



Citizens Advisory Committee Minutes

Wednesday, January 12, 2022

Location: via: Zoom

Attendance:

New Jersey: Reggie Haynes, Alan Becker, Dan Norfleet, Steve Benigno, Joe Russell, Marty King, Pam Mack-Brooks, Bruce Schwartz

Pennsylvania: Larry Davis, Dan McArdle, Tyrone Wesley, Bob Melikian

Emeritus Member(s): Jeff Kessler, John Boyle

Potential Member(s): Scott Cohen

DRPA/PATCO: John Hanson, CEO; John Rink, GM; Mike Venuto, Chief Engineer; Barbara Wagner, Executive Assistant

Public Member(s):

Call to Order

A motion was made to approve the November 10, 2021 minutes. The minutes were approved.

CEO John Hanson

CEO Hanson began the meeting by wishing the members a Happy New Year. He reported that things are going well at the DRPA and PATCO. We are still around 90% in bridge traffic revenues with a little more variability over the holidays and with Omicron. GM Rink will talk about PATCO ridership being at 40% in ridership.

In follow-up to the discussion that we had last month about trying to create the required data for the train scheduling and the lack of resources, I spoke to John Rink and we've identified an individual who will have the capacity to do the work. GM Rink and Jeff Kessler are working together, and we are continuing to try to sort it out.

Bob Melikian thanked CEO Hanson and the Port Authority for not raising bridge tolls like everyone else. Mr. Melikian stated that management should be commended for being prudent and doing things to the benefit of the people who use the bridges and the trains.

CEO Hanson reported that the Authority likes to be careful about how we talk about the other agencies raising tolls as our main concern is infrastructure. Everyone has their own needs and approach, but the infrastructure is important to people's quality of life, their employment, etc. We're very fortunate that we have a great team in place that is focused on this and maybe that happens when you have a CPA at the top of your organization who's focused on pinching pennies and holding the line on the costs. CEO Hanson stated that he is balanced by GM Rink, CE Venuto, and others who are also focused on making sure that we have the resources to provide the service. Although we have mixed feelings about it, we are happy that people are recognizing that we are trying to do the right thing, but we do not want to throw shade at the agencies that had to raise tolls in order to provide the service as the day is going to come, sooner or later, that we will have to raise tolls, too.

Update on DRPA 2022 projected revenue.

CEO Hanson reported that we are still working on the 2022 projected revenue and projecting that 2021 will come in at about \$25M below where we were in 2020. We expect to pick-up \$10M in this coming year but, for 2022, it's difficult to predict what the trajectory of all of this is going to be. As an accountant, I am rarely an optimist, we're usually pessimistic, but one way or another the pandemic is running its course and we're seeing the CDC considering the societal impact of their policies. Generally, people are getting to the point where they're saying, one way or another, we are going to live our lives, so I think we are going to be moving toward whatever the new normal is going to be. Hopefully, it's not too far off the old normal in terms of traffic patterns and train use. CEO Hanson stated that he thinks we'll start to get pretty close. He will inform the committee later in the year as to how we're tracking. In the meantime, we easily met our bond covenants and our formal obligations.

Ben Franklin Bridge Centennial – Possibility of forming a Centennial Celebration Committee.

CEO Hanson reported that when we get closer to the Centennial, which is in 2026, the DRPA will have a working group that will primarily be made up of staff. He added that he would be happy to include representation from the CAC when we form that Committee sometime closer to 2026.

Impact on Steve Sweeney's election loss effects on the DRPA and the Glassboro Camden Line (GCL) project. Has there been any contact with his successor, Edward Durr (truck driver who defeated him)?

CEO Hanson reported that we discussed this before. The GCL is primarily driven by Governor Murphy and the agencies that are wholly under his control, particularly, New Jersey Transit. Senator Sweeney was a huge advocate for the project and he's the one who got it initiated and we continued to look to him for support, advice and guidance. He's not going away, we will still

be able to get that support from him. He was able to perform the heavy lifting as Senate President to help identify some of the funding that's coming from the South Jersey Transportation Authority. He was a big advocate for the DRPA being in the role of Project Manager and those agreements are in place. It's a huge loss, in my estimation, as he is a great supporter of the project and there's no doubt he would have done more from a governmental perspective. We are going to miss having him in that role, but we will be working with him and talking to him. He got it off the ground, he got big funding for it, he got the agreements going, so we're in great shape thanks to Senator Sweeney.

CEO Hanson reported, in terms of Senator Durr, he is not the Senate President and that's largely how Senator Sweeney came to intersect with us. We sometimes have contact with individual legislators for different issues or circumstances, but we've no real reason to be communicating with Senator Durr in the same way that we don't have communication with any of the other Senators from Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

Bruce Schwartz asked CEO Hanson about his relationship with State Assemblyman Greenwald.

CEO Hanson reported that he has a cordial relationship with the State Assemblyman, however, he doesn't interact with us much on DRPA matters. The State Legislators aren't typically too involved. State Legislators may get involved when people from New Jersey are appointed to the Board (full at this time) from their district who have the ability to impact that appointment process. We don't receive funding from the State of New Jersey nor the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The DRPA is not subject to the laws of either state unless there is a substantial similar law on both sides of the river.

CE Mike Venuto

Steve Benigno asked if there have been any developments with the Glassboro Camden Line?

CE Venuto reported that the Environmental Impact Study was completed in February 2021. We are now working with SJTA as our financial partner and continue to work with New Jersey Transit as the project owner. In December, we received Statements of Qualifications, so the next phase of the project is the preliminary engineering phase. We are going to take the conceptual design that was done during the EIS and move that into approximately 30% of the engineering phase. The anticipation is that we will eventually go out to a design build/operate/maintain contract similar to the River Line.

The first phase will be the preliminary engineering and that will result in a set of documents that will, in aggregate, be around 30% of the design. Some parts of the design may be a little bit less and some a little more, but we will look at utility relocations/intersections and start narrowing down the property that we may need to acquire for the preliminary design of the stations.

CE Venuto reported that he received Statements of Qualifications on December 16th from three firms for the preliminary engineering. We are in the process of reviewing those Statements of Qualifications now. Our evaluation team will review and rank the Statements of Qualifications

then, ultimately, we will develop a short list and those shortlisted firms will receive a formal Request for Proposal (RFP) where they will then provide a detailed, technical proposal to do the work. Once we receive those, the same review team will review and rank, ultimately, to get to the highest technically ranked firm which we will then present for approval. We are following the FTA Brooks method of consultant selection. Once we have the highest technically ranked firm, we will ask that firm to put their cost proposal together. So, we anticipate that the Request for Proposal will be out at the latter part of February. Hopefully, we will have a firm onboard to start the preliminary engineering the latter part of May or early June. It will probably be around the two-year timeframe to do the entire preliminary engineering.

Larry Davis asked when property is acquired, will it be the DRPA, NJT, who's going to do the acquiring?

CE Venuto reported that the preliminary team, the program management team, and our team will do the leg work to prepare the appraisals, but the owner of the property and negotiations for the final acquisition will be by New Jersey Transit (NJT).

Steve Benigno asked if there was a Board Sub-Committee that does oversight on the project.

CE Venuto reported that there is not a Board Sub-Committee right now. New Jersey Transit is the project owner, the DRPA is the project manager, and SJTA is the funding partner. Presently, the leadership is essentially the three organizations, so we have a project team that is doing the details. Representatives from SJTA and NJT are basically overseeing the project team and then the DRPA reports up on the project status. CEO Hanson then collaborates with Executive Director Dougherty at SJTA. We also have a monthly status report aside from the monthly meetings with the respective groups.

CEO Hanson added that it's similar to our relationship with SEPTA where someone does our escalators and elevators – they're doing the work, but they're ours. This really belongs to New Jersey Transit and we are sort of in SEPTA's role doing the job for them. We have our own internal processes for oversight, but the real ultimate project level oversight is going to be with the owner or the funding partner at South Jersey Transportation.

John Boyle asked if there is a projected groundbreaking date for Franklin Square?

CE Venuto reported that at the December Board meeting, the contractor was approved and at the January O&M meeting and January Board meeting it is anticipated that we will have approval for the construction manager for that project. The veto period expired at the end of December, so we're working with the Franklin Square contractor to get the contract signed through their organization and our Legal Department. I anticipate the Notice to Proceed will probably be issued at the end of this month. Right now, we don't have an official groundbreaking ceremony planned. I expect that we will be out in the field and mobilize sometime in February bringing in field trailers and possibly some fencing to delineate our space. We're going to minimize our space to just the construction area to minimize our impact on Franklin Square.

Larry Davis asked if CE Venuto has been in touch with the local community groups, especially the Chinatown group to make sure they are aware of where things are going to be placed, as they are sensitive about it.

CE Venuto reported that we have met with the local community groups and the Chinatown group a few times during the design phase. Aside from those communities, we also had a lot of discussions with the City of Philadelphia and different groups including Historic Philadelphia and the Franklin Square folks in December. We have a public outreach scope of work within our construction management contract to collaborate with the stakeholders. We will be meeting with the community groups as well as the City. There is going to be an extensive amount of coordination that needs to happen for that project. We have a 36-inch water main that has to be relocated out to the street, improvements have to be done around 7th and Race Streets since we are redeveloping that corner. We recognize that use of the park has been increasing and they now have weddings and other events there. We have bi-weekly construction meetings when we're out in the field, so they will be able to attend the beginning of the meeting to let them know the coordination of activities that will take place, but not sit through the technical part. The water main relocation will be one of the first activities and will have the biggest impact, so we will coordinate with the local authorities and the community groups as we do it.

CEO Hanson added that we've had a lot of contact with the community groups including the Chinatown group and we'll continue to do that.

John Boyle asked about the construction on the Ben Franklin Bridge going from the northside to the southside.

CE Venuto reported that it will be sometime in June or July. He stated that by the next meeting he should have a firm date. We are about 95-98% done with the cable wrapping, additional work on the cable, and some steel repairs, so it will be during the summer when we do the switch.

Update on 2022 Approved Capital DRPA Projects.

CE Venuto reported that the Walt Whitman Bridge Project was a \$67M construction project. We are close to completing the project and we're close to being off the roadway. We are presently working on the punch list and we also have one major item that has to be done which is the final sign gantry that will be put up later this month. That work will take place through the night where we'll have intermittent lane closures. We are in the process of cleaning up the area and the trailers are leaving.

We completed most of the construction on the Solar Project. One Port Center, the Commodore Barry Bridge, Ferry Avenue and Lindenwold are all on-line producing power. We will finish up on the Betsy Ross Bridge soon, as we had one issue with a piece of equipment and expect to be producing power there in January. In February, the Ashland Station should be complete and producing power. By the end of March, the Woodcrest Station should be complete and producing power. By the end of March, we should have all the solar panels up and running.

The mega project suspension span at the Ben Franklin Bridge continues. We are in the process of doing very complex, intricate work with the links where we have temporary bracing at the NJ

tower on the northside. We had new links fabricated and in order to get the links put back in, there will be lane closures on January 28th and February 4th taking three lanes out with a single lane going into Pennsylvania. All trades will be working throughout the wintertime, except for the painters. The walkway will be switched to the southside by the end of summer or early fall. CE Venuto made a note to make sure we continue to report back on that.

The elevator project continues and is on the same schedule as discussed in prior meetings. That project should finish up in the late summer, early fall for the last two stations.

GM Rink added that besides the bridge work discussed by CE Venuto, PATCO has been doing track interlocking which explains why there are 30-minute headways on the weekends and at nights. This project cost \$14.2M. GM Rink provided the attached photograph below of work being performed.

At the Broadway Station, the crossover was installed for the new interlocking. Over the next four weekends, one of the four switches will be installed. All the connecting pieces have been installed and all the ties have been replaced. The entire floor structure that supports the tracks have been redone, including drainage and steel repairs. It will take four more weekends, one weekend for each switch to be installed, then the tracks are welded, and then the signal electrical connections will be made. This project will be completed in March. The original interlocking that has been replaced is over fifty years old. Besides that, we did structural repairs in the entire Camden subway tunnel.

Bruce Schwartz asked if there were any new capabilities added to the system or just replacing old equipment?

GM Rink reported that the work entailed replacement of all four switches and the switch machines with new.



Status of ongoing construction and road closures on the bridges and access roads.

CE Venuto reported that the two big lane closures are at the Walt Whitman Bridge, as mentioned, and then the nighttime closures at the Ben Franklin Bridge for the installation of the links.

PATCO General Manager, John Rink

GM Rink reported that PATCO's on-time performance for 2021 was at 97.69%. Over 2020, it was just .2/3% higher, but the last two years were our highest in the last five. We did run more trips in 2021 compared to 2021, but we were almost at 98% for the year which means that we are providing good reliable service to our customers.

The first week in January, our ridership was impacted by the storms a bit. We were at the 26-28% ridership range for the start of the year.

Update on GTFS Processes and Workflows.

GM Rink reported that, as discussed last month, we believe we have an internal source that will be able to provide that work and we are working through that. GM Rink thanked Jeff Kessler for sending him a file to look at and help his staff. He advised Jeff Kessler to keep a look out for an e-mail that will be coming from staff. Unfortunately, PATCO does not have the python or software, so our IS Department is working on a coding software. Staff has been playing with their laptops at work and home and loaded all the features. We should be able to do the GTFS for the trackwork and the real time.

Jeff Kessler added that the python can be downloaded for free if you go to python.org. There shouldn't be an issue in installing it from a security perspective, as IS will probably say they have to review it first to make sure it's not destroying any files on the DRPA systems. GM Rink advised Jeff Kessler to look out for an e-mail from Mr. Barrett whose working on it and he'll have some questions. GM Rink stated that Mr. Kessler, Mr. Boyle, and Mr. Davis have been on the forefront of this and hopefully it will be an enhancement for our customers in the future.

Old Business:

GM Rink reported that there are no Public Events scheduled.

GM Rink updated the CAC re: being able to get Share Cards from the website. PATCO made that change so riders can now purchase a Share Card on-line. GM Rink thanked the committee for the suggestion and PATCO moved on it. Larry Davis stated that he did put a tweet out when he received the e-mail from the DRPA.

Reggie Haynes and Dan McArdle will work on the active membership list.

CAC Membership: Bob Melikian asked if there were any new ideas on recruitment, especially from Pennsylvania. He stated that the committee talked about putting a story together on why we all joined. Has it gone beyond Alan Becker and I responding to Mike Williams? Scott Cohn

stated that maybe the CAC will get some activity at the opening of Franklin Square as it might draw some interest from people on the Philadelphia side.

New Business:

Chairman Haynes introduced Scott Cohn as a new member to the committee. Mr. Cohn said he believes he can bring a unique perspective to the committee as he lived in Cherry Hill, NJ for many years and presently lives in downtown Philadelphia.

Next CAC Meeting: Will be held via Zoom on February 9, 2022, at 6:00 p.m.

Next DRPA Board Meeting: Will be held virtually on January 19, 2022, at 9:00 a.m.