



# SPC Transit Operators Committee

## Meeting Minutes: May 6, 2026

### Attendance

#### Members

Mary Jo Morandini (BCTA)	Sheila Gombita (WASH)
Alan Blahovec (WCTA)	Mavis Rainey (OTMA)
Julia Ferri (CI)	Ashley Seman (MMVTA)
Seth Davis (PRT)	John Paul (BTA)
Tosh Chambers (PDP)	Brenda Hill (IndiGO)
Rick Blaker (Greene)	

#### Guests & Transit Staff

Nathan Werner (Butler Co.)	Thomas Swisher (Butler Co.)
Jason Theakston (Washington Co.)	Ann Ogoreuc (Allegheny Co)
Angie DiPadova (ANR)	Brandon Leach (PennDOT)
Kathryn Simpson (PRT)	Julia Cornell (PennDOT)
Samuel Buckley (PRT)	Mark Cassel (Bowman)
Deborah Phillips (PRT)	Amy Mathieson (ACTA)
Ed Typanski (PRT)	Breen Masciotra (Mobilify)
Ian Ramsey (WASH)	Alison Keating (PPT)

#### SPC Staff

Devon White	Russell Singer
Daniel Kukula	Chuck Imbrogno
Ronda Craig	Cate Aaron
Leann Chaney	

#### 1. Introductions

- a. The meeting was called to order by Russell Singer

#### 2. Minutes of April 15, 2026 TOC Meeting

- a. The minutes of the April 2026 meeting were approved

Motion: Sheila Gombita

Second: Ashley Seman

Action: Approved

#### 3. Transit Participant Updates

- a. Sheila Gombita (WASH) mentioned recent work on website accessibility as updated guidelines written in 2024 have now gone into effect. Ashley Seman (MMVTA) echoed the need for work regarding website accessibility as it has been a topic at recent internal meetings. Sheila suggested that web accessibility could be a useful topic for an upcoming TOC meeting discussion, and Devon White pointed out it might be an opportunity for joint procurement of services if it's a need for multiple operators. Seth Davis mentioned that PRT

employee Jeff Devlin may be a good contact for information about web accessibility.

- b. Seth Davis (PRT) mentioned that PRT is finishing it's current round of gathering feedback for the Bus Line Refresh project, and is moving into refinement of the plan based on community input. Further public hearings on the most up to date version of the plan will begin in June, with more information available at [www.buslineredesign.com](http://www.buslineredesign.com)

#### 4. TIP Amendments and Administrative Actions

##### a. WCTA

- i. Fixed-Route Bus Was Replacement (MPMS# 122571): This administrative adjustment reprograms \$1,440,000 of Federal 5307 with State and Local match from FFY25 to FFY26 to align with current grant application schedule. No total TIP value change

Motion: John Paul

Second: Sheila Gombita

Action: Approved

#### 5. Other Business

##### a. Devon White, SPC

- i. 2027 Draft TIP Public Comment Period is open with meetings happening in every county during the coming month. Comments can be offered in person or submitted through SPC's website at [www.spcregion.org/get-involved/](http://www.spcregion.org/get-involved/) and the comment period runs through Friday, June 5
- ii. Long Range Plan Stakeholder Survey is available for feedback on the SPC's update process for the LRP. The survey was sent out to stakeholders through SPC's contact lists and will be open for the remainder of the month

##### b. NFL Draft Debrief discussion

- i. Sheila Gombita reported that Freedom Transit's NFL Draft service on Thursday and Friday served approximately 30 riders each day. Thursday of the event, more riders returned home on the latest runs at 11:30 and 12:00, on Friday most riders came back earlier with only one on the last run home. It was also mentioned that this service was not heavily advertised due to the fear of demand outstripping the available capacity
- ii. Mary Jo Morandini (BCTA) echoed that concern about overburdened capacity but found that most of their usual commuters on the Express 4 route stayed home and freed up extra capacity for the Draft service. With three additional buses serving the Pittsburgh route, ridership was such that bus seats were full but passengers were *not* required to stand while riding at highway speeds on 376, which was something BCTA wished to avoid. Buses from the Ambridge Park n Ride running every hour were full all day. Mary Jo also thanked Darcy Cleaver and Chuck Rompala at PRT for helping to coordinate the many last changes demanded by the NFL
- iii. Seth Davis (PRT) mentioned that although the event area transportation was a success, many local businesses who were not in the immediate area felt a vacuum where perhaps their usual customers were staying home. Vehicle traffic was exceptionally low during the

whole event, in addition to special transit service all the parking rates were initially set very high. PRT did make some changes each day in response to observed demand which were all positive changes

- iv. John Paul (BTA) reported that their special service wasn't overwhelmed but was heavily utilized, especially with the coordination with PRT to transfer passengers from the park and ride. Had very few complaints and a lot of positive feedback about the service
- c. Sheila Gombita, Freedom Transit

Freedom Transit was established in 2001, prior to that Washington County operated MATP and shared-ride contracted through a broker. The City of Washington operated their own fixed-route transit until 2015 when it was also merged with Freedom Transit to manage both fixed-route and shared-ride transit within one entity. Freedom's current operating budget is about \$9.5 million but that is expected to increase \$1m based on recent RFP from contractors.

Freedom Transit operates five weekday routes with two local routes for the City of Washington, two County Line routes that serve the outer regions of Washington County, and a Metro route that connects with Downtown Pittsburgh. The commuter service offered to Pittsburgh runs 10 times a day, on Saturday this route is truncated to stop at South Hills T Station.

From survey results last year, 35% of riders depend on Freedom Transit to reach work, 76% use the service at least two or more days a week, and 60% report they have no alternative transportation option. 78% of riders have used the service for at least one year. Freedom provided 91,718 trips via fixed route transit last year, and 172,250 trips via shared ride services. Ridership remains approximately 20% below pre-COVID levels, however recent numbers show an increase as gas prices rise and large employers in the region enact return-to-office policies.

Current capital projects include the extension of the bus lane at the Transit Center, replacement of two shelters and construction of one new shelter. The shelters were contracted to a previously used contractor, however the new PROWAG requirements caused some issues in communication and back and forth. The larger capital project is the construction of a new bus storage and maintenance facility, property for which was acquired in 2022. Demolition of existing buildings took place in Fall of '24, with construction of the new build beginning in December of '26. Expected completion in December '28

- d. Next meeting: June 10th, 2026, 10:00am, in person at SPC's offices in Pittsburgh's Strip District and with remote attendance options available through Microsoft Teams

## 6. Adjournment

Motion: Sheila Gombita

Second: Seth Davis

Action: Approved