

# Northeastern Pennsylvania Metropolitan Planning Organization

*Transportation Programming for the Counties of: Carbon ✧ Monroe ✧ Pike ✧ Schuylkill*

## January 5, 2022 Policy Board Meeting Summary and Minutes

2:00 p.m.

### Meeting Location: NEPA Alliance Office and Microsoft Teams Videoconference

<u>Attendees:</u>	<u>Organization:</u>	<u>NEPA Staff:</u>	
David Alas	PennDOT Central Office	Alan Baranski	NEPA Alliance
Micah Gursky*	St. Luke's Hospital	Jeff Box	NEPA Alliance
Kristin Mulkerin*	PennDOT Central Office	Kate McMahon	NEPA Alliance
Matt Smoker	FHWA		
Joe Sebelin*	NEPA Board		

\*Committee members who voted at this meeting.

### Summary of Actions Taken by the NEPA MPO Policy Board Committee

During the course of this meeting the NEPA MPO Policy Board Committee voted on the following actions:

Action 1: Mr. Baranski requested a motion to approve the June 16, 2020 NEPA MPO Joint Technical Committee and Policy Board meeting minutes. A motion was made by Mr. Sebelin, seconded by Mr. Gursky and passed unanimously.

Action 2: Mr. Baranski requested a motion to confirm the email ballot approving the NEPA MPO 2022-2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and submit it to PennDOT. A motion was made by Mr. Gursky, seconded by Mr. Sebelin and passed unanimously.

Action 3: Mr. Baranski requested a motion to confirm the email ballot approving the Eastern Pennsylvania Freight Alliance Multi-Regional Freight Plan Partner Agreement. A motion was made by Mr. Sebelin, seconded by Mr. Gursky and passed unanimously.

Action 4: Mr. Baranski requested a motion to select the consultant for the NEPA MPO Open End Consulting Services Agreement. A motion was made by Mr. Sebelin to select Michael Baker International as the consultant. The motion was seconded by Ms. Mulkerin and passed unanimously.

Mr. Baranski called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. Mr. Baranski chaired the meeting since the chairman and vice-chairman were both absent.

### **Meeting Minutes**

#### **1) Business Items**

- a) Approval of Minutes from the NEPA MPO Policy Board June 16, 2020 Meeting  
Mr. Baranski requested a motion to approve the June 16, 2020 NEPA MPO Joint Technical Committee and Policy Board meeting minutes. A motion was made by Mr. Sebelin, seconded by Mr. Gursky and passed unanimously.
- b) Confirmation of the Email Ballot Approving the 2022-2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)  
Mr. Baranski stated that the Technical Committee recommended approval of the 2022-2024 UPWP to the Policy Board at its December 21<sup>st</sup> meeting. An email ballot closed January 4<sup>th</sup> was approved by the Policy Board to adopt the 2022-2024 UPWP and forward it to the NEPA Board of Directors. The Board of Directors approved the UPWP

and accompanying resolution at their meeting today. Mr. Baranski requested a motion to confirm the email ballot approving the NEPA MPO 2022-2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and submit it to PennDOT. A motion was made by Mr. Gursky, seconded by Mr. Sebelin and passed unanimously. Mr. Smoker commended the NEPA staff on the development of the UPWP and the engagement of the PennDOT districts and county planners during the process.

c) Confirmation of the Email Ballot Approving the Eastern Pennsylvania Freight Alliance Multi-Regional Freight Plan Partner Agreement

Mr. Baranski stated that the NEPA MPO is one of five MPOs that are working on a joint freight plan. The other MPOs are Lehigh Valley, Lackawanna-Luzerne, Reading and Lebanon. The freight plan will help address growing freight issues along the interstates from warehouses and distribution centers. The freight group received \$280,000 in supplement planning funds from PennDOT. \$70,000 in local match is required. Lehigh Valley has agreed to act as the lead agency. The Partner Agreement authorizes the transfer of \$13,771.13 in funds from the NEPA MPO to Lehigh Valley for our portion of the required match. The agreement was recommended for approval by the Technical Committee at the December 21<sup>st</sup> meeting. The Policy Board approved the agreement by email ballot and forwarded it to the NEPA Board of Directors for approval action. The NEPA Board approved it at the meeting today.

Mr. Baranski requested a motion to confirm the email ballot approving the Eastern Pennsylvania Freight Alliance Multi-Regional Freight Plan Partner Agreement. A motion was made by Mr. Sebelin, seconded by Mr. Gursky and passed unanimously.

## 2) **Transportation Planning and Programs**

a) NEPA MPO Open End Consulting Services Agreement

Mr. Baranski stated that NEPA issued a Request for Qualifications in the fall to engage services of a consultant for a multi-year contract. The consultant will assist with the update of the Long Range Transportation Plan and possibly the development of an Active Transportation Plan to address bicycle and pedestrian issues. The Technical Committee reviewed the responses and heard presentations from the consultants at the November 16<sup>th</sup> meeting. At the December 21<sup>st</sup> meeting, the Technical Committee recommended selection of Michael Baker International to the Policy Board. Mr. Baranski requested a motion to select the consultant for the NEPA MPO Open End Consulting Services Agreement. A motion was made by Mr. Sebelin to select Michael Baker International as the consultant. The motion was seconded by Ms. Mulkerin and passed unanimously.

b) 2023-2026 TIP Update and Transportation Funding

Mr. Baranski stated that the 2023-2026 TIP development is underway. The State Transportation Commission (STC) started the process last summer with public engagement. The districts have been working over the past few months to develop a draft bridge and highway TIP. Several meetings with the districts and county planners have been held. During the fall, Congress passed the Investing in Infrastructure and Jobs Act (IIJA) which reauthorized federal transportation programs and provided additional transportation funding to Pennsylvania. The additional funding will help keep regional projects on schedule. Additional funding in the IIJA is for new discretionary programs and guidance is being developed. There may be opportunities to receive addition funds. The draft TIPs were due to Central Office by the end of December. Further review with Central Office will occur later this month. Other pieces of the TIP will be put together in early spring. We anticipate adoption by the Technical Committee and Policy Board by June. We did receive additional Spike funding for the Rt. 61 Reconstruction Project.

## 1) **Other Business**

Mr. Baranski stated that NEPA went through a program review in October by PennDOT, FHWA and FTA. All of our plans and processes were reviewed, similar to the certification review that larger MPOs go through. A draft report was issued which includes commendations and recommendations. No corrective actions were identified. The report and a presentation will be provided to the Technical Committee at the January 18<sup>th</sup> meeting.

## 2) **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the NEPA MPO Policy Board Committee meeting adjourned at 2:25 p.m.