chairman Kufro asked if the locations of the classes work out well. Mr. McGough said that most of the classes are held at the Agriculture Center. That is a free county facility that is easily accessible and centrally located. As part of the survey, Mr. McGough asked if any of the municipalities were willing to host classes. Muhlenberg and Spring Townships have hosted some classes at their facilities in the last year and probably will again in the future.

Mr. Kilmer asked if the placement of bus stops and shelters in relation to crosswalks is mentioned in the Pedestrian and Crosswalks course. Mr. McGough is not sure because this is the first time this class is being offered. PSATS & PennDOT do change and add new courses every year. Mr. Kilmer offered to provide information if needed.
5. **BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR**

Mr. Hunter introduced himself to the committee as the new Executive Director of the Berks County Planning Commission. He is excited to be working for the Planning Commission.

6. **PENNDOT REQUESTED AMENDMENTS/MODIFICATIONS TO FFY 2019-2022 TIP**

Ms. Ruth said there are no new Amendments. There are two Administrative Actions. Each of these involve reallocating funds in existing projects based on needs.

There are two Statewide Administrative Actions. One of these repositions Interstate funds for the I-78/PA 61 Bridge project based on need. The second applies Statewide Multi-Modal and local funds to the TIP for the Perkiomen Avenue Streetscape project in Exeter Township.

7. **UPDATE ON FUNDING ISSUES FOR DRAFT FFY 2021-2024 TIP**

Mr. Piper stated that, at our last meeting, approval of the draft TIP project listing was recommended to the Coordinating Committee. Necessary changes were discussed as a result of the reduction in funding.

Between our last meeting and the Coordinating Committee meeting, PennDOT announced the Spike funding allocations, which are discretionary funding from statewide reserves. We received approximately $321 million from two separate categories - federal STP and state funds. These funds were designated to be applied to the US 422 West Shore Bypass project. Because of Spike funding commitments over the years, the funds that are being made available to us do not begin until FFY 2027 ($2.5 million) and FFY 2028 ($25 million) and the balance of those funds are available in FFY 2029-2032.

Mr. Barry Schlouch, a member of the Berks County Planning Commission, has contacted various state and federal legislators and set up a meeting between Senators Argall and Schwank, the PennDOT District Office and Deputy Secretary Larry Shifflet in December 2019 to discuss the importance of the US 222 and 422 Corridors to our area. One of the results of that meeting was that Deputy Secretary Shifflet has given us the option to consider using a portion of the Spike funding for either the West Shore Bypass or for the US 222 North Corridor. A meeting is scheduled to meet with the District Office staff as well as the designers for both of those projects to see if there are logical phases that can be funded using those dollars that will allow better progress in both of those corridors. There is no commitment at this time. Any recommended changes must be approved by both the Coordinating Committee and PennDOT.

We discussed extending the improvements on US 222 further than what was included in the draft TIP and see how that fits into our ability to have meaningful programming on the West Shore Bypass.

The draft TIP has been submitted to PennDOT and a review meeting is scheduled between the District Office, the MPO and Central Office via a conference call/Skype next Monday.
Through discussions with federal legislators, a conference call has been scheduled with USDOT at the end of January to talk about federal discretionary programs that may be available, which include large programs such as the Build or Infra Programs. Based on that call, we will see if we are willing to move ahead with applying for funding any of those programs. Mr. Romano asked if the MPO can borrow against the Spike funds. Mr. Piper said that, if you borrow against it, there needs to be a way to pay it back with interest. This is highly unlikely.

Mr. Piper said there will be a brief update on the results of those discussions at the next meeting in February. The project list must be finalized in March in order to get prepared for the Air Quality Conformity documentation and the rest of the draft TIP.

8. REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION OF FY 20-21 AND FY 21-22 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP) DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Golembiewski stated that at the November 2019 meeting, a recommendation was made to forward the draft UPWP to FHWA and PennDOT for their review and comments. Since that time, Mr. Porochniak submitted a number of comments and had questions. The comments were incorporated, and Mr. Golembiewski answered his questions. Ms. Ebur also reviewed it and we received notification from her that their (FHWA) review is complete and no additional changes are required.

Mr. Piper and Mr. Golembiewski updated the budgetary information and incorporated it into the draft. This was done by reviewing past invoices of what was spent in prior years on the individual tasks. We reviewed what products and programs we are looking to produce over the next two years. The financial information for each task and each year better reflects our anticipated needs.

The revised draft UPWP was again sent to Ms. Ebur and Mr. Porochniak on December 19, 2019 for a second review. There were no additional comments. We would ask for a recommendation to forward this to the Coordinating Committee for their final adoption.

MOTION: Mr. Krall made a motion to forward the Draft UPWP to the Coordinating Committee for final adoption. Mr. Kilmer seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mr. Golembiewski thanked Ms. Ebur and Mr. Porochniak for their time in reviewing and for the comments that were made.

Mr. Golembiewski said he never received a reply from either PennDOT’s Bureau of Public Transit or FTA regarding the draft UPWP. Mr. Porochniak sent it to them and he did not get any response either.

9. REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION OF PM 1 SAFETY TARGET SETTING

Mr. Porochniak gave a presentation regarding the PM 1 Safety Target Setting. He said that Performance Measures were initiated as part of federal legislation and we have experienced a
move towards performance-based planning. FHWA has been implementing these and PM 1
(Safety) is one of those metrics for which we must implement targets.

There are five Safety Performance Measures that are looked at: 1) The number of fatalities;
2) the rate of fatalities per 100 million Vehicle Miles Traveled; 3) the number of serious injuries;
4) the rate of serious injuries per 100 million Vehicle Miles Traveled; and 5) the number of
combined non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries. This is the third year now that the safety
targets have been established and they need to be updated on a yearly basis. The legislation
requires that these measures be applied at the statewide level.

The FHWA will be evaluating if the state has met the targets. The established targets need
to be met in 4 out of the 5 Performance Measures to be shown as making significant progress
towards achieving those targets. For the FFY 2018 targets, the determination will be made by the
end of March 2020. Unfortunately, we are not going to see that bench mark of significant
progress based on the preliminary data. There was a target of 2% reduction in each of the
categories. This year, PennDOT is looking at changing that to a 1% reduction in each category.

If, in fact, we do not meet the goals, PennDOT must submit an implementation plan that
identifies the gaps in the targets and develop strategies to addressing them. That plan would be

Mr. Porochniak said that two years ago, a base line number was established for each of
the 5 Performance Measures. You take the last five years of actual data, divide that by five and
that gives you an average. That becomes the initial base line. To set the targets, the reduction
needs to be set to the last year of actual data. To get the 2017 estimate, you take the 2016 actual
data times that by .98 to get the 2% reduction. The 2018 estimate is calculated by taking another
2% reduction off the 2017 estimate. The target number becomes the average of the last three
actual years of data and the two estimates that were just calculated. The cycle continues for the
current year but will use the 1% reduction for the new target.

Mr. Porochniak said that this MPO must decide to either to support PennDOT’s statewide
target, which would include using the 1% reduction for the next year or decide to establish its
own targets, which would require a methodology be set up and identify data collection and
discussed with Central Office. In the first three years of this program, so far, every MPO elected
to follow the state targets.

Mr. Piper said he noticed we are over by double digits on both categories. How does that
relate to other similar areas? Mr. Porochniak was not sure. The Reading MPO, when compared
to statewide data was higher than expected.

Chairman Kufro asked Mr. Porochniak to explain what happens if the target is not hit.
Mr. Piper said that, while we have local targets that are used to measure our local progress, the
only true target required under the federal regulation is the statewide target. Mr. Porochniak said
that, at this point, the penalty for not meeting the statewide threat would be the implementation
plan that PennDOT will be required to prepare. In order to improve the program, FHWA must
be told what we are doing.
Mr. Piper said that the Department will put this implementation plan together that looks at how the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds are being spent. The requirements could be stricter in terms of how those dollars are used across the state. Mr. Porochniak said MPO’s might be asked to add additional funds into the program. If the decision comes back from FHWA that we did not meet the 4 out of the 5 targets, the Department will have to put the plan together by June 2020.

Mr. Piper explained that when HSIP money is used for any project in the program, there is specific criteria that is required to be used that must show benefits based on the cost. These dollars can only be used on the most dangerous places. The benefit/cost ratio must be 1 or greater for it to be eligible.

Mr. Boyer asked if there is fatality and crash statistics on every road at every level in this geography, state routes, etc. Mr. Piper said that safety is one issue that applies everywhere, including state routes and local roads. It does not apply to the Turnpike. Mr. Porochniak said that one of the challenges with this is that you cannot predict for human error. Mr. Krall said he is in favor of preventing fatalities. If we get a bad report card, so be it. It needs to be documented. Fatalities should be zero.

MOTION: Mr. Kilmer made a motion to recommend that the Reading MPO follow the state Performance Measures. Mr. Piper seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Chairman Kufro stated that the PM 1 Safety Targets will be sent to Coordinating Committee for their approval.

10. REVIEW/RECOMMENDATION OF ANNUAL LIST OF FEDERALLY OBLIGATED PROJECTS FFY 2019

Mr. Piper said that, under federal regulations at the end of the federal fiscal year, we are required to put out a report showing the annual list of projects that received federal obligations in the prior year. In the past, a spreadsheet was posted from the Department. It met the statutory requirement but didn’t give guidance to the public. A few months ago, the format was revised to create a more user-friendly document for FFY 2018.

We have used this same format to produce the FFY 2019 report.

This is here for reference and the document does not need to be approved by the committees. It has also been posted to the Planning webpage and submitted to Central Office and will be forwarded to the FHWA.

11. COMMUTER SERVICES

Mr. Boyer said that during the month of December, the Outreach team visited ESI Berks, Career Link and Reading Alloys in Robesonia. They are very receptive to learning about our programs and letting staff talk to their employees.
The stats from December are based on the Commute PA Program from people logging in to sign up for the program to track their trips. There were 359 new members that joined the program in December. There were 14,500 trips tracked during that period, which equates to approximately 261,000 miles not driven as a result of them using our programs and 12,000 gallons of gasoline saved.

Mr. Boyer said that there was a submission made to PennDOT for additional Try-Transit and Try-Carpooling signs. Many of the counties in the program received the posting of transit signs on their roadways. We had to go back to PennDOT to request a new approval in order to use CMAQ funds for that purpose. We were approved two weeks ago. It is important to find good locations in Berks County to install the signs.

Mr. Boyer stated that the position previously filled by Ms. Landis at the Chamber has been filled. The new person is Kathryn Cunfer. She will also be the Chamber’s Representative to the SRTP (Commuter Services) Board.

Mr. Boyer attended the Schuylkill County Chamber Committee Meeting this morning. They are also discussing the state’s reallocation of the TIP funds. He referenced the success Berks County is having with the Chamber, County Officials, community groups and ReadingBridge.net initiative. It might be possible that they reach out to the MPO for information.

12. PENNDOT UPDATE ON TASA AND HIGHWAY PROJECTS

Chairman Kufro there are two lists of updates in the packets.

Mr. Piper said he received a copy of a letter from the Department regarding Topton Borough and an apparent lack of progress with their TASA project. Was there any response? Chairman Kufro said he does not recall any response from them yet. Mr. Piper said Topton Borough had a convoluted Right-Of-Way issue that needed to be resolved. This finally happened. He didn’t know if this was holding up the process and keeping them from moving forward with that project. Chairman Kufro agreed to follow up on this.

Mr. Piper said that the City of Reading is taking steps to move forward with their project. The biggest issue now is the fact that the City is going through a transition period in their administration and it may be difficult to stay on track. Mr. Krall said they need to take a step back to take steps forward. The project is on schedule.

Mr. Piper said that the Highway Status Report is still using the current let date found in the FFY 2019 TIP. Chairman Kufro agreed that the let dates are based on the current TIP and not the draft TIP. The let dates for all projects not scheduled in the next year in the current TIP need to be taken with a grain of salt. The let dates will be updated as we finalize the new TIP.

13. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Piper stated that PennDOT, in cooperation with FHWA, is continuing a process they call the Alternative Fuels Deployment Plan. This is a process of defining corridors that people
who either driving CNG or electric vehicles can use and have faith that they will have the opportunity to refuel their vehicles while traveling on these corridors. The current effort will look at the route that extends along I-81 from the Maryland border through the interchange with I-78 in Lebanon County and then following across I-78 to the New Jersey border at Easton, PA.

Mr. Piper said the goal is to provide opportunities for formal designations. There is specific criteria required to receive that designation. There will be national signing that will help drivers understand which routes they can use with confidence.

The agencies involved in this effort are the MPO’s, PennDOT Central and District offices, USDOT, PA DEP, and other agencies.

The two definitions being used are “Corridor Pending” which means that the corridor is being worked on, but not ready yet. “Corridor Ready” for electric vehicles needs to have a public fast charge station available no more than 50 miles apart along the corridor. The station cannot be located more than five miles off the designated highway. To be pending means there are stations built but does not meet the 50 miles between stations separation gap.

To be qualify for “Corridor Ready” CNG, it needs to be a public fast-fill station that can do 3,600 PSI, with gaps no more than 150 miles between stations along the corridor and they cannot be located more than five miles off the designated highway.

Mr. Piper said that stations along the corridors must be universally available in order to be designated. That means that charging stations for Tesla vehicles, which have unique connectors, don’t fit into the criteria.

For electric vehicles, the Turnpike, parts of I-83, Northeast Extensions as far as Scranton, PA and the Pittsburgh area are all designated “Corridor Ready” areas. The other areas including I-81 and I-78 corridors are falling into the “Corridor Pending” category. There are other corridors that are building stations into this network.

As for the Alternative Fuels Deployment Plan, the goal will be to have the Department and other agencies involved identify critical gap areas they would like to fill and will then work with the MPO’s and municipalities within those areas to identify specific sites. They are looking at partnering with existing/proposed fuel stations and/or truck stops rather than setting independent fueling sites. Funding is available through federal and state programs that provide incentives for implementing the fueling stations. There are ten programs that influence the availability of funding for the alternative fuel vehicles. There is proposed legislation that would mandate working with utility companies in certain areas as far providing electric fueling services.

Mr. Krall asked if there is anything on the local level. Mr. Piper stated that PennDOT and DEP are tracking the number of alternatively fueled vehicles, but it is not perfect. The also keep track of the location of alternate fueling stations. Mr. Boyer asked if PennDOT or FHWA given any data as to how many vehicles are on the road, in the area or registered in the Commonwealth. Mr. Piper said he asked that same question. At this point, there are no CNG or EV fueling stations along the I-78 Corridor in Berks County. There might be opportunities in the Bethel
Township and the Hamburg Borough areas. DVRPC has a map that contains information regarding all registered electric vehicles in Pennsylvania. PennDOT can differentiate between CNG and 100% electric in their registration. There is a breakdown right now where hybrids are still recorded as gas vehicles. It is concentrated in the Philadelphia and Pittsburgh areas but are spreading across the state. FHWA/PennDOT want to look at this area (I-81/I-78 from a local level and how it connects on a national level as well. They also want to show the importance of that corridor for both regular and freight transportation.

Mr. Piper said that when you look at the density in the I-78 area, it is a thru-route. If anything is done along that corridor, existing trip generators in the Bethel and Hamburg areas will most likely be concentrated on. Chairman Kufro said that Bethel Township and Rt. 61 are the two most logical points. This is the early stage of the program. The goal is to go through the study and have recommendations by September 2020. This program will be marketed to property and truck stop owners and to explain the funding available to them for participating in this program.

14. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Mr. Krall made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:47 PM. Mr. Golembiewski seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Date: 2/6/2020

[Signature]

Alan D. Piper