

MINUTES  
Cambria County Planning Commission  
January 16, 2025

The regular monthly meeting of the Cambria County Planning Commission was held on Thursday, January 16, 2025, at 10 a.m., at the Young People's Community Center, Ebensburg, Pennsylvania.

Chairwoman, Melissa Komar, called the meeting to order.

PRESENT

Melissa Komar  
Charles Koren  
Danea Koss  
Paul Kundrod  
Scott Eberhart  
Debra Orner  
Diane Waksmunski  
Shawn Veneskey

ABSENT

Ron Rovansek

STAFF

Mark Lazzari  
Colleen Bukowski  
Shanna Sosko  
Jacob Zerby

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was offered at this meeting.

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Mr. Eberhart, seconded by Mr. Kundrod, the December 19, 2024 meeting minutes were approved. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

The January Treasurer's Report was read by the Executive Director and reviewed by those present. Mr. Lazzari reported the January 1, 2025 balances for the Commission's regular checking account as \$168,453.17 and the Money Market Account as \$25,509.85. Noting that the report was provided to the members prior to the meeting, Mr. Lazzari entertained comments/questions from those present. There being none, the January Treasurer's Report, including expenses listed for payment, was unanimously approved on a motion by Dr. Koren, seconded by Mr. Kundrod.

Reorganization/Election of Officers

After verbal approval from each of the current officers as to their willingness to continue serving in their current positions, Mr. Kundrod made a motion that the current slate of officers be retained for 2025. The motion was seconded by Ms. Waksmunski passed unanimously.

The 2025 CCPC slate of officers is as follows:

Chair - Melissa Komar  
Vice-chair - Charles Koren  
Secretary - Diane Waksmunski  
Treasurer - Danea Koss

BarnesSaly Proposal for Auditing Services

Mr. Lazzari stated that the 2023-2024 CCPC audit has been initiated by BarnesSaly. Noting that the proposal submitted by BarnesSaly for continued audit services to the CCPC for the years ending June 30, 2024; June 30, 2025, and June 30, 2026 had been provided to each member prior to this meeting, the Executive Director stated that the estimated fees for the auditing services described in the proposal are as follows: 2023-2024 - \$5,800; 2024-2025 - \$6,300; and 2025-2026 - \$6,800. Dr. Koren requested that the auditing firm be contacted to clarify the following statement contained in the proposal: "Because the determination of waste and abuse is subjective, *Government Auditing Standards* do not expect auditors to perform specific procedures to detect waste or abuse in financial audits nor do they expect auditors to provide reasonable assurance of detecting waste or abuse." A brief discussion concerning the bonds that are currently in place (Executive Director and Treasurer), Commission member liability for oversight of internal control and employee integrity with regard to financial transactions, and auditor responsibilities was held. Mr. Lazzari stated that he will contact a representative of BarnesSaly to gain a better understanding of the statement regarding waste or abuse. There being no further discussion on this issue, Mr. Veneskey made a motion to accept the 3-year proposal for auditing services as submitted by BarnesSaly. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kundrod and passed unanimously.

West Hills Regional Comprehensive Plan

Mr. Lazzari stated that the Commission received contract documents from the PA Department of Community and Economic Development regarding funding of the West Hills Regional Comprehensive Plan in the amount of \$37,500 for approval and execution by the CCPC. Dr. Koren made a motion that Mark Lazzari, CCPC Executive Director, be authorized to sign and execute all documents relevant to the funding of the West Hills Regional Planning Commission on behalf of the Cambria County Planning Commission. The motion was seconded by Ms. Waksmunski and passed unanimously.

STATUS REPORTS

Executive Director

Mr. Lazzari stated that with the execution of PA DCED contract documents, staff will discuss the required local funding match with the five municipalities involved in the West Hills Regional Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Lazzari reported that in addition to participation in monthly meetings with County Conservation District staff regarding update of the Southern Alleghenies Chesapeake Bay County Action Plan, staff from both departments have discussed opportunities to support the District's Dirt and Gravel Road Program. Further noting continued CCPC collaboration with other agencies,

the Executive Director stated that he has spoken with a local PA DEP representative regarding possible CCPC involvement with the EPA Brownfield Inventory Program. Ms. Komar noted that PA DEP staff has been very helpful in assisting the City of Johnstown in securing funding for environment clean-up activities on brownfield sites in the City.

Regarding the Johnstown Housing Authority Neighborhood Choice project, Mr. Lazzari stated that Commission staff recently participated in a field tour with HUD, Johnstown Housing Authority, City of Johnstown and consultant representatives and to discuss data collection and other aspects of the neighborhood plan. Ms. Komar commented on the productive field tour and commended CCPC staff for their efforts in this collaborative effort with the Johnstown Housing Authority.

#### Transportation Planner

Updating the members on various ongoing projects associated with the Unified Planning Work Program, Mr. Zerby stated that project applications for inclusion on the TIP have been reviewed and prioritized based on metrics such as average daily traffic, risk assessment scores, redundancy, projected project cost, and community impact. He explained that after final discussions with State and Federal partners, the TIP will be presented to the Metropolitan Planning Organization for approval. Mr. Zerby also indicated that he finalized the 2024 Cambria County Transit Financial Capacity Report during the past month.

Mr. Zerby noted that, as requested by Commissioner Hunt, he investigated the possibility of partnering funding through the State Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) with the Conservation District's Gravel Roads Program. He stated that although roads identified under this program cannot be included on the TIP, the County's Liquid Fuels Program can be paired with the Gravel Roads Program as a possible funding mechanism for roadway improvements.

The Transportation Planner stated that the 2025-2027 draft Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) has been submitted to PennDOT, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for final review and comment. Noting that FHWA comments have been addressed in the draft, Mr. Zerby commented that adoption of the 2025-2027 UPWP is expected at the January MPO meeting.

Mr. Zerby provided information on the National Electric Vehicles Infrastructure (NEVI) program. The NEVI program is a 5-year \$5 billion investment into Electric Vehicle (EV) infrastructure and as part of this program Pennsylvania was allocated \$171,514,120. He explained that Phase 1 of this investment was focused on the installation of EV charging stations along alternative fuels corridors, primarily interstates and the turnpike. Cambria County was not included in Phase 1. Phase 2 is the installation of EV charging stations along connectors such as 22 and 219 and Phase 3 is the installation of Community Charging stations. As part of Phase 3, PennDOT has tasked the Cambria County Planning Commission to conduct public outreach related to determining potential locations to install EV charging stations. Cambria County is estimated to receive between \$500,000 - \$800,000 for Phase 3 activities. Mr. Zerby indicated that he will keep Commission members apprised as this initiative progresses.

In response to an inquiry from Mr. Kundrod regarding the Commission's involvement with the Cambria County John Murtha Airport, Mr. Zerby stated that although the Airport Authority is represented on the Metropolitan Planning Organization's Technical/Coordinating Committee, the CCPC has no direct involvement in airport operations or funding initiatives. He explained that a separate funding mechanism is in place at both the state and federal level for aviation activities and airport improvements.

Community Development Planner

Referring to Mr. Lazzari's update on the West Hills Regional Comprehensive Plan, Ms. Sosko stated that the local share needed for the grant may be considerably higher if advertisement and acceptance of a new RFP is necessary for plan preparation. She explained that Commission staff has begun investigating additional funding sources to cover the local share which may exceed the financial capabilities of the five municipalities involved in the plan. Ms. Sosko stated that she and Mr. Lazzari met with Community Foundation for the Alleghenies (CFA) representatives to discuss funding through the Foundation's Community Initiative Program and other possible private/public partnership opportunities. The Community Development Planner indicated that Commission staff will prepare a funding application to be submitted to CFA in the next funding cycle.

Ms. Sosko reported that she continues to participate in monthly meetings designed to foster communication and coordination activities for development of the West Hills Regional Fire Commission. She noted that establishment of the Commission is anticipated by the Fall of this year.

Commenting on the JHA Neighborhood Choice initiative, Ms. Sosko commented that virtual team calls and the field tour conducted earlier this month have been very productive, with Commission staff assisting in the collection of local planning documents and GIS data as requested by the consultant. Dr. Koren questioned whether a change in HUD initiatives is anticipated with the recent administration change at the federal level. Mr. Lazzari stated that the planning funds have been Congressionally approved; however, the certainty of implementation funds is never a guarantee.

NEW BUSINESS

Noting that most of the items listed under "New Business" had already been discussed during staff status reports, Mr. Lazzari stated that CCPC staff has been requested to participate in Cambria County's Smart Drone Program. Commission staff explained that the unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) consortium, which includes representatives from the County's Emergency Management Agency, GIS Department, Planning Commission, and the Conservation District, is discussing the capabilities of drone usage and how this relates to various County departments, as well as opportunities for staff training and licensing. A discussion ensued regarding this County initiative and the increased usage and benefits of drone technology.

With no additional business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Ms. Waksmunski, seconded by Dr. Koren. Motion passed unanimously.