

June 2020 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday | June 18, 2020 | 10AM

Via Zoom



Municipal Attendees: Mindy Ranney, Mt. Lebanon; Tom Rengers, Etna; Darla Cravotta, Allegheny County; Mary Ellen Ramage, Etna; Ben Estell, Dormont; Patty DeMarco, Forest Hills; Tim McLaughlin, Aspinwall; Steve Beuter, Carnegie; Mark Sampogna, Green Tree; Brittany Reno, Sharpsburg; Marita Garrett, Wilkesburg; Andrew Flynn, Mt. Lebanon; Jack Betkowski, Ross; Doug Sample, Duquesne; Tim Rogers, Shaler; An Lewis, Steel Rivers COG; Ian McMeans, Mt. Lebanon; Josiah Gilliam, Pittsburgh, Josh Schneider, Pittsburgh, Laura Drogowski, Pittsburgh

Other Attendees: Jeanne Clark, ALCOSAN; George Dougherty; GSPIA; Weiping Xiao, GSPIA; Andi Thieman, DHS; Jenn Batterton, DHS; Ashley Shafer, Pitt School of Education

CONNECT Staff & Interns: Lydia Morin, Tess De Jong, JoEllen Marsh, Ally Walker, Kaleigh Dryden, Tosan Adoki, Eric Raabe, Kelley Kelley, Sarah Downing

Agenda overview and introductions in the chat

You received this [ASPA award](#) ([PA Times Article here](#)) – it was 11 years in the making and some of you have been here since the beginning. Thank you for everything leading up and everything we are about to do. It is nice to be recognized for what your hard work.

Welcome new CONNECTers

- Borough of Swissvale
- Sarah Downing, CONNECT Policy & Communications Intern
- Kelley Kelley, LEAD Community Engagement Coordinator
 - Her story of why she ran for mayor, how she became involved in advocacy around substance use disorders, and why she's thrilled to work with CONNECT.

April 2020 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve minutes – Patty DeMarco, Forest Hills

Second – Tim Rogers, Shaler

Motion approved.

CONNECT Member Bylaws Revisions

- A question around switching from “urban core” to “urban county”
- A large majority of municipal representatives voted “yes” via zoom

Motion to approve bylaws – Patty DeMarco, Forest Hills

Second – Mary Ellen Ramage, Etna

Motion approved.

Municipal Finance Research Collaborative Update

- We have been working on addressing your feedback over the last 2 weeks, which was to make it more visually pleasing. It is hard to code, though.

- This tool is for you to input budgeted revenue and get a quick sense of where you are and how much money you can expect to lose due to COVID-19 revenue losses
- Shared screen to show the [app](#)
- This is for cash insolvency predictions, a long-term warning of how many municipalities are at risk in different scenarios, and we are working on building a regional web – regions want to be defined by district/service areas
- Press releases are [online](#)

LEAD Update

- The LEAD National Bureau was super impressed with where we are with the Allegheny County LEAD program – this shows how much engagement you all have, and it would not have existed without it. Thank you to everyone who has met with me (JoEllen) and for those wanting to move forward!
- A lot of coalition building is happening and members feel fully supported by many crucial partners
- Our report will be prepared for our website soon (*now available [here!](#)*)
- The City of Pittsburgh is working to create a new office – The Office of Community Health and Safety – where these programs will be held. This office will support both residents and public safety professionals, as police have become 24/7 safety net responders for every incident. <https://pittsburghpa.gov/press-releases/press-releases/4052> Email laura.drogowski@pittsburghpa.gov with questions.
- During a difficult time for municipalities, LEAD can address unmet community needs with community engagement.

My Brother's Keeper (MBK) Presentation

- In the same vein talking about community engagement and collaboration of initiatives, how could CONNECT incorporate the MBK playbook?
- MBK is a national program to support Black men and boys in every stage of life. The MBK position has existed for 1 year and it is in the Office of Equity in Pittsburgh
- Many stakeholders codesign what it could look like in your communities, no size fits all and there are many impact areas, what do you find most important? Your local MBK is the result of not one person's idea but the long process of community engagement. What would it look like to create the platform in your community for people to speak?
- Please consider Josiah an ally and resource josiah.gilliam@pittsburghpa.gov
 - What MBK finds important: <https://www.obama.org/anguish-and-action/>
 - PGH press release on a task force for police reform and ongoing feedback from stakeholders. Take the burden off law enforcement that wears so many hats <https://pittsburghpa.gov/press-releases/press-releases/4064>
 - How MBK might make sense for you community: <https://www.obama.org/mbka/about-mbk-communities/>
 - MBK action plan: https://pittsburghpa.gov/mayor/mbk/action_plan.pdf
 - Josiah moderates Zoom broadcasts on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL2L3ZTwe78kEn2W->

[1PI0wvrBiNsbcbMzg](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL2L3ZTwe78kFsvGKTF5tBIE_SV3Cm53Xd)

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL2L3ZTwe78kFsvGKTF5tBIE_SV3Cm53Xd

Regional Recycling Research Update + E&E Working Group Report to the EC

- Continuation of last fall's GSPIA/CONNECT capstone project. CONNECT created a temporary, paid, part-time position with the funding supporting the advancement of initiatives from our working groups
- The steps are to network and get buy-in, get a snapshot of the region today, collect data, and create a report that can be used as a tool to begin a movement towards regional recycling standards and communications.
- Ally is taking inventory of members' websites, getting information on haulers, looking for inconsistencies (including in messaging), and sorting through the gray areas
- Ally will be looking into landfills to create a bigger picture and better understand diversion rates

Comments

- The serious market failure is that there is an industry push for material we don't need
- Examples of how to restructure supply chains of materials; Anita Prizio and most of the rest of County Council's call to state legislature to stop ban on bans; the national bottle bill proposal; Reimagine Appalachia to predict what difference it would make to invest directly in our communities the same money we are subsidizing petrochemicals in our communities
- Rushing raw materials to the landfill at a rapid rate is not "GDP"; raw materials have more value than we are assigning them
- We are not accounting for the full lifecycle cost of our goods. We are making future taxpayers subsidize these costs. And the state isn't very willing, thus far, to tax landfills
- The frustration with legally, by contract, having to collect materials that they know aren't even going to be recycled

I&U Working Group Report to the EC

- 5 of the 20 municipalities working on a Climate Action Plan (CAP) through ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability) are in CONNECT. The goal is to lower greenhouse gas emissions by government.
- Explanation of the data they get for these reports and a wide range of actions they can take back to their councils
- CONNECT has been invited along with two other regions to use the ICLEI Clearpath tool in this next year, until June 2021, which provides us a unique opportunity to look at CAPs not only at the municipal level but moving toward a larger regional effort. We also have seasoned GSPIA intern support in Eric Raabe who is leading this work.
- Noting other organizations/movements that are doing something like this and how we all need standardized measurements in order to speak the same language
- Intersections with other things CONNECT is working on such as air quality, vulnerability to COVID or other future lung pandemics, flooding, landslides, and transportation.

- [Active Allegheny Grant Program](#) for transportation projects. Applications are on a rolling basis until November 30, 2020.
- The Western PA Energy Consortium is starting a new contract next year. You can choose a predictable payment model or go with a model where costs will fluctuate but should give you the best price, more info is available from Sarah Yeager sarah.yeager@pittsburghpa.gov and Aftyn Giles aftyn.giles@pittsburghpa.gov

PSH Working Group Report to the EC

- We are tight on time, but have already discussed a fair amount via the LEAD and MBK convos. Our next meeting will be July 16th at 1pm via Zoom and will be about LEAD and Volunteer Fire, which has been off the radar for a little bit with COVID

Nominating Committee Update

- We sent out the nominating form again, we did not get that many responses the first time because we sent it out in early March. Those first nominations still stand.
- Went over the eligibility/guidelines for nominating and being nominated
- We are eager to see all who wish to be engaged in leadership roles in CONNECT since there is a lot of work to do and our membership has a lot of talent and expertise to offer.
- We will take your nominations and have a proposed slate by the next EC August 20th
- Given the circumstances, this new board will serve until April 2022

CONNECT Business

- Our Legislative Session will be virtual, we still want a special, tangible thing that can bring us together so we may mail you something or drop it off right before
- We will fine tune the year's resolutions at our next EC meeting August 20th and will check in with how we did on last year's
- Applying for a National Science Foundation grant with a few partners to address the spatial mismatch of where people live with where jobs are via public transit and digital opportunities
- Update on the collaborative process of the anti-racism skill share series, and thank you for helping us!
- What technology can we adapt when we go back to meeting in person?

Adjourn 11:56am