

MEETING MINUTES
Morris County Board of Transportation Meeting
 Tuesday, January 21, 2020
 30 Schuyler Place, 2nd Floor Conference Room
 Morristown, New Jersey

In Attendance:

Board Members	Additional Attendees	Staff
Melverne E. Cooke	Scott Harris VP, DRRV	Christopher Vitz
Ilene Dorf Manahan	Christine Hellyer, Morris County Human Services	Gerald Rohsler
Len Resto (Alternate 1)		John Hayes
Jigar Shah	Mike Stanzilis, Morris County Chamber of Commerce	Dede Murray
Joe Wells, Chairperson		
John Wetzel		

I. Call to Order: Chairperson Joe Wells called the meeting to order at 2:01 pm.

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

III. Welcome and Introductions: Chairperson Wells welcomed all in attendance.

IV. Approval of Minutes from October 22, 2019 Meeting: Approval of the minutes was moved by Ilene Dorf Manahan, seconded by Melverne E. Cooke, and unanimously approved.

V. Report from Election Committee Chairperson & Election of Officers: Election Committee Chairperson Cooke announced the following nominees for the 2020 Officers of the Board of Transportation: Joe Wells for Chairperson, Frank T. Reilly for Vice Chairperson, and Manuela Schuster for Secretary. Chairperson Wells asked if any other Board members wanted to volunteer to serve as an Officer. No other members asked to be considered for an Officer position. Election of the Officers was moved by Ms. Manahan, seconded by Len Resto, and unanimously adopted.

VI. Reports:

A. Road & Bridge Projects: Christopher Vitz, County Engineer, reported that the Morris County Board of Chosen Freeholders introduced the 2020 Capital Budget. In 2020, the County plans on paving 32 miles of road, replace/rehabilitate 12 bridges, and design a new court house. The County can start advertising projected for bids in February. The full budget will be introduced in March.

B. NYS&W Updates: 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 final design was received and is under review. The County continues to coordinate with the New York, Susquehanna, and Western Railway (NYS&W) to have the railroad provide easements to the encroaching properties prior to the County's purchase. There is one easement remaining to be set up. The riparian mitigation credits were purchased in December. Mitigation is required to offset the project's impact on wetlands, including wetlands along the Pompton River and Packanack Brook. Since new wetlands could not be created on site, mitigation credits were purchased to permanently preserve wetlands offsite. Closing is anticipated to occur in February.

Ms. Cooke asked when construction is expected to start. Mr. Vitz said it should start in the spring. Chairperson Wells asked about the status of the last easement. Mr. Rohsler replied that the required title work for this property took some time since the property owner is illegally crossing the rail property.

C. Freight Activities: Mr. Rohsler reported on the following County railroad projects:

1. The construction of the Chester Branch Runaround Track was completed on November 21, 2019 and is in use by the County's railroad operator, the Dover and Delaware River Railroad (DRRV).
2. The Kenvil Team Track Improvement Project was completed in early December 2019.
3. The High Bridge Branch Resurfacing Project will resume after the winter. Except for some tie pickup and putting the crossing signals back into service, work on the project is on hold until the spring. Replacement of ties and certain sections of rail are completed. Repairs to a bridge deck and removal of trees are finished.

Scott Harris from the DRRV stated that the High Bridge project is progressing ahead of schedule. John Wetzel asked if the project has increased the weight capacity of the rail. Mr. Harris responded that the weight limitations are on NJ Transit's lines.

4. The contract was awarded for repairing two rubber seals at the NJ 10 crossing along the Chester Branch. The County has begun working on coordinating construction with Roxbury Police and NJDOT. It should take two days to complete the repairs.
5. An RFQ was issued for design services to repair/replace a culvert that collapsed along the Chester Branch on January 15. The culvert is located near the intersection of Berkshire Valley Road and W Dewey Ave. The quotes are due early February.

6. The final plans for the Main & North Rd Crossing Improvement were received from the contractor on December 12. The plans were forwarded to NJDOT for comment and approval. The project is anticipated to be advertised early in the year so construction could start in the spring.
7. The County submitted an application to the Freight Rail Assistance Grant Program at the end of October. The application is for funding for the design and construction of a runaround track along the Dover & Rockaway Railroad. A meeting was held with NJDOT at the site of this potential project on November 15. Meeting attendees also visited the recently constructed runaround track along the Chester Branch to give an example of this type of this project.

VII. Old Business:

- A. Combination of Board of Transportation, Freight Railroad Advisory Committee, and Airport Advisory Committee:** Mr. Rohsler updated attendees on the potential of the Board of Transportation absorbing some members of the Freight Rail Advisory Committee (FRAC) and the Airport Advisory Committee (AAC). FRAC member attendance has been low and it has been rare for an official FRAC meeting to be held due to lack of quorums. While the AAC has not met in years. The Freeholders would appoint a few members from the FRAC and AAC to the Board of Transportation, and would dissolve the two committees.

Chairperson Wells called for a vote of support on the Board/Committee merger. Board of Transportation support for the merger was moved by Jigar Shah, seconded by Mr. Wetzel, and unanimously approved.

VIII. New Business:

2020 Board of Transportation Meeting Dates – Chairperson Wells introduced the proposed 2020 meeting dates for the Board of Transportation and requested that the April meeting date be moved from April 21 to April 14. The Board approved the following meeting dates for 2020:

- April 14, 2020
- July 21, 2020
- October 20, 2020

IX. Public Comments:

Christine Hellyer, Morris County Department of Human Services, introduced herself. Ms. Hellyer oversees the Morris Area Paratransit System (MAPS) and she summarized MAPS ridership statistics for December 2019. She reported that the Department has procured new routing software, Ecolane. The software was launched and tablets have been installed on all vehicles. The software provides better routing than the previous software MAPS used. Its capabilities have enabled shorter advanced trip requests. MAPS will begin providing trips to grocery stores, possibly in March.

Mr. Resto asked how NJ Transit responded to offering grocery trips. Ms. Hellyer responded that the NJ Transit grants require paratransit operators to provide nutritional and recreational based trips for their clients. Ms. Manahan asked if MAPS was getting any more vehicles to provide the trips. Mr. Wetzel asked about utilization rates by town. Ms. Cooke asked how many municipalities have dial-a-rides. Ms. Hellyer indicated that they have 23 vehicles operating Monday through Friday, they can run a report for utilization rates, and many of the towns have their own dial-a-rides and they have been providing nutritional and shopping based trips. The new software has helped better manage MAPS' vehicle utilization and reservations. MAPS is better able to use the full capacity of each vehicle with multiple clients per vehicle. The software enables more efficient trip scheduling and improved ability to tell clients what time slots are available for reservations. With MAPS providing nutritional and recreational based trips, demand may increase. Ms. Cooke asked if medical based trips get priority. Ms. Hellyer replied that reservations are handled as they are received. Ms. Cooke asked if this could jeopardize the funding. Ms. Hellyer reported that the grants they receive do not allow for prioritization.

Mr. Resto reported that Chatham Borough recently started a senior citizen advisory committee to look at various issues affecting seniors, including transportation, and he would like to invite Ms. Hellyer to attend.

Mike Stanzilis from the Morris County Chamber of Commerce introduced himself to the Board, and was welcomed and thanked for attending.

IX. The Next Regular Meeting: Tuesday, April 14, 2020 at 2:00 pm at 30 Schuyler Place, 2nd floor conference room, Morristown, NJ.

X. Adjournment: Adjournment of the meeting was moved by Mr. Resto, seconded by Ms. Cooke, and unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 2:36 p.m.

Minutes prepared by John Hayes, Division of Engineering & Transportation