

Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission  
Minutes of the Meeting  
June 28, 2021 – 4:30 p.m.  
Cisco Webex Meeting

The one hundred and forty-seventh meeting of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission was called to order by Chairman Rich Fitzgerald.

Members: Darin Alviano, Mike Belding, Jennifer Beer, Tom Ceraso, Gina Cerilli, Douglas Chew, Ali Doyle, Pat Fabian, Rich Fitzgerald, Kim Geyer, Shelia Gombita, Mark Gordon, Kelly Gray, Bob Griffin, Lynn Heckman, Sherene Hess, Charles Jones, Fred Junko, Katharine Kelleman, Sean Kertes, Clifford Levine, Larry Maggi, Jeff Marshall, Kevin McCullough, Cheryl Moon Sirianni, Leslie Osche, Mavis Rainey, Bob Regola, Aurora Sharrard, Larry Shifflet, and Byron Stauffer.

Others: Daniel Ramot, and Eric Gardiner, VIA.

Staff: Vincent Valdes, Jared Bedekovich, Mary Brangan, Kirk Brethauer, Rhonda Craig, Dom D'Andrea, Colleen Friend, Chuck Imbrogno, Tom Klevan, Jennifer Lasser, Vince Massaro, Steve Meredith, Shannon O'Connell, Dee Pamplin, Kathy Stefani, Kay Tomko, David Totten, and Andy Waple.

1. Chairman Fitzgerald called to order the June 28, 2021 meeting of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission.
  - Quorum – There being a quorum present the meeting proceeded.
  - Any conflict of interest declaration on action items – None

Chairman Fitzgerald pointed out that since the Commission has not met in person for so long, and we have some new members and a new Executive Director; I think we should introduce all the members that are present.

The new Executive Director said he is excited to be here and is ready to get busy with what we must do around the region.

2. Action on Minutes of the April 26, 2021 Minutes

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the April 26, 2021 meeting by Commissioner Maggi which was seconded by Commissioner Osche. The affirmative vote was unanimous.

3. Public Comment – None
4. Financial Report – Vince Massaro

Vince Massaro reported on the financials for the period July 1, 2020 through April 30, 2021. We have the approved updated budget with revenues and expenditures of \$15,051,636. We have actual encumbered expenditures and revenues to date of

\$11,845,690 for 79% of the budget expended to date. The funding money, the grants and the requests we have submitted are all coming in on time. Most programs and budgets for the projects have an end date of June 30, 2022. So, we may see some of those expenditures carry over into the new fiscal year 2021-2022. At the end of July, we will present the agency budget for adoption by the Commission.

There were no questions for Mr. Massaro on the financial report.

5. Update on the Region's ARC Area Development Project Priority Listing – Jenn Lasser

Jenn Lasser stated that she wanted the Commission to be aware of a future fax vote that's going to be requested of the Commission on or around July 15<sup>th</sup> in regards to the ARC fiscal year, 22 area development, and local access road funding projects. Historically, we bring these through at the July Commission meeting, but with no July meeting this year, we're going to submit everything through via fax vote.

The projects are due by July 30<sup>th</sup> we will have a ranking meeting on July 12<sup>th</sup> via the Planning Directors Forum and submitting to DCED on behalf of SPC on July 23<sup>rd</sup>.

6. Update on Regional COVID-19 Hospitality Industry Recovery Program (CHIRP) – Steve Meredith

Chairman Fitzgerald commented that the SPC as well as another agency have been working very hard to help the hospitality industry. Mr. Meredith said the legislation that brought CHIRP into existence was signed into law by Governor Tom Wolf on February 5, 2021. It allocated \$27.6M to the southwestern Pennsylvania region to assist hospitality establishments.

The counties had to apply for funding by 5PM on February 11, 2021. Then the counties had to contract with a Certified Economic Development Organization like SPC, to assist in the application review process. During the latter half of February, we worked with our legal counsel and county representatives to finalize CHIRP contracts. And then prior to the opening of the application period, we had to finalize the CHIRP application itself, the application review process, and train SPC's economic development staff on how to review each CHIRP application.

SPC assisted four counties in our region, Allegheny, Butler, Greene and Indiana. The amount allocated to those four counties was about \$17.2M or 62% of the region's total. Funds were dispersed to businesses less than 30 days after the application period was opened. SPC provided county specified assistance through paper and online applications as well as grant disbursement and document collection on a county-specific basis.

Greene County's CHIRP Program was a little bit different than Allegheny County's program. We had a great amount of help from both the elected officials in these counties as well as the county staff.

From the elected officials' standpoint, thank you to Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald, Butler County Commissioners, Osche, Geyer and Boozel; Greene County

Commissioners, Belding, Zimmerman and McClure; and Indiana County Commissioners Hess, Keith, and Gorman.

From a staff perspective, thanks to Lance Chimka, Dora Wamsley and the entire Allegheny County Economic Development staff. In Butler County thanks to Mark Gordon and Ann Brown; Greene County thanks to Rich Cleveland and Connie Bloom; and Indiana County thanks to Byron Stauffer, Angela Campisano, and Teresa Bachy.

The SPC staff jumped in to pivot their roles to assist with the process of reviewing applications. We reviewed over 600 applications between the four counties we assisted. The staff reviewing the applications was the entire Planning and Development Department with additional staff from other Departments. As a region, it is crucial that we be prepared for future assistance programs like this one that could come down from the state or federal government. SPC's recent performance with CHIRP proves that we have the capability to do that. With that, I will take any questions and if there are none, I'll yield my time.

Chairman Fitzgerald commented I also concur with what you were able to do for our county, and I'm sure I speak for the other counties, too. More Programs will evolve for transportation, broadband, etc., and we're going to rely on the staff to do it all.

Commissioner Cerilli asked if any other counties encountered problems, getting the money out. We have 1,200 businesses that would qualify in Westmoreland County. After the first round, we doubled what they were getting, because we didn't have anyone applying. We kept promoting the program but the owners and managers were busy trying to stay afloat and didn't have time to complete the application.

Chairman Fitzgerald asked if anybody else experienced this problem. Steve said I know that the only issues that we're having in terms of getting the money out, is there are a couple of businesses that we're waiting to hear back in terms of signed grant agreements. Jenn Lasser added that in our other LDD regions, that was a common issue across the state. It was not just a Westmoreland County issue.

Also, the businesses were truly thankful to the commissioners, the counties, and all the staff for how you were able to help their business grow. You've kept doors open, you've kept lights on, you've kept people employed. I'm currently collecting testimonials to be distributed to all of you.

Chairman Fitzgerald said that would be great. This was unprecedented what these folks went through and the last thing you want to happen is not getting the money they are eligible for because they can't complete the application. To be able to assist them through the process is kudos to you.

## 7. Upcoming Long-Range Plan Amendment – Andy Waple

Thanking the Chairman, Andy said I just wanted to make the Commission aware that we are processing a Long-Range Plan Amendment, for your action in August. The plan amendment consists of adding a few projects; to the Fiscally Constrained Project Listing.

The following projects are being amended into the long-range plan so that PennDOT can begin their design and engineering work and study phases of these projects to get them started.

- Addition of the SR 356 Corridor Improvement Project Construction to Stage 2 (\$12.8 Million)
- Addition of Moon Transportation Authority Market Place District Project (Locally Funded)
- Adding Projects to State Managed Interstate Program within the region:
- I-79 Widening/Bridgeville Interchange/Bridge Improvements (PennDOT Bridge Tolling Program)
- Change in the name of the “Parkway East Corridor Transportation Improvement Phase 2” to the “I-376 Squirrel Hill Interchange Improvement”

We will be holding a 30-day public comment period from July 12<sup>th</sup> to August 13<sup>th</sup>. Materials will be available on our website beginning on July 12<sup>th</sup>. Comments can be made electronically or in writing. A virtual public meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 28<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

#### 8. Presentation by VIA – Vincent Valdes/Daniel Ramot, CEO

Mr. Valdes said Eric Gardiner and Andrei Greenawalt from VIA made a presentation to the Policy Committee the art of the possible when it comes to enhanced and innovative mobility. It's my distinct pleasure to introduce Dan Ramot. He is one of the most accomplished people I know. He's the founder and CEO of VIA Transportation. As background; he built supercomputers designed to discover new pharmaceuticals at D.E Shaw Research. He developed AVIONICS Systems for F-15s and F-16s for the Israeli Air Force. He has a PhD in neuroscience from Stanford University and is a graduate of the Israeli Defense Force Elite Talpiot Program. And it's a pleasure to introduce him. Daniel, the floor is yours.

Thank you for the kind introduction. Also, thank you for this opportunity to present to you. I really appreciate it as we all do at VIA.

I do want to tell you a little bit about what VIA does around the world, and, also in the great state of Pennsylvania. Our mission is to try to expand efficient, affordable mobility to everyone through technology in particular, and, we build a digital infrastructure that we are trying to deploy to really transform the way the world moves. Our software, our digital infrastructure really touches every part of what we think of as public mobility.

First, we take traditional public transportation systems, bus systems in particular, and we do what we think of as digitizing. As an example, the route map from Jersey City across the river from New York City. We took that bus route system and essentially complimented it with a dynamic on demand shuttle system. And what you see on the bottom right, is the heat map of all the possible pickups and drop offs where people were requesting and getting on these dynamic shuttles and traveling all across Jersey City thanks to this new system. No longer, constrained to fix routes. We have dynamic on

demand shuttles that can be booked on demand on an app, or through a phone call, or through a website. It's a fully accessible system. You don't have to have a credit card or have an app. You can access it however. You can see, it's almost an infinite number of virtual bus stops that we have across the city to any other virtual bus stop using the system.

In many cases where we're dealing with either complimenting, or in some cases, even replacing underperforming bus routes, we see a dramatic increase in ridership and a very significant cost per ride by allowing vehicles to be routed dynamically rather than be restricted to specific routes that don't really work for the people who live in those areas, particularly in areas that are not very dense and you've seen buses with just one or two passengers on them. So that's one example.

We are also reimagining school transportation. If you're familiar with how school buses work, you know, they haven't really changed in decades. You still go down to the corner and wait for the bus to show up. Not knowing if your kid is on it or not on it we are digitizing those entire systems. In this case. You see an example, for the City of New York, we're introducing digital systems across all 10,000, yellow school buses in New York where students can scan on and off the bus they get on and off. We track all of the buses. We're sort of digitizing the creation process which allows us to create far more efficient rounds that can also be altered dynamically based on real time traffic conditions and whether a bus breaks down or any unexpected event were to happen.

We're applying a similar technology to paratransit obviously very costly, often quite inefficient part of our transit system that is required. I think touches some of our most vulnerable residents and to whom we don't often provide the best services we are bringing digital technology into that space as well. So that residents who are dependent on these services for getting to their medical appointments and so forth, can have a much better experience, whether it's being able to book a seat through an app or through a website. Get real time alerts on where the vehicle is and an overall far improved, experience versus traditional systems, and we do this all over the world. And lastly, we recently acquired a company that we love called Remix. So, we partnered to join forces together with Remix that has been providing planning systems for transit networks and streets.

Hopefully, this gift is coming through, but you can see how they allow cities and transit agencies to replan their street systems, add protected bike lanes, high occupancy vehicle lanes, bus routes and so forth. Very, very sophisticated tools, and we see that really contribute to the ability to optimize the system and provide better transit systems all over.

Our model is really to partner with cities and transit agencies in order to support them in dealing with everything that's going on. Whether it's the recovery from COVID-19; hopefully, is now, mostly behind us. Increase competition from companies like Uber and Lyft, a greater budget pressures, changes like electrification in the systems and then just the need for greater equity in our transportation systems. How do we measure that? How do we quantify? How do we redraw our systems to be more equitable and reach more residents? The ones who need them the most and we have software to support all of that. Through some of what I describe our systems are deployed to 30 countries across more than 500 cities all over the world. These are all those systems that I showed earlier,

whether it's for public transportation, paratransit, school buses, or planning, we partner with all of the folks that you might imagine, we work with cities with transit agencies with schools, with operators and with some very large corporations as well; and our model is very flexible. In most cases we can just provide the software.

So, if we partner with your transit agency, you already have your own drivers, your own vehicles. You may just want to adapt the way you run your operations; may want to think about replacing certain bus routes that are very inefficient because they run through sparse regions with more dynamic services. We can provide you our software SaaS, as a service. The software is basically a service for you and you can use it. That's what 80% of our partners choose to do.

There was a lot of skepticism about whether software can really help improve public transit and whether anything dynamic was public transit, we got a lot of restarted company nearly a decade ago. I like to say that we never really got left out of the room because we just didn't make it in the room to talk to cities and transit agencies at the time about how software can transform what they're doing. People just didn't really think that it was relevant. Public transit was buses and trains and that was it.

Then when we deploy the technology, we're able to see a very powerful return on investment as our investors like to think about it. Across really many metrics and now that we've got over 500 of these deployments, the numbers are very clear. There's a real positive impact, when we deploy the technology and support of public transportation. And I think if that is the either or return on investment for our partners, for our cities, transit agencies, school districts, there's also, the return investment for the planet or the impact that we have for society, whether it's reducing emission. Increasing access in many parts of the world, where we launch, we can see a dramatic increase in access that folks have to jobs to start education opportunities, to healthcare, and so forth.

This is one example from Birmingham, Alabama, where previous jobs within the city were accessible by public transit in under 30-minute trips. Only 10% of the jobs are accessible. Post the Via launch, because we're now able to take people from any number of virtual bus stops and virtual bus ups 90% of the jobs are now accessible.

And just to talk a little bit about what we provide, we have a holistic platform that is end to end. We talk about a vertical tech stack, which means a tech stack is adapted to the need. It's not a generic tech stack. It's sort of designed with cities and transit authorities and school districts directly in mind; the algorithm we've been developing based on, over 100 million trips that we've now collected that the algorithms constantly learning. So, it's improving day by day. So, we can always provide increasingly more efficient service, more sophisticated, matching of passengers with seats. We're constantly improving utilization of the vehicles and so forth and we ourselves are operators. We operate several of these services. We operate directly about a handful of them. So, we know what it's like to operate one of those services and we really tried to take that experience. We operate a couple of services in the United States. We know what that's like, and we know what it takes to do it well, and we bring that into our platform to make sure the platform moves.

And just in the interest of time, I will jump forward to the last slide. We have a couple of services in Pennsylvania, as I mentioned one with Septa, as you can see here and one, a very rural service across two different zones with rapid transit. Both of which I'm pretty proud of and I think are working quite well.

So, I will pause there. Hopefully that's a useful intro. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have about the technology, the platform, our approach and what we do around the world and maybe some trends that we've seen now, coming out of COVID, what's been working, what hasn't been working so happy to take questions on any of these.

Chairman Fitzgerald said, you talked about transit systems in larger urban areas. We represent a 10-county region, which is a lot of rural areas. What would be the current activity that you'd have there? Secondly, how do you connect with transit systems and ride share programs as well? The last type of issues how does your service provide for that?

Daniel responded, before I mentioned, some of the largest cities because obviously those are quite well known to folks, but the vast majority of our services are with small agencies in cities. I think where the micro transit system really comes into its own is not. We cannot replace if you will the bus, that runs down 5th Avenue at peak rush hour, that bus is going to be far more effective than a micro transit. I would argue, some technology on that bus could make even that bus more efficient. That's a separate question.

I think where you find these dynamic systems that are responsive to demand that are not just running, kind of on a fixed loop or a fixed route regardless of where the demand is in these more rural or suburban areas that are sparser where you can combine riders into smaller vehicles by having these more dynamic routes, much more efficiently. And many of the statistics that I showed go back down the gains and efficiency are really coming from these more rural areas where we're reducing wait times significantly, because you don't have these buses that are coming by twice a day, or just every two hours or every hour that you can have a dynamic vehicle that you can request a ride within 15 minutes. Ten to fifteen minutes on average, you're going to get picked up and taken wherever you want to go.

In answer to number two about ride sharing we typically think of this service as almost a replacement for ride sharing for people who cannot afford ride sharing. It's a publicly supported model that helps people get around. I think a lot of times we see the benefits that that technology's providing these days as to people who can well afford those services. They're quite expensive. I think we're looking to bring the benefits of technology to people who cannot afford ride sharing. In many cases, it's really an alternative for folks. It's shared. You're not going to get a ride within two minutes. You're going to share the ride with others, you're going to have to potentially take some detours, the vehicle is larger, so it's not quite the same quality of service, but it can be very efficient. And in fact, I think far more efficient because the ride is shared. Having said that there are ways to integrate these services with virtually every other mode of transit. Whether it's integrating with fixed route, I mentioned earlier example of Seattle into integrating into the train multimodal transportation, something that we can provide through our technology or

integrating the service with a ride sharing service as well as one of the options in the app that is certainly a possibility.

Chairman Fitzgerald asked if anybody on Webex had any questions for Daniel with what he has presented. It's certainly eye opening. It is for me.

Commissioner Cerilli commented that I think we kind of did this in reverse order in this meeting because the next agenda item is the adoption of a resolution on the Smart Moves Connections, regional transit plan and it would certainly lead us to looking at these options that Via offers.

Mr. Valdes asked Daniel one of the things when I was at FTA, I realized in traveling to other countries, was that transit agencies very effectively in other countries use their origin destination, or their mobility factor, if you will, to advocate for funding. Have you seen that improve given your efficiencies in other countries that you're actually practicing this? And could that be used here; once you introduce those efficiencies? You can use that as an element to say, hey, I need this funding in order to get people to jobs or what have you.

Daniel responds I think that's an excellent question. I do think that we're seeing an increased sort of interest and accountability for trend systems beyond what is typically done in the US with reporting to the entity that the transit database to look at. Okay. Where are you actually providing service? How efficient is it? Should we base funding on those outcomes and I think, as you're saying, this is a bit more common, perhaps outside of the United States.

I think one of the advantages of a system, like ours, or any technology enabled system, that you start to really get that data and what we find from our partners in cities translations we work with is that we start out when we provide them a lot of data, and very quickly, they become very hungry for the data and they start to demand more and more reporting. It's almost as if yes, there's value in the service being more dynamic and more flexible, having a more intuitive interface.

I think we have some efforts at the federal level to tie future funding to outcomes, like, what you're describing. But, that has not happened yet in the United States. I think it would be very interesting to do it. I think it would change the thinking a little bit around what exactly our public transit systems are responsible for delivering.

Chairman Fitzgerald thanked Daniel and asked if there were other comments or questions for Daniel before we move on.

#### 9. Action on Resolution 8-21 to Adopt the SmartMoves Connections Regional Transit Vision Plan – Andy Waple

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I may, I have a brief, walk through of a story map that we developed to better explain the, process that we undertook to develop this Smart Moves Connections. This study is a product of, the Long-Range Plan, *SmartMoves* for a Changing Region.



During our public involvement and an engagement campaign, one of the things that we heard, was the need for a better linked seamless public transportation system. Enabling the various transportation, public transportation providers across the region to better link their services together for a more seamless trip for users.

We're about a year into this plan on that regional strategy of smart moves for a changing region. There was a number of very significant planning endeavors going on across the region. From the very granular level. The Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership, began to undertake the Downtown Mobility Plan. Along with the City of Pittsburgh, and their 27, the vision plan for transportation as well as the update of their comprehensive plan. Similarly, the Port Authority of Allegheny County began to develop their long-range plan.

We really took advantage of all this planning going on at the same time. The teams of all these different planning efforts were on the steering committees of each of the other plans. So, there was a lot of collaboration going on among staffs of all these agencies and a lot of data sharing and a lot of, making sure that the recommendations for each of these plans were complimentary to one another and making sure that we were able to mend them together and looking into the future, being able to implement a really seamless public transportation system for the entire region.

We started out as a data driven approach, taking all the best practices and all the input we received from the public and other stakeholders, and looked at really defining multimodal hubs throughout the region; we looked at land use and building footprints and did some cluster analysis. We came up with typologies of different types of transit; conducive areas across the regions all the way from rural crossroads, all the way up through commercial corridors and major districts, such as the North Shore, Strip District or McKeesport. We looked at county seats from across the region, and then major employment centers, such as South Point, the Airport and Cranberry, and with that, we developed a matrix of improvements that are fitting for each of these types of land use, typologies, and types of transit improvements that can be made at these hub and corridor locations, everything from first and last mile connections, bicycle and pedestrian facilities to Micro mobility to share use. And share ride transit to fix route transit and other types of investments.

So you take the hubs, the hub locations, and the different technologies, and the different travel corridors and you put them together and it really paints a picture of where we can begin to look at opportunities for the different transit agencies to better coordinate their services through scheduling or a common fare type or other things like that, other places like, maybe New Kensington or Freeport, that are on the fringe of one county or multiple counties where if these individual transit agencies that serve those counties can converge into hub location, we'd be able to better facilitate the seamless transfer of transit and get folks to where they're going in the region in a more efficient and timely manner. Thus, increasing job opportunities and economic development and economic growth.

And this is just an example of some of the locations that we looked at in the study, as you can see here, we have Cranberry Township a commercial corridor hub. The I-376 Corridor or something like the Flat Iron Flyer in Boulder, Colorado, maybe a solution to that cord or a highway-based system. We looked at all the county seats again, this one

is looking at Greensburg. They have a transit center as well as an Amtrak Station in Greensburg. Is there an opportunity to combine those places and make a better, facilitation of transfers from Amtrak to public transportation through the region. We looked at existing hubs and corridors like the transit hub in Rochester, Beaver County. It's a great example of an existing transit, but what can be done to better facilitate a first and last mile movements and better movements through and within that area. The same thing can be said with New Castle in Lawrence County, a good example of a transit hub, but what can we do to better facilitate that?

We also did some simulating modeling, which I'm not going to go through here as you can see some simulation modeling of how these things may actually work in Greensburg and North Versailles in Allegheny County, and also the I-376 near Wilkinsburg.

Finally, we have a series of maps that are available to partners and transit agencies in the counties throughout the region and what we're doing to begin implementation of this we've started to define a set of high priority projects. Ten or more projects that we're going to start developing by talking with transit agencies, with municipalities, and with counties to begin to develop these corridors in these hubs and; when these funding opportunities become available through the infrastructure bill or other discretionary programs, we'll have done the homework and we'll have the partnerships in place we'll have talked to the folks on the ground. Locally, we'll know what is needed and we'll be better prepared and able to pursue these funding opportunities as they become available.

With that Mr. Chairman, that's all I had in terms of this presentation.

Chairman Fitzgerald asked for any questions for Andy.

Mavis Rainey asked does the plan also include the Investigation into a single fair instrument. I know there was something I mentioned about similar fares, but it will be great as a seamless ride to be able to use the same instrument if I'm on Allegheny County Port Authority, or Westmorland Transit.

Andy said that's one of the things that we looked at in the best practices and we're going to be further exploring into, as we start to develop these high priority projects and high priority corridors, we're going to be out talking with folks with transit providers and others and seeing, which makes the best sense and further exploring the ability to use a common fair system. We just heard from Via, and a platform like that, or another vendor may be a great opportunity to bring those folks into the conversation and really begin to explore very specific needs and outcomes. Long story short, yes, we looked at best practices, but we really need to get into the project development side to begin to do the granular analysis and really match what's out there to what may be tailored to each individual area. And each individual or aggregate transit operators so, yeah, that's going to be explored during the development phase.

Chairman Fitzgerald commented I think this is very powerful, because so many of our folks who live in one county work in another county. To be able to seamlessly get them and by using this type of data and these types of transit hubs can really help all of us be more efficient and more effective for the folks we represent.

Are there any other discussions or questions for Andy? Well, let me entertain a motion to approve Resolution 8-21 to Adopt the Smart Moves Connections Regional Transit Vision.

A motion was made by Mavis Rainey to adopt Resolution 8-21 and Commissioner Osche seconded. The affirmative vote was unanimous.

10. Action on Resolution 9-21 to Adopt a Meeting Schedule for 2021-2022 – Vincent Valdes

Thank you. Mr. Chairman yes, we're proposing the adoption of a schedule that has the full Commission meeting 10 times during the next fiscal year. From August, through June, the only times we wouldn't be meeting are July and November, due to people's vacations and the holidays of course. But the intent is really to meet more often, perhaps for a shorter time, but more often. So that we can provide timely information. And have these timely discussions given that things are developing quickly around the country and around the world. So, it's, a great forum for us to meet and talk about these important issues.

## 2021-2022 Meeting Schedule

<u>Board of Directors/Executive Committee</u>	<u>Commission</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• August 30</li><li>• September 27</li><li>• October 25</li><li>• December 13</li><li>• January 31</li><li>• February 28</li><li>• March 28</li><li>• April 25</li><li>• May 23</li><li>• June 27</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• August 30</li><li>• September 27</li><li>• October 25</li><li>• December 13</li><li>• January 31</li><li>• February 28</li><li>• March 28</li><li>• April 25</li><li>• May 23</li><li>• June 27</li></ul>

Mr. Valdes said the meeting times have been moved up. The Executive Committee will meet at 3:00 pm and the Commission will meet at 4:00 pm

Chairman Fitzgerald ask if there is any further discussion before the motion. Let me entertain a motion to approve Resolution 9-21 to adopt the Meeting Schedule for 2021-2022.

A motion was made by Commissioner Osche to adopt Resolution 9-21 and seconded by Sheila Gombita. The affirmative vote was unanimous.

Chairman Fitzgerald said we'll get the schedule out to everybody after this meeting.

## 11. Committee Report on Activities of the Regional Policy Advisory Committee - Leslie Osche

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Regional Policy Committee has been meeting prior to the Commission meetings and reviewing some of the presentations and information that you've all seen today.

However, I think more broadly, the Policy Committee has really been trying to hone in on the direction and how we're going to drive policy forward for the Commission.

Number one, I think we need to define and know who we want to be as a region and what will drive that innovation and growth as we move forward. So, certainly attracting and keeping a workforce in this region is critical. And defining how transportation and broadband connectivity will support, what we aspire to be.

Further, the Regional Policy Committee, I think then that will allow us to really prioritize our projects for funding. And another important piece that we've discussed is working to engage the municipalities, particularly around land use and where it relates to transportation. Also, building vibrant communities in the communities that really have been left behind, oftentimes, by the changes that have happened in the economy.

So, wanting to make sure we're supporting that and bringing those municipalities, because we know how important they are to any success of what we're trying to drive here; in the Commission and finally discussing in depth why it's important that we work together on funding solutions.

In addition to engaging municipalities, I think this collaboration on funding solutions is really critically important for the region. Instead of us competing with one another. We really need to be figuring out how to bring in dollars, and how to collaborate on public and private partnerships and any other funding solutions. We can find a solution to make sure that we can remain a strong and vibrant Southwest PA region.

A lot of it really is a lot of discussion, I think now defining the next step is how and who we're trying to be as we move forward, and it's been certainly an honor and pleasure to work alongside everybody else here in the region to figure out who we're going to be when we grow up. But none the less, I think it's certainly an exciting time to be here and to be part of that. So, I look forward to the future that we have here.

Chairman Fitzgerald said it's really important work the Commissioner does before these meetings even exist. The Agenda is put forward so that we can have those brilliant formal discussions or more working groups. Thank you for doing that and convening everybody. We encourage everybody to participate with the Commissioner and doing all the road work that needs to be done as she said speaking with one voice as a region, it's going to make us more effective when the funding infrastructure money comes out. Are there any questions for Commissioner Osche on the Regional Policy Advisory Committee?

Okay, no questions for the Commissioner, we have a message from the Executive Director Vincent Valdes.

12. Message from the Executive Director - Vincent Valdes.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just had three items to share with everyone before we end the meeting. First, I wanted to congratulate Miss Sheila Gombita, Executive Director of Freedom Transit. She has been elected by the TOC to serve as the Chair for her second term. I look forward to continuing to work with you.

The other item I wanted to share was that, and I shared it in the Board and Executive Committee Meeting. SPC is going to be undergoing a review by federal highways of our transportation planning processes. This will happen on July 13th through the 15th virtually. It's really a review that must happen, that we go through periodically. It will be a public meeting. There will be a public element, and we invite everyone to participate if they would like to, we'll be posting more information on our website. So, go there if you would like to get more details on this certification review. Cheryl Moon-Sirianni asked about two full days that has been blocked out on our calendars, are they going to be more refined as to a time when we need to be involved? Mr. Valdes said yes, they will be providing more details and we'll share that with you.

The last piece I wanted to share was, I think you're all aware in terms of sharing information that we're really looking at how SPC communicates differently. And I just want to congratulate the Communications Department for thinking outside the box in terms of how we do that. This is the last meeting of the year. So, naturally, we're working on the annual report.

And this year, we took a little bit of a different tack in terms of doing that annual report. And I think Shannon has something to share with all of you. We're only going to share a little bit, but these will be available on our website as well.

## 2020 Annual Report Video: The Countermove

Available on SPC's YouTube Channel

Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission  
2020 Annual Report



Look for that on our website. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

### 13. Other SPC Business – Rich Fitzgerald

Chairman Fitzgerald said we have not made our visits to Harrisburg and Washington that we need to do. Katharine and I went to Harrisburg last week to talk a little bit about the Port Authority. I think it's incumbent upon all of us to get there as a group. They obviously passed the budget last week, so they're going to be out of session for a couple of months. In September, I would like to plan a trip and I'm going to ask Vincent to coordinate with the Commission's schedules. So, if we can do that, there is no more powerful effective way than for us to be there in front of our state leaders, state representatives, and our state senators. So, be thinking about that, and also the coordination with Leslie and the Policy Committee on what projects we want to see at the top of our agenda that goes with the state folks and then obviously, the federal folks, as they work their way through this infrastructure plan.

We don't know exactly what it's going to look like, but my guess is it's going to be fairly robust. Might be the biggest one most of us will see during our terms. I think we'd better be ready with the plans that we want to move forward so that when that funding does come forward, our projects can move very quickly.

Also, as the state is dealing with the funding, the revenue source, the commission that the governor's put forth, and he would like to see the gas tax eliminated and replaced by other funding sources. Again, we need to be involved with our state leaders as they pass some funding as Act 89 concludes next year. So, I think all of those things really are incumbent upon us to be communicating and be planning on what we want to see for this region as we move forward.

We have box lunches in the kitchen so pick one up before you leave. I know nobody votes against adjourning. That's always a good thing.

### 14. Adjourn

We move to adjourn. The affirmative vote to adjourn was unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pat Fabian  
Secretary-Treasurer