



Citizens Advisory Committee Minutes

April 14, 2020

Location: via: Zoom

Attendance:

New Jersey: Reggie Haynes, Marty King, Steve Benigno, Ben Saracco, Mike Devlin, Judy Boldurian, Strasso Jovanovski, Dan Norfleet

Pennsylvania: Bob Melikian, Larry Davis, Dan McArdle

Emeritus Member(s) John Boyle, Jeff Kessler

Potential Member(s):

DRPA/PATCO: John Hanson, John Rink, Mike Venuto, Barbara Wagner

Public Member(s):

Call to Order

A motion was made to approve the February 12, 2020 Minutes. The Minutes were approved.

A motion was made to approve the Memo of Cancellation of the March 11, 2020 Meeting due to the ongoing Novel Coronavirus Covid19 virus. The Motion was approved.

Updates from CEO, John Hanson:

Due to the Covid19 Pandemic, on March 26, 2020 at 6:00 a.m., the DRPA pulled the Toll Collectors from the WWB, BFB, CBB and the BRB going cashless in cooperation and coordination with Governor Phil Murphy, the New Jersey Tolling Agencies and the Bi-State Agencies. Drivers without EZ Pass were guided into the EZ Pass lanes. A monthly invoice generated by EZ Pass will be mailed to the owner of the vehicle driven through the EZ Pass lane. They have 35 days upon receipt of the invoice to pay without violation fees. If drivers do not pay within 35 days, a violation charge will be assessed. The DRPA is hopeful the invoices will be paid considering the economic crisis that is going along with the Covid19 Pandemic. Presently, traffic on the bridges is at 30% of normal or at a 70% loss.

Capital Projects/Expenditures have not been impacted by the Pandemic. Less traffic and less ridership have helped to move forward with projects on the bridges and tracks. Unfortunately, our revenue loss is at 15 million per month on the bridges and 2.5 million a month with PATCO. The

DRPA is expected to receive 41 million from the Federal Transportation Agency, which will help offset the revenue deficiency. The DRPA was and still is in great financial shape, therefore, we are not looking to increase bridge tolls or PATCO fares at this time. Once the Stay-at-Home Order is lifted, we expect the bridge tolls to increase more so than ridership on PATCO due to continued social distancing.

Presently, the DRPA is not considering a lay-off, although the Toll Collectors are on standby at this time. John Hanson will talk to the Union to see if they would be receptive to redefining their work duties during the Pandemic to avoid lay-offs.

The DRPA continues to serve the public. Employees are doing their jobs remotely with occasional trips to the office, only when necessary. Strict rules have been implemented at all DRPA/PATCO offices including social distancing and face coverings to minimize exposure. Janitorial/sanitizing work continues at all DRPA/PATCO locations, as well.

Larry Davis reported concerns on the lack of social distancing on the bicycle walkway which became very crowded during the recent warm weather. He suggested blocking off one lane of traffic running in one direction while the rampway runs in the opposite direction. John Hanson will talk to Chief Stief, but believes it would create too many issues, require additional police enforcement and become very dangerous. Additionally, the DRPA is trying to limit employee exposure to the public during the Covid19 Pandemic.

Freedom Cards have been purchased and received to last for approximately one year.

The Ben Franklin Bridge Centennial is scheduled for January 6, 2022. John Hanson appreciates any ideas or recommendations from the CAC members for the Centennial.

Presently, PATCO is running on a modest schedule with Stations closed at Ashland, Westmont, Camden City Hall and 12th/13th in Philadelphia. The headway is every 20 minutes during the week, every 30 minutes on Saturday and every hour on Sunday. The front and back trains are not available to riders and kept locked to keep Train Operators and Essential Workers safe.

The CDC has only “recommended” the wearing of masks. Consequently, only some riders are wearing some sort of face covering. However, there are a sufficient amount of trains available and enough space between riders for social distancing.

Updates from Mike Venuto/Engineering:

Mike Venuto reported that the DRPA works on 60 to 70 Capital Projects each year. Presently, the following projects are moving forward:

Ben Franklin Bridge work includes rehabilitation of the suspension span and anchorage, steel repairs, maintenance painting and decorative lighting.

As part of the Capital Projects, lighting on the Ben Franklin Bridge is a part of the expansion plan that will take approximately 4 ½ years. New LED lighting will be installed one side at a time.

Mike Venuto explained that the project will start on the north side of the bridge so we keep the new south walkway bike ramp open. Bob Melikian suggested starting at the south side as good PR because the southside of the bridge is picked up by cameras and shown on all the news stations. Bob Melikian also mentioned that many lights on the bridge are presently out and noticeable. Mike Venuto will talk to Bridge Ops to see if they can be replaced.

Walt Whitman Bridge work includes the I-76 corridor to Passyunk Avenue, paving, bridge repairs, painting, lighting and electrical improvements and signage.

Commodore Barry Bridge work includes concrete pier rehabilitation.

Betsy Ross Bridge work includes painting of the bridge structure and rehabilitation of Route 90.

Ben Franklin Bridge/Fourth Street Garage work includes concrete repairs and steel repairs.

The Solar Project work continues including the connectivity and working out Solar Interconnection Agreements with PSE&G. DRPA is securing an easement for solar connectivity at Lindenwold.

PATCO work includes the station enhancement projects and the installation of elevators at the remaining stations: Ashland, Westmont, City Hall Camden and 12th/13th Philadelphia and resurfacing the tracks.

Updates from John Rink/PATCO:

Sanitizing systems have been ordered for each Station. Once the systems are received, they will be installed in each Station permanently.

Franklin Square Project design is close to being finalized. The February meeting in China Town was well attended. Feed back and concerns were addressed and the coordination of construction will be scheduled around events taking place.

Ben Saracco asked if the time and date could be added to the screen on the trains. John Rink said it could be done but is not easy as it would be expensive and require a rewrite of the software. John Rink will discuss at upcoming budget hearing in July 2020 to see if it could be added to the budget.

There is no update on the GTFS Data.

CAC Business:

The CAC requested advanced notice of all Public Events pertaining to the DRPA and PATCO.

The CAC requested every other year report on all DRPA Real Property. Maria Wing, Deputy CEO or Mike Howard will discuss Real Property owned by the DRPA at the May 13, 2020 meeting.

The CAC nominated Daniel McArdle for Chairman, Reggie Haynes for Vice Chairman and Judy Bouldurian for Secretary. A vote will be taken at the May 20, 2020 meeting.

The CAC continues to look for candidates to become members of the Citizen Advisory Committee.

Meeting Adjourned.

Next CAC Meeting: Will be held via Zoom on May 13, 2020 @ 6:00 p.m.

Next DRPA Board Meeting: Will be held virtually on May 20, 2020 @ 9:00 a.m.