

CONNECT's 11th Annual Legislative Session Resolutions
September 17th, 2020

Resolution 20-01

Election of the Board of Officers

Presented by Marita Garrett, Borough of Wilkesburg, Mayor

To hear and act on the report of the Nominating Committee.

The Nominating Committee recommends the Congress to elect the following officers:

To elect as chair for a term of 19 months. Patricia DeMarco, Council Vice President, Borough of Forest Hills.

To elect as vice chair for a term of 19 months. Andrew Flynn, Commissioner, Mt. Lebanon Township.

To re-elect as secretary/treasurer for a term of 19 months. Mary Ellen Ramage, Manager, Borough of Etna.

To elect as the manager representative for a term of 19 months. George Zboyovsky, Manager, Brentwood Borough.

To appoint as immediate past chair for a term of 19 months. Brittany Reno, Council President, Borough of Sharpsburg.

To re-elect as the Allegheny County representative for a term of 19 months. Rich Fitzgerald, County Executive, Allegheny County.

To re-elect as the representative of the Mayor's Office of the City of Pittsburgh for a term of 19 months. William Peduto, Mayor, City of Pittsburgh.

Resolution 20-02

Welcoming New Members

Presented by Mark Sampogna, Green Tree Borough, Council President

WHEREAS Ingram Borough and the Borough of Swissvale have requested membership in CONNECT; and

WHEREAS Ingram Borough and the Borough of Swissvale have met the criteria set in the *"Policy on inviting new municipalities to join the Congress of Neighboring Communities"* that was accepted by the CONNECT Executive Committee in February of 2015.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Ingram Borough and the Borough of Swissvale are welcomed as member municipalities by the Congress of Neighboring Communities.

Resolution 20-03

Transportation

Presented by Ben Estell, Dormont Borough, Manager

WHEREAS The Port Authority of Allegheny County (PAAC) has been a long-time partner of CONNECT;
and

WHEREAS CONNECT municipalities worked from early 2018 through 2019 with PAAC and Dover Kohl & Partners to explore and encourage Transit Oriented Development in their communities, and produced a Best Practices Guide, Executive Summary, and Municipal Toolkits; and

WHEREAS PAAC is currently forming a 25-year plan called NEXTransit to better serve Allegheny County.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CONNECT commits to working with PAAC on the long-range plan and members will represent the needs of all their residents in the process.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CONNECT members will consider the Transit Oriented Development Best Practices document developed by our members, in partnership with PAAC and Dover Kohl & Partners, when there is an opportunity for development.

Resolution 20-04

Regional Climate Action Plan

Presented by Andrew Flynn, Mount Lebanon Township, Commissioner

WHEREAS greenhouse gas emissions have increased over the last 150 years; and

WHEREAS the role of greenhouse gas emissions in climate change is well documented; and

WHEREAS in 2020, municipalities and CONNECT staff and interns, in partnership with ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability, conducted research, solicited and analyzed data, and produced municipal Climate Action Plans; and

WHEREAS those municipal Climate Action Plans included recommendations for local governments to lower greenhouse gas emissions within their communities; and

WHEREAS CONNECT and two other Pennsylvania regions have been invited to use the ICLEI Clearpath tool through June 2021 in order to examine municipal Climate Action Plans and move towards a larger regional effort; and

WHEREAS the development of Climate Action Plans embodies many issues CONNECT has, and continues to, address, such as stormwater flooding, transportation issues, energy concerns, air quality, and utilities coordination; and

WHEREAS CONNECT can and has collectively requested data from utility providers on behalf of individual municipalities for a more efficient process; and

WHEREAS CONNECT has benefitted from a dedicated and experienced GSPIA intern who will continue to lead this work.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CONNECT intends to lay the groundwork for a regional Climate Action Plan, and will coordinate with entities working on similar projects in the region to define sustainability metrics; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CONNECT members support the creation of a regional Climate Action Plan and welcome CONNECT's support and encouragement of municipal Climate Action Plans.

Resolution 20-05

Water

Presented by Mary Ellen Ramage, Borough of Etna, Manager

WHEREAS stormwater and flooding cleanups are very costly to municipalities and residents; and an increase in annual extreme weather incidents has become even more straining on municipal budgets; and

WHEREAS stormwater and flooding are a public safety and health hazard to residents; and

WHEREAS a single municipality is unable to confront the issues of stormwater and flooding on its own, and that mitigation is an Ohio River Basin regional issue; and

WHEREAS there is a significant number of municipal and environment organizations working to address both water quantity (stormwater) and water quality (drinking water) issues in the Ohio River Basin; and

WHEREAS CONNECT has convened members and partners around this issue in our Infrastructure & Utilities Working Group since September 2019, and has worked with and convened organizations for ten years before that in various committees.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CONNECT will continue to support collaborative actions of region-wide coalitions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CONNECT members will use best practices developed in these regional networks and implement them locally in their own municipalities, and will remain committed to this issue until it is no longer a crisis.

Resolution 20-06

Coordinate PA

Presented by Ron Borczyk, Ross Township, Manager

WHEREAS there is no legal requirement for communities and utilities to cooperate in excavation projects; and

WHEREAS projects often overlap and do not use taxpayer dollars most efficiently; and

WHEREAS CONNECT partnered with PA One Call in 2015 to create the Coordinate PA Software, which aids coordination between municipalities and utility companies, and between neighboring municipalities' development projects; and

WHEREAS the Coordinate PA software is most effective in finding opportunities to work together and save time and costs when everyone participates; and

WHEREAS Coordinate PA trainings are free and flexible to municipalities, and CONNECT is able to serve as liaison between PA One Call and municipalities.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CONNECT member representatives commit to emphasizing the value of using Coordinate PA as a planning tool to work more efficiently with neighboring communities, contractors, and utility companies to their councils and/or municipal managers.

Resolution 20-07

Recycling

Presented by Patricia DeMarco, Forest Hills Borough, Council Vice President

WHEREAS a majority of CONNECT members present at the July 2019 Visioning Session identified recycling as an urgent priority and requested a GSPIA Capstone report with recommendations; and

WHEREAS recycling has been one of the key issues of the Economic & Environmental Development Working Group where CONNECT has partnered with cross-sector organizations since October 2019; and

WHEREAS CONNECT guided regional recycling studies from The University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public & International Affairs' Public Administration capstone class, and from the Covestro Center for Community Engagement at Robert Morris University; and

WHEREAS CONNECT has staffed a part-time Regional Recycling Research Coordinator since April 2020 to continue compiling data on the current state of recycling, coordinate E&E partner work, and provide technical and labor assistance to municipalities; and

WHEREAS the Economic & Environmental Development Working Group is long-term tool for CONNECT to address the needs of long-term materials management and legislation.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CONNECT endorses better coordination of recycling services and regional data collection, as well as public education on recyclables and the recycling process.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CONNECT calls on its member municipalities to support the regional effort by offering to share information that may be found useful to the Regional Recycling Research Coordinator.

Resolution 20-08

Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD)

Presented by Tim Rogers, Shaler Township, Manager

WHEREAS since 2017, CONNECT members have committed time and resources to addressing the rise of opioid overdoses in their municipalities; and

WHEREAS people with opioid use disorders and other behavioral health issues are often repeatedly arrested for problematic behaviors and cycle through the criminal justice system; and

WHEREAS law enforcement officers and other stakeholders in CONNECT communities have identified the need for new tools to assist people with unmet behavioral health needs; and

WHEREAS justice system involvement disproportionately affects people of different demographics in CONNECT communities, and repeatedly arresting these community members often does not address the root causes of their problematic behaviors; and

WHEREAS CONNECT and the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) have done in-depth research and worked with the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) National Support Bureau for one year, preparing to uniquely adopt the program in Allegheny County; and

WHEREAS CONNECT and ACHD produced an extensive report of the research with recommendations given to municipalities to prepare for piloting LEAD; and

WHEREAS CONNECT has received funding through ACHD's CDC Overdose Data to Action Grant and has hired a LEAD Program Director and LEAD Community Engagement Coordinator to assist municipal councils, managers, police departments, social workers and community members in planning to pilot LEAD in CONNECT member municipalities; and

WHEREAS Allegheny County plans to participate in the LEAD National Support Bureau Proof of Concept initiative, which provides access to technical assistance, training, relationships, and many other resources through the Bureau.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CONNECT will utilize the LEAD National Support Bureau's assistance and adopt best practices to explore and pilot pre-arrest diversion projects.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CONNECT endorses the recommendations of the report produced with ACHD.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CONNECT municipal member representatives will be open to engaging in dialogue about law enforcement and LEAD and will support the exploration of LEAD in CONNECT and the potential to pilot in select CONNECT member municipalities.

Resolution 20-09

Lead Safety

Presented by Sarah Harvey, Borough of McKees Rocks, Councilperson

WHEREAS lead is still very prevalent in our communities, and the presence of lead in water, paint, or the air is harmful especially to the health of children; and

WHEREAS both individuals and municipalities face higher future healthcare costs when there are high rates of Elevated Blood Lead Levels (EBLLs) in a community; and

WHEREAS there are only minimum legal requirements for lead abatement in houses and building demolition; and

WHEREAS people are spending significantly more time at home due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which is dangerous for those who have lead in their homes; and

WHEREAS CONNECT is a member of Lead Safe Allegheny's Policy Committee, and serves as liaison between the coalition and CONNECT members; and

WHEREAS the Lead Safe Allegheny coalition is prepared to offer examples, resources, and expertise to municipalities interested in adopting a lead-safe ordinance unique to their community, and will work with them to do so.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CONNECT members will look to best practices and seek the adoption of ordinances that protect their residents from the harmful impacts of lead, and CONNECT will compile a library of these model ordinances for others to reference.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CONNECT supports countywide and statewide initiatives that limit residents' exposure to lead in water, paint, air, and demolition practices.

Resolution 20-10

Volunteer Fire

Presented by John Frombach, Brentwood Borough, Council Vice President

WHEREAS the number of volunteer firefighters in Pennsylvania has fallen to 10% of what it was in 1970, and there is more fire equipment than there are firefighters to operate the equipment within our region; and

WHEREAS the volunteer firefighter population is aging and recruitment efforts are proving more difficult; and

WHEREAS multiple independent volunteer fire companies show up to fight the same the fires with smaller teams where it would be safer to have teams of firefighters trained together on the same equipment; and

WHEREAS paying for fire services is very expensive and is becoming unaffordable to many municipalities; and

WHEREAS the country and most municipalities are experiencing large revenue losses due to the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS CONNECT now, more than ever, has reason to find collaborative opportunities and regional cost savings to continue providing quality services to constituents; and

WHEREAS graduate students in the Spring 2019 GSPIA CONNECT capstone course completed a report with recommendations for fire departments and municipal governments, and the research will be built upon in the Fall 2020 GSPIA CONNECT capstone course.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CONNECT is committed to continuing research into data and solutions for this volunteer firefighter crisis, as well as strengthening our existing relationships with partners.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CONNECT members will engage in conversations and efforts exploring recommended labor and cost-efficient strategies to keep those departments sustainable and our communities safe.