**Turtle Creek Valley COG**

**Director’s Report**

TCVCOG Board Meeting

October 28, 2021

**Upcoming Meetings**11/16: Police Chief Meeting, 1:30pm  
11/17: Manager’s Meeting, 2:00pm  
TBD: November/December TCVCOG Board Meeting  
12/16: Code Enforcement Officer Meeting, TBD

**Election of TCVCOG Officers**The positions of Vice Chair and Treasurer are up this year. Please contact a member of the nominating committee if you would like to be considered for one of these positions.

**Annual Dinner – Save the Date**

Our Annual Dinner event is slated for February 25, 2022 at Edgewood Country Club. Please let me know if you have any ideas for a guest speaker.

**Application for 501(c)(3)**

Under Review.

**Vactor**The Vactor truck will be winterized and shut down for the season once the snow starts to fly, and temps remain consistently cold. Therefore the following Opt-in Towns need to schedule ASAP in order to use their remaining days:

Turtle Creek: 3 days

Swissvale: 1 day

North Braddock: 5 days

Braddock: 1 day

Elizabeth Municipal Authority: 1 day

**Police Testing**

The TCVCOG will conduct a joint police test on Tuesday, November 9th. Applications are due in our office by 1pm on 10/29.

**CodeNforce**We continue to have regular ongoing weekly meetings as the development of this software progresses. As you consider your budgets for 2022, please remember that we will be launching next summer!

**Other**

TCVCOG has partnered with SRCOG on a successful grant application to the Allegheny County Health Department’s Air Quality Ambassador program. We will be developing content for community outreach (fliers, social media, website, etc.) that you will have use. The purpose of this program is to increase participation in Allegheny Alerts, which notifies participants with a variety of different information in the format of choice. Funded applicants met virtually on 10/18 as the County explained the program and anticipated outcomes. They also educated us on air quality, and why these alerts matter – especially in places that historically have poorer air quality. Through the COGs developing content, we hope to standardize messaging, and make it easier for our towns to communicate with constituents.

On September 17th Public Source released an article about US Steel (<https://www.publicsource.org/us-steel-plant-search-steel-industry-pittsburgh-mon-valley/>). In summary, the article discusses US Steel’s desire to build a $3b “green” plant.

*“The new plant will use electric arc furnaces, a different kind of technology than what is used at its plants in the Mon Valley. That method can create steel products at a lower cost and with fewer greenhouse gas emissions. In a statement the company said its decision on a location would depend on a number of factors but singled out “state and local support.”*

*PublicSource asked a U.S. Steel representative whether the Pittsburgh region — its longtime home — would get any special priority. The company said it would make its decision based on factors like “state and local support, swift permitting, energy availability and cost, and logistics infrastructure.”*

**Examples of Meetings attended:**

9/30; 10/21; 10/28 – Strategic Network Leadership Training hosted by Connect

10/01/2021- Lead Safe Allegheny Coalition– Sarah Goodwin with the National Center for Healthy Housing gave a presentation on strategies for Lead Prevention Funding. NCHH supports proactive inspections and adequate funding for effective Code Enforcement programs.

10/5/2021 – Diversity, Equity & Inclusion hosted by Local Government Academy (LGA)

10/06/2021 Valentina Lachimia -Wall Borough to discuss Wall Borough joining the Code Enforcement Collaborative.

10/06/2021 Krista Koller and Alex Graziani w/ Churchill Borough – To discuss our Code Enforcement services, Sewage collections and talked about the possibility and benefits of a shared finance director

10/13 – EIT Tax Collection Committee meeting hosted by DCED

10/15 – Legislative Breakfast hosted by Monroeville Area Chamber of Commerce

10/18/2021 Allegheny County Health Department -Air Quality Ambassador training with Steel Rivers Cog: Received an introductory description of the county’s Air Quality Ambassador program. Details were given on types of pollutants, air quality index, and effects on public health. The group learned where there are air quality monitors through the county and how selected business are advised to slow their emissions on Air Quality Advisory days. Through Allegheny alerts the public may subscribe to be alerted of days that have higher than normal air pollutants. ACHD would also like to increase the number of participants in their health assessment survey. More information will be sent in the coming weeks to pass along to the towns to distribute to the public.

10/21/2021 Forbes Fund MAG discussion – An Lewis Steel Rivers COG, Emma Yourd with Forbes Fund, Alan Sisco, Ed Nusser : Discussed the preapplication and grant amounts for the 5 organizations requesting funding, Ann went over the reasons and benefits of keeping the grant at the full amount requested. The full grant application can now be submitted, and is due Nov. 4th. Steel Rivers COG will be submitting the full grant. Funding decisions will be made in December.

(Ongoing CodeNforce meetings )Plus 10/25/2021 – CodeNforce meet with Joel Garceau Steel Rivers COG’s new employee – Gave an introduction into the system and our code enforcement process / workflow, will be meeting again with Eric work on some specific items needed.

**Managers Meeting: October 13, 2021**

In Attendance: Chris Blackwell, Penn Hills; Greg Bachy, Swissvale; Rebecca Bradley, Wilkins; Dave Soboslay, Plum; Connie Rosenbayger, East McKeesport; Alex Graziani, Churchill; Seth Abrams, East Pittsburgh; Natalie Merola, TCVCOG; Molly Valentine, TCVCOG; Amanda Settelmaier, TCVCOG

Cassa Collinge from the Dept. of Economic Development presented the group with information pertaining to the Home Improvement Loan Program (HILP). Loans are made available through the Redevelopment Authority of Allegheny County (RAAC).

##### **Emergency/Priority Improvement Loans**

* Financing for the repair of code violations or emergency conditions that present health and safety hazards.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Interest Rate | 0% |
| Minimum Loan Amount | $1,000 |
| Maximum Loan Amount | $10,000 |
| Processing Fee | $0 |
| Loan Term | 12 months to 240 months |
| Collateral | Mortgage-secured |

**General Improvement Loans**

* For the rehabilitation and improvement of single-family residential properties.
* Borrowers must use a portion of the loan to correct code violations, if any, and to undertake lead-hazard remediation activities, if applicable. (See  [HUD's Lead-Safe Housing Rule](https://www.alleghenycounty.us/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=2147487604" \o "HUD Lead-Safe Housing Rule).)
* Remaining loan funds may be used for energy-related improvements and general property improvements.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Interest Rate | 1% |
| Minimum Loan Amount | $3,000 |
| Maximum Loan Amount | $23,000 |
| Processing Fee | $375.00 (may be financed as part of the loan) |
| Loan Term | 12 months to 240 months |
| Collateral | Mortgage-secured |

**Grants**

Grants may be available and are determined on a case-by-case basis for limited code repairs, lead hazard control/reduction work, accessibility improvements and public sidewalk repairs.  Grants are only available as funding is available and are subject to change.   Grants are only available in connection to receiving a loan.

Examples of eligible work include but are not limited to:

* Electrical and plumbing
* New or remodeled kitchens and fixtures
* Flooring
* Retaining walls
* General remodeling
* Roofing
* Lead-hazard reduction
* Siding
* New or remodeled bathrooms and fixtures
* Heating and cooling systems
* Structural repairs
* Windows and/or doors
* Water or sewage system connections
* Water, sewer and/or gas line repairs

Cassa indicated that some of the program funding limits can be raised for good projects. The program has room to grow in that they can double the number of funded loans for qualifying applicants.

Chris Blackwell discussed Penn Hill’s loan program, and it’s benefits. They are able to fund this program due to their direct allocation of CDBG dollars through HUD, and the program has been a valuable tool for residents.

**Police Chief Meeting:  October 19, 2021 at 1:30pm - Monroeville Council Chambers**

In Attendance: Dennis Marsili, Director IUP Criminal Justice Training Center, Chief Jim Matrazzo, North Versailles, Chief Ellis Watson, Swissvale; Chief Lanny Conley Plum; Chief Russ Stroschein, East McKeesport; Chief John McCaul, Turtle Creek; Chief Howard Burton, Penn Hills, Natalie & Amanda

Dennis Marsili discussed In-Service Training Programs for officers, Preservice student training, and Instructor Development at the IUP Criminal Justice Training Center. The training center has been operating for 45 years, with a now more proactive, progressive training and they also have multiple locations. The program is a CALEA Accredited Training Academy with 150 standards that sets the program apart from others as well as added diversity and sociology training. Dennis discussed sponsored cadet training with MPOETC offering reimbursement of 75% the student’s tuition and 40 % of the hired salary. Some of the courses discussed were The Perceptual Driving Update this a 16 hour refresher course & may lower municipal insurance premiums $150 with group rates available. The ICAT, Integrating Communications, Assessment, and Tactics course is an In-Service course for Police officers and Emergency Communications Dispatchers. The ICAT training addresses the need for tactics to limit controversial uses of force during a critical incident involving mental illness or erratic behavior. This class can provide first responding officers with tools, skills and options to safely defuse a wide range of critical incidents to reduce officer caused jeopardy. The fee for this course is $40 for 12 hours and it can be possibly condensed into 10 hours. Dennis offered to push hiring ads out to all graduates and there are additional course description pamphlets available at the COG Office.

Chief Burton discussed TACS changes, Dennis does have a contact at the department that may be able to assist with further questions if the group has any. The group also discussed physical agility testing standards and the possibility of other sites. Amanda reminded the group to send in their salary survey that was requested by Pitcairn, we can also check with the managers for those figures. The next Police Chief meeting is Nov. 16th 1:30. (Notes by Natalie Merola)

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Respectfully submitted,

Amanda Settelmaier