

5/26/11 PPTA UPDATE

TRANSPORTATION FUNDING ADVISORY COMMISSION STATUS REPORT

As many of you know, Governor Corbett has appointed a Transportation Funding Advisory Commission to make recommendations on how to best address the state's funding crisis. The Commission consists of three dozen members, three of whom represent transit - Rich Farr, Hugh Mose, and Kevin Johnson (a Board Member from SEPTA). Transportation Secretary Barry Schoch serves as Chairman of the Commission; Toby Fauver and LaVerne Collins of the Bureau of Public Transportation attend the meetings. The complete membership roster can be found at: <ftp://ftp.dot.state.pa.us/public/pdf/TFAC/TFAC%20Contact%20List%20-%20Website.pdf>.

At the first meeting the morning was spent in presentations on the history and current status of transportation funding; the afternoon was one long brainstorming session, where members of the Commission were encouraged to list any and all transportation funding possibilities. Commission staff recorded the recommendations, placing them into one of three areas:

- 1) Finance Options
- 2) Modernization
- 3) Decade of Investment.

Following the meeting the PennDOT staff were tasked to evaluate the proposed ideas.

Recognizing that having only three transit people on the Commission was a pretty narrow representation, following the first Commission meeting the Bureau gathered a group of transit system representatives and key PennDOT staff members in Harrisburg to go over the funding ideas and solicit further input.

The second Commission meeting began with more presentations, including one by Toby Fauver on public transportation, which can be viewed at: <ftp://ftp.dot.state.pa.us/public/pdf/TFAC/Toby%20Fauver%20-%20Transit%20Perspective.pdf>.

Barry Schoch then led the group through a discussion of funding ideas identified at the first meeting, organized by existing sources, new sources, local funding options, longer term options, future options to be evaluated, and modernization/cost savings. The matrix containing those ideas can be found at: <ftp://ftp.dot.state.pa.us/public/pdf/TFAC/Potential%20Revenue%20Enhancement%20Strategies%20-%202011-05-16.pdf>.

Another Commission meeting is scheduled for June 6; a fourth meeting is tentatively set for June 23. The expectation is that the Commission will complete its work and be prepared to make recommendations to the Governor in July.

PPTA will provide updates on the work of the commission and provide more information as things develop. Please remember to reach out to your representatives in the general assembly and keep them informed of your service to the community. It is critical to maintain a positive relationship and to demonstrate the value of your system to their constituents. When the time comes to vote on a comprehensive transportation funding package, they must understand the scope of the services you provide and the difference you make in creating jobs, reducing reliance on fossil fuels, and enhancing the quality of life for all.

6/16/11 PPTA UPDATE **TRANSPORTATION FUNDING ADVISORY COMMISSION STATUS REPORT**

The Governor's Transportation Funding Advisory Commission met on Monday, June 6. As has become the pattern, the morning was spent with presentations, while the afternoon was devoted to discussion. Rich Farr and Hugh Mose, along with SEPTA Board member Kevin Johnson, represented the transit industry. In the audience were Dennis Louwerse (BARTA), Michelle Schultz (SEPTA), and Toby Fauver and LaVerne Collins of the Bureau of Public Transportation.

There were two presentations that may be of particular interest to transit systems: US422 Plus, a tolling proposal to fund road and rail improvements in the Schuylkill corridor, and Traffic21, Carnegie Mellon University's transportation technology research. The US422 proposal seemed to really resonate with the Commission, perhaps because the improvements in the corridor would be paid for directly by the users of the roadway. The technology presentation was impressive, especially with what the folks at CMU are doing to capture information from transit riders via their cell phones. Check out the PowerPoints:

<ftp://ftp.dot.state.pa.us/public/pdf/TFAC/Presentation - US 422 Plus.pdf>

<ftp://ftp.dot.state.pa.us/public/pdf/TFAC/Presentation%20-%20The%20Potential%20of%20Technology.pdf>

After lunch Barry Schoch led the Commission through a long list of "Modernizations," process improvements and/or legislative changes that could either save money, generate new or increased revenues, or improve service to PennDOT's partners. Included were a wide array of actions, things such as streamlining vehicle registration and driver licensing processes, increasing fees and fines, and shifting certain activities from local municipalities to PennDOT. Several Modernization strategies were directed at transit; the most noteworthy was a proposal to encourage consolidation of human service (and fixed route?) transportation by increasing the local match for transit systems that chose to remain independent. Here's the PowerPoint:

<ftp://ftp.dot.state.pa.us/public/pdf/TFAC/Presentation%20-%20Modernization.pdf>

The Commission will meet on Monday, June 27. At that point it is expected that Barry and the PennDOT staff will begin shepherding the process toward the set of recommendations that will ultimately be forwarded to the Governor. One additional meeting is scheduled for July, after which draft recommendations will be assembled, with the final review by the Commission to take place electronically and/or via a conference call.

PPTA will provide updates on the work of the commission and provide more information as things develop. Please remember to reach out to your representatives in the general assembly and keep them informed of your service to the community. It is critical to maintain a positive relationship and to demonstrate the value of your system to their constituents. When the time comes to vote on a comprehensive transportation funding package, they must understand the scope of the services you provide and the difference you make in creating jobs, reducing reliance on fossil fuels, and enhancing the quality of life for all.