

MINUTES
Cambria County Planning Commission

September 17, 2015

The regular monthly meeting of the Cambria County Planning Commission was held on Thursday, September 17, 2015, at 12 noon, at Kosta's Restaurant, Ebensburg, Pennsylvania.

Following a brief Executive Session to discuss personnel matters, the meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair, Mr. Rovansek.

PRESENT

Ronald M. Rovansek
Russell Kiel
James White
Tim Whited
William Trevorrow
Eric Wolf

ABSENT

David L. Belz
Toni Renee Anderson
Lonnie Batdorf

STAFF

Ethan C. Imhoff
Christopher D. Allison
Shanna M. Murphy
Colleen A. Bukowski

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were presented at this meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion by Mr. White, seconded by Mr. Whited, the minutes of the August 20, 2015 CCPC meeting were approved as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The September Financial Statement was read by Mr. Imhoff and reviewed by those present. There being no questions or comments on the report, Mr. Wolf made a motion that the September Treasurer's Report and the bills listed for payment be approved. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kiel and passed unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Imhoff mentioned that he had prepared and submitted a budget request to the County Commissioners. He further explained that the 2016 request was for \$90,000; \$70,000 in general fund revenue and \$20,000 from liquid fuels funds.

STATUS REPORTS

Executive Director

Reporting on the status of the Long Range Transportation Plan update, Mr. Imhoff stated that Commission staff will begin the compilation and analysis of the 136 survey responses received to date. In addition to the information garnered from the surveys, transportation concerns expressed by officials from Geistown and Wilmore Borough will be incorporated into the LRTP update.

Mr. Imhoff reported that he and Chris Allison had recently attended public meetings focused on the Pennsylvania Rail Plan. He noted that the draft plan contains very little planning for improvements from Pittsburgh to Harrisburg. Mr. Imhoff distributed public input sheets and urged those present to submit comments to PennDOT's Bureau of Public Transportation, particularly stressing the importance of a viable rail link to Pittsburgh from our area.

With regard to the West Hills Comprehensive Planning effort, Mr. Imhoff stated that although Southmont Borough has decided not to participate, Westmont Borough and Upper Yoder Township remain committed to the project. He noted that a meeting will be held with Ferndale Borough to finalize their participation in the endeavor.

Noting that he facilitated a follow up meeting with LIFT Johnstown, Mainline Canal Greenway and CCCRA staff, Mr. Imhoff reported that it has been decided that the portion of the 9/11 Memorial Trail that will traverse through Cambria County will follow the Mainline Canal/PA Route 53 corridor. He indicated that the committee will now begin to target specific grant programs to fund a feasibility study.

Transportation Planning

Mr. Allison provided additional information on the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) update. Noting the success of the on-line survey, Mr. Allison stated that the outreach phase will be further enhanced through interviews of key transportation stakeholders. Mr. Allison briefly reviewed the following results of the interviews: the Cambria County Airport Authority is striving to increase ridership and convince the general public that the current carrier is a reliable service provider; the Chamber of Commerce continues to support Route 219 North and South projects and Route 56 East & West improvements, as well as improving the visual appearances of gateway entrances into the City; and the Lehigh Valley short-line railroad currently has no expansion plans. Although Mr. Allison noted that the consultant is conducting the interviews for the trucking industry stakeholders, Mr. Rovanssek suggested that Muchesko Trucking, which operates a large coal hauling fleet within Cambria County, be contacted as well.

Mr. Allison stated that in August he attended a plans display meeting for the Wildwood Bridge replacement project. He explained that the replacement of the current one-lane bridge with a two-lane structure will require a five-mile detour during the construction phase. Mr. Allison noted that the project is scheduled to be undertaken in 2017.

Community Development Planning

Ms. Murphy stated that development of a sign inventory PDF form that will operate on both a computer and a mobile device has been challenging. She explained that in order to be a viable tool to local municipalities, over 700 signs must be encoded into the form. Ms. Murphy further commented that once completed, the form will allow municipalities to develop a signage database. She also noted that PennDOT is urging municipalities across the Commonwealth to install more visible and standardized signage and a comprehensive signage database would be helpful to County municipalities.

Reporting on a workshop she attended in August, Ms. Murphy stated that the Carnegie Mellon Remaking Cities Institute shared interesting ideas to help revitalize the City of Johnstown. She indicated that there were also small group discussions focusing on the challenges facing the City, as well as ways to improve the visual aesthetics of the City and promote the benefits of small businesses.

Ms. Murphy reported that the Floodplain Management section of the CCPC website has been updated to include information about the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014 and the new National Flood Insurance Program Insurance Manual.

Various application and project reviews completed by the staff during the past month were reviewed by those present.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Imhoff apprised the members that BarnesSaly & Company, LLP agreed to match the fee schedule submitted by Baker Tilly and was therefore engaged to complete the 2015, 2016, and 2017 audits. He noted that although no date has been set as to when the audit will commence, he anticipates it to begin soon.

NEW BUSINESS

As a result of discussions held during an Executive Session prior to this meeting, Mr. Kiel made a motion to replace the provision of life and disability insurance to full-time employees with a \$1,000 annual cash stipend so that employees may purchase applicable individual insurance. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wolf and passed unanimously.

Mr. Imhoff reminded those present that the date of the October meeting has been changed from the 15th to the 22nd. He explained that the PennDOT Planning Partners Conference is scheduled for October 15.

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Mr. Whited, seconded by Mr. Wolf. Motion carried.