

Turtle Creek Valley COG Director's Report

TCVCOG Board Meeting
January 2025

Upcoming Meetings

Feb 6: WPJWA Working Group, 1:00pm
Manager's Meeting, 2:00pm

Feb 28: TCVCOG Annual Dinner, 5:30pm

Reconnecting Communities Federal Planning Grant (RCP)

We've received official notification that this project is being awarded. Please see the attached Press Release.

PRT Busline Redesign

I attended the PRT virtual educational session last night focused on route redesigns in the upper Mon Valley. There are lots of proposed route changes in the first iteration of their plan. They said that they know the plan isn't perfect – and they need input from communities and riders to make the plan better. Input is being accepted until February 15th. Then, the revised plan will be presented this Spring. My understanding is that there will be impacts to Braddock, Chalfant, East McKeesport, North Versailles, Penn Hills, Turtle Creek and Wilmerding. In addition, routes that impact Forbes Regional Hospital and Monroeville Mall were discussed last night. Go to buslineredesign.com for more information and to give input.

Code Enforcement/CodeNforce

DCED has awarded a \$50,000 grant to build additional functionality into CNF.

PA Tax Exempt Appeal

No update yet.

Our liquor store purchase for ALOM sparked an inquiry of our tax status by a State Auditor. The auditor told me that we have to apply for tax exempt status with the PA Dept. of Revenue, which I did. The Dept. of Revenue declined our request, so Dayne Dice and I appeared at a virtual hearing with the Dept. of Revenue to appeal their decision. Essentially, we argued that COGs are quasi-governmental and therefore tax exempt and I presented a power point that described our work. We're hoping that the original decision was based upon lack of knowledge of COGs. A decision should be rendered on or before January 2025.

Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) partnership

Participating communities are scheduling (or have had) their Climate Resilience Action plan kick off meeting between ACHD staff and borough managers/secretaries. Braddock and Swissvale have identified their Climate Action Plan committee. North Braddock, and Wilmerding should submit this information ASAP.

Utility Billing

Please reach out if we can help with your refuse, stormwater or sewage billing.

Vactor

Amanda will be emailing opt-in agreements to municipal managers. Please get your agreement in so we can start the 2025 season strong.

Earned Income Tax

Please reach out to Rose Harr at Keystone Collections if you would like projections for your budgeting process. rmharr@keystonecollects.com.

Historic Preservation Construction Grants

Must be listed on the National Historic Register. \$5,000 - \$100,000 with 50% cash match. Reimbursable. Publicly accessible buildings – at least 100 days per year. Alex O’Gorman, Karen Arnold presented the webinar.

Manager’s Meetings

January 9, 2025: Michelle McAndrew, Churchill; Seth Abrams, Forest Hills; Mike Bolen, Pitcairn; Greg Bachy, Swissvale; Lou Ransom, Braddock. Virtual: Joe Varhola, North Versailles

The committee decided to form a WPJWA working group. Amanda will invite all WPJWA to participate. The first meeting will take place prior to the February manager’s meeting, and will focus on agenda items. We will invite staff from WPJWA to future meetings.

Amanda will send an email to members towns gauging interest in a shared refuse collection program. Although the group acknowledges dump space will continue to be an issue, they agreed that it’s worth the time to investigate if a shared program would provide efficiencies.

Seth suggested that future manager’s meeting have a more structured conversation around specific topics. Manager’s should provide topic ideas to Amanda well in advance of meetings so that she can communicate the topic to managers, and manager’s can come to the next meeting prepared to discuss.

The group also discussed the value of having a library of documents (ie: shared collective bargaining agreements) available on the TCVCOG website. Amanda and Natalie will investigate option and costs.

Respectfully submitted,
Amanda Settelmaier