

January 2021 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday | January 28, 2021 | 10AM

Via Zoom



Municipal Attendees: Ian McMeans, Mt. Lebanon; Mary Ellen Ramage, Etna; Darla Cravotta, Allegheny County; Patty DeMarco, Forest Hills; Ben Estell, Dormont; Tim Rogers, Shaler; Tim McLaughlin, Aspinwall; Shawn Alfonso-Wells, Swissvale; Lindsay Powell, Pittsburgh; Steve Beuter, Carnegie; Brittany Reno, Sharpsburg; Mindy Rainey, Mt. Lebanon; George Zboyovsky, Brentwood; Phyllis Anderson, Oakmont; An Lewis, Steel Rivers COG + Tri-COG Land Bank; Doug Sample, Crafton; Vanessa McCarthy-Johnson, Homestead; Krista Koller, Churchill; Jack Betkowski, Ross; Kelly Robertson, Duquesne; Tom Rengers, Etna; Jessica Semler, Etna; Eddie Figas, Millvale; Deborah Gross, Pittsburgh; Tara Yaney, Edgewood; Katie Malsch, Swissvale; Betsy Monroe, Fox Chapel; Krista Mosher, Castle Shannon

Other Attendees: Jeanne Clark, ALCOSAN; Nick Mackereth, DCED

GSPIA/CONNECT: Lydia Morin, Tess De Jong, JoEllen Marsh, Kelley Kelley, Sarah Downing, Eric Raabe, Brett Stewart

The Zoom room opened at 9:45am for members to casually chat with one another

Welcome from CONNECT Chair DeMarco

- CONNECT puts 35 heads together and we are starting to see tangible things in our working groups, and we are seeing the value of our collaboration
- Everyone in CONNECT is a tremendous asset and I hope we can become more visible
- I would love to physically or virtually visit all of our member communities while Chair
- I am also involved in the Reimagine Appalachia process to steer federal money to local communities, specifically communities that were part of building the industrial revolution and are rebuilding now

Welcome to New Faces (or familiar faces in new positions)

- Krista Mosher, Castle Shannon Main Street Coordinator
- Krista Koller, Churchill Finance Officer/Treasurer
- Jessica Semler, Etna councilperson
- Vanessa McCarthy Johnson, Homestead manager
- Kelly Robertson, Duquesne manager
- Doug Sample, Crafton manager
- Katie Malsch, Swissvale manager

CONNECT Board of Officers Introductions

Chair: Patty DeMarco, Forest Hills Council Vice President

Vice Chair: Andrew Flynn, Mt. Lebanon Commissioner

Manager Representative: George Zboyovsky, Manager of Brentwood

Treasurer/Secretary: Mary Ellen Ramage, Manager of Etna

County Representative: Darla Cravotta on behalf of County Executive Rich Fitzgerald
City of Pittsburgh Representative: Lindsay Powell on behalf of Mayor William Peduto
Immediate Past Chair: Brittany Reno, Sharpsburg Council President

November 2020 Executive Committee Minutes

Motion to approve minutes – Tim McLaughlin, Aspinwall

Second – Shawn Alfonso-Wells, Swissvale

Motion approved.

Working Group Agendas

Communications & Technology Advisory Committee

- We have had one group call so far to explore this new group
- Communications is difficult but critical
- Making government documents and information more accessible
- Our institutional knowledge is very hard to access without calling someone. We need to dig really deep to find contacts, history, etc. Information should be more accessible to current government officials and the public.

Infrastructure & Utilities Coordination Working Group

- Recap of the November quarterly meeting
- ALCOSAN Update
 - 2021 is the year of regionalization. Combining sewer communities, 200 miles of trunk sewers will be transferred from municipalities to ALCOSAN, they'll review tap fees and move a big portion of the system and remaining overflows to ALCOSAN control

Bring issues to your representatives, please call Tim Rogers, Shaler Manager (412-486-9700) with anything you want to see on upcoming agendas and he'll work with Jeanne Clark from ALCOSAN

- Regional Climate Action Plan Update & Discussion
 - A review of the timeline. Four finished CONNECT Local Climate Action Plans were passed (see them on our [website](#)) – out of all of the LCAPs that were passed through the PADEP ICLEI program, CONNECT was the majority of them.
 - [Click here to see a the 2019 – April 2022 timeline](#)
 - This year, CONNECT has done the Climate Action Process as an entire region. We are done with the data collection phase – we have collective data and your individual municipal data as well. We can disseminate it to your community! Email Eric Raabe at raabej@gmail.com to ask for your municipality's data.
 - We need your help developing the regional development plan. We're setting it up by March and trying to make it easy for everyone to participate in this. It will tentatively be the 3rd Monday of the month. We'll have a working draft in the summer in time for potential funding from PADEP.

- Updating your councils along the way is extremely important. No one wants to get to the end with a finished product and have it be dropped

Economic & Environmental Development

- Big picture: this is the year of planning/research to make sure our actions will be more effective in reaching our goals. We hope to set an action agenda that we can begin to carry out in 2022.
- Recycling
 - Progress on the education piece – we have the recycling report and now are working on a video presentation that is easily sharable
 - Please coordinate with Ally Walker, CONNECT’s Regional Recycling Research Coordinator, so we know when appropriate council/committee meetings are so we can come give a short presentation. Additionally, please [tell her](#) when your contracts are up
 - Are you able to help educate your own or your neighboring’ municipalities council/committee on this issue? Please help us disseminate information to all communities.
 - Recap of the discussions surrounding “recycling” versus “materials management”
- Transit
 - Last week we had a session with Port Authority, focus groups to talk about relationships, barriers to progress in TOD in our communities, and movement in general issues. What keeps you from planning more projects, sidewalks, curb cuts, crosswalks?

Public Safety, Health, & Human Resources

- LEAD
 - The LEAD Subcommittee started meeting every 2 weeks.
 - The cohort interest form will go out soon (*since this meeting, it has been sent out*) to gauge interest to determine where we will pilot LEAD. The pilot will be in contiguous communities that work cross-boundary with neighbors to share case managers and start diverting!
 - We’re planning a diversion summit this year – “What can pre-arrest diversion look like in Allegheny County?”
 - JoEllen: joellenmarsh@pitt.edu
 - Kelley: kelleykelley@pitt.edu
 - Kaleigh: kan84@pitt.edu
- Volunteer Fire
 - The Future of Fire group with Fire Chiefs and elected officials is also meeting every two weeks, to build collaborative capacity
 - There has been a misallocation of resources and a decline in demand for volunteer fire. This group may test pilot a couple needs assessment programs.

CONNECT Work Plan & Website Tour

To wrap up discussing all these issues: review of how we organized the initial 17 high priorities from the 2018 member engagement survey into working groups and the structure of the [Exploring, Monitoring, and Implementing stages](#).

- We start monitoring when we assign grad students to work alongside elected & appointed officials to help research where we might like to go. What we might find is that someone else needs to house it, or we're going to go ahead and implement it
- Implementing: when we have a paid person giving the issue capacity and officials guide them
- These are the 3 stages LEAD when through and we want to continue using this model. We now have a work plan that follows through these stages.
 - We briefly shared the screen in the Zoom meeting to show CONNECT's work plan.
- Highlighted our events, the "What is CONNECT" booklet, and CONNECTed Issues page on the [website](#).

Breakout Rooms to brainstorm Working Group involvement

Rooms divided into the 4 working groups

First round (randomly assigned): Who else from your municipality or organization should be here, how can we help you get them involved, what else could the working group explore, and what CONNECT staff capacity do you anticipate needing?

Second Round (attendees may self-select their room): What tasks could you take on? What's your vision for the work? What tasks does CONNECT need to do to carry out your vision?

Report out of breakout room discussion / themes

In the chat to debrief: Name one person from your municipality who you think would like to or would be good to plug in to one of these working groups

CONNECT Business

- Funding update
- Update on strategic Network Leadership Framing & Training with New Sun Rising and Sustainable Pittsburgh
- Governing for the Common Good Series Update/reminder – February 26th, March 26th and April 23rd

Adjourn 11:38am