

MEETING MINUTES
Morris County Board of Transportation Meeting
 Tuesday, April 23, 2019
 30 Schuyler Place, 2nd Floor Conference Room
 Morristown, New Jersey

In Attendance:

Board Members	Additional Attendees	Staff
Melverne E. Cooke	Jack Holland, FRAC	Gerald Rohsler
Freeholder Kathryn A. DeFillippo	Brian Kincaid, FRAC	John Hayes
Ilene Dorf Manahan	Jakub Rowinski, NJTPA	Dede Murray
Frank T. Reilly, Vice Chairperson	Tom Hand, Randolph Traffic Advisory Committee	Benjamin Peacock
Leonard Resto (Alternate #1)		
Manuela Schuster, Secretary		
Jigar Shah		

I. Call to Order: Vice Chairperson Frank T. Reilly called the meeting to order at 2:04 pm.

II. Roll Call: John Hayes read the roll call. Seven voting members were present during roll call.

III. Welcome and Introductions: Vice Chairperson Frank T. Reilly welcomed all in attendance and attendees introduced themselves.

IV. Approval of Minutes from January 22, 2019 Meeting: Approval of the minutes was moved by Len Resto, seconded by Melverne E. Cooke, and unanimously approved.

V. Reports:

A. Pavement Projects: Gerald Rohsler explained that Christopher Vitz, County Engineer, had a conflicting meeting and was unable to attend this Board of Transportation meeting to discuss the County's paving projects and its Capital Budget. Mr. Rohsler reported that the bonding for capital projects is to be approved at the next Freeholder Meeting. Freeholder Kathryn A. DeFillippo stated that road projects are a top priority for the County, and quickly advancing bonding will enable the County to hire contractors at good prices and to complete paving earlier in the year.

B. Freight Activities:

Pilot Freight Concept Development Program - Jakub Rowinski from the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) updated the Board on NJTPA's Pilot Freight Concept Development Program. One of the two locations that the Program is studying is the Phillipsburg Bridge in Warren County; height restrictions prevent industry-standard Plate F (17' high) railcars from passing under the bridge on the Washington Secondary. Currently only Plate C (15' 6" high) railcars can pass beneath the bridge; however, the supply of Plate C railcars is reducing as the freight industry has shifted to Plate F which provide better economies of scale for shipping costs. The Dover and Rockaway River Railroad (DRRV), a subsidiary of the Chesapeake and Delaware, LLC, was formed to serve customers along the three Morris County-owned rail lines. The DRRV began serving Morris County in July 2017. Mr. Rowinski reported that the Dover and Delaware River Railroad, also a subsidiary of the Chesapeake and Delaware, LLC, has recently assumed operations of the Norfolk Southern Washington Secondary line. At the NJTPA's Freight Initiatives Committee Meeting on April 15, the new railroad reported that they will address the height clearance by replacing the wood ties with steel ties to lower the rail under the Phillipsburg Bridge by July 4, thereby allowing Plate F railcars to reach the County-owned rail lines.

Mr. Rowinski reported that as a result of this announcement, the NJTPA will shift the Freight Concept Development Program from Phillipsburg to study a Drain Bridge west of Hackettstown that has a weight restriction limiting railcars to 263K lbs. The location was identified in NJTPA's Morris/Warren County Rail Corridor Study, completed in 2013. The current standard weight limitation in the U.S. is 286k lbs. per loaded railcar. The Drain Bridge should be the last major constraint preventing 286k lbs. railcars from entering Morris County from the west and reaching the County-owned rail lines; there are other bridges with weight restrictions but it should be acceptable for 286k lbs. railcars to traverse them at low speeds.

Brian Kincaid asked how many truck loads would fit in a single Plate F railcar. Jack Holland responded that a Plate F railcar can hold approximately three to four truckloads, and asked how long until the project will be complete. Mr. Rohsler stated that Plate F should be able to access the County-owned rail lines from the west in a few months, while 286k railcars access will take a few years until resolved; the Drain Bridge is along NJ Transit's rail, therefore the project has to follow a more comprehensive process. Vice Chairperson Reilly discussed the benefits of enabling 286k lbs. railcars to access Morris County, and Mr. Rohsler added that existing and potential freight customers are asking for shipping by Plate F railcars.

Mr. Resto asked about NJ Transit's involvement in NJTPA's Program. Mr. Rowinski responded that NJ Transit has been great to work with and supportive of the Program's efforts and the needs of freight transportation. Positive Train Control (PTC) will be an issue to address with NJ Transit on the Dover & Rockaway Railroad Realignment, the other project being examined as part of this Program. The Realignment study is progressing well; several alternatives are under development with the end goal of producing a preliminary preferred

alternative. Freeholder DeFillippo asked about completion timing of the Pilot Freight Concept Development Program. Mr. Rowinski stated that the Program will be completed in June 2020 and is intended to support grant application submissions to the State Freight Rail Assistance Plan within the next few years.

Mr. Kincaid asked if there are any customers east of Dover on the County-owned rail lines. Mr. Rohsler said there is a scrap metal customer in Dover. Mr. Rowinski responded that there are three to four customers around Green Pond Road in Rockaway Township; Plate F and 286k railcar issues are the first questions asked by potential customers.

County Railroad Projects - Benjamin Peacock reported on several railroad projects. The construction phase of the US 46 Railroad Crossing Improvement Project along the High Bridge Branch in Roxbury Township was completed on April 7; the project will be closed out within the next few weeks. The Preconstruction Meeting for the Railroad Bridge 14D2608 along the Dover & Rockaway Railroad in Wharton was held in January, and construction is anticipated to start on April 29 or May 6, weather permitting. Tree clipping and brush clearing along the Dover & Rockaway Railroad and Chester Branch started on April 22 and should be completed within two weeks. The Kenvil Team Track Improvement Project continues to progress; utility/electrical poles were installed in January, new railroad ties and ballast for a 16-foot section were installed on April 11 in preparation for the crossing reconstruction, and preparations are underway for paving the site. The County anticipates advertising Request for Proposals for the High Bridge Branch Resurfacing and the Chester Branch Runaround Track projects in May. The Main St & North Road Railroad Crossings Improvement project in Mount Olive Township is currently being designed.

- C. NYS&W Update:** The NYS&W Bicycle and Pedestrian Path will be a 4.8-mile shared-use facility starting at River Drive in Pequannock and ending at Mountain View Boulevard, a short distance from the Mountain View Train Station in Wayne. Mr. Rohsler reported that the County reviewed the 90% complete final design plans and submitted comments back to the design consultant for edits on a few outstanding issues, and received back the 99% complete final design plans. The County is surveying encroachments along the right-of-way that the County will purchase, and is coordinating with the NYS&W to have the railroad provide easements to the encroaching properties prior to the County's purchase. Construction is anticipated to start in the spring of 2020.

VI. Old Business: None.

VII. New Business:

Chairperson Reilly presented a draft resolution regarding the State's gasoline tax. Freeholder DeFillippo noted that some at the State level will be looking at the fact that electric cars are not contributing to the gas tax. Mr. Rohsler stated that Oregon is examining charging automobiles a fee based on Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT).

Manuela Schuster handed out a flyer announcing the 103rd Annual Membership Meeting of the Employers Association of New Jersey to be held on May 7 in West Orange that will cover family leave law and other topics related to employees.

VIII. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 2:42 p.m.

The Next Regular Meeting: Tuesday, July 16, 2019 at 2:00 pm at 30 Schuyler Place, 2nd floor conference room, Morristown, NJ.

Minutes prepared by John Hayes, Division of Engineering & Transportation