

WATS Coordinating Committee Members

Lycoming County Board of Commissioners
Lycoming-Sullivan Boroughs Association
SEDA-COG Joint Rail Authority
Mayor, City of Williamsport
River Valley Transit
Williamsport City Council
Williamsport Regional Airport
PennDOT Engineering District 3-0
Lycoming County Association of Township Officials
PennDOT Center for Program Development & Management



WATS Technical Committee Members

Lycoming County Planning & Community Development
PennDOT Engineering District 3-0
City of Williamsport
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The WATS MPO is staffed by the Lycoming County Department of Planning & Community Development

WILLIAMSPORT AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY MPO TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE PUBLIC MEETING

DATE: Thursday, May 13, 2021
TIME: 2:00 PM
PLACE: Virtual Meeting
Dial-In Number: 1 (267) 332-8737
Conference Code: 372 140 235#

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER Vitko

MINUTES:
December 10, 2020 Vitko

PUBLIC COMMENT Vitko

AGENDA ITEMS:

- Introductions / Meeting Purpose Vitko
- River Valley Transit Service Update Wright
 - F.R.I.T.S. Project
 - Act 44 Review
 - Clinton County Service
- STEP, Inc. Service Update Merk
 - COVID-19 Vaccination Transportation
 - Find My Ride Transit Eligibility system
 - On-line Registration system
 - Lycoming County Divers-ability Awareness Committee
- Consumer Comments Group
- Next Scheduled Meeting Date Vitko

OTHER BUSINESS / PUBLIC COMMENT Vitko

ADJOURN Vitko

All meeting materials also available on [WATS MPO Website \(http://www.lyco.org/WATS-MPO/Committees\)](http://www.lyco.org/WATS-MPO/Committees)

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WILLIAMSPORT AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE TELECONFERENCE PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

December 10, 2020 Transit Advisory Committee Teleconference Public Meeting: Held at various locations via teleconference.

CALL TO ORDER (WATS Transit Advisory Committee Teleconference Public Meeting)

Sal Vitko called the meeting to order at 2:03 P.M.

MINUTES

August 20, 2020 Transit Advisory Committee Public Meeting

Sal Vitko asked if there were any issues or questions on the **August 20, 2020** meeting minutes. Sal explained the request is to approve the meeting minutes to ensure the meeting minutes were a fair and accurate representation of what occurred at the meeting, and that a vote to approve the minutes was not needed. Committee members shared no changes or concerns with the August 20, 2020 meeting minutes and the meeting minutes were approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

AGENDA ITEMS

Introductions / Meeting Purpose

Sal Vitko asked all members to state their names and organizations who attended the meeting. Sal Vitko gave a brief overview of the WATS Transit Advisory Committee's purpose and the partnership with River Valley Transit (RVT) and STEP, Inc.

2021 Meeting Dates

Sal Vitko asked Committee members to review and approve the 2021 Transit Advisory Committee meeting dates. There were no questions or concerns on the 2021 meeting dates, Committee members approved the 2021 WATS Transit Advisory Committee meeting dates.

RIVER VALLEY TRANSIT SERVICE UPDATE

RVT Clinton County Service Update

Todd Wright gave an update on River Valley Transit (RVT) services. Todd Wright informed the Committee that RVT service to Clinton County will be ending effective December 31, 2020. The Clinton County service was a partnership between RVT and PennDOT, utilizing a Technical Assistance grant to help fund the service. Todd stated that PennDOT reviewed ridership statistics and expenses for the grant and determined, due to the expense to RVT and RVT not being able

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to hit ridership benchmarks included in the grant, that the service would be suspended. Todd informed the Committee that the Clinton County service is not being cancelled permanently, but this is a temporary suspension while COVID-19 issues are addressed. Todd stated that the hope is as RVT moves into the next fiscal year that RVT will be able to resume the Clinton County service.

Mark Murawski asked Todd if RVT would have to restart the entire Clinton County service trial period again, or if Todd had any sense of what RVT's trial period for the service would be. Todd stated that he did not feel that RVT would have to start completely over, but that PennDOT did not provide a specific timeframe.

Mark asked if Todd had any update on the five County service area feasibility study. Todd stated that from the discussions RVT has been involved in with PennDOT, the five County feasibility study is on hold during the issues everyone is experiencing due to COVID-19.

COVID-19 Service Impacts on Fixed Route Service

Todd Wright explained that in an effort to combat COVID-19, RVT has gone back to a free fare policy. In an effort to reduce contact between drivers and passengers, all entry onto RVT buses is through the rear bus doors. Todd stated that RVT is still using social distancing in seating, and the buses are being cleaned/disinfected twice a day. RVT provides hand sanitizer and masks for riders who may need those items.

Todd informed the Committee that RVT has had some drivers who have tested positive for COVID-19 and RVT is reviewing their plans and if/when, RVT would need to reduce service based on the potential loss of available drivers. Currently the only route that RVT has reviewed that may be suspended is the Lysock-Views route; however, at this point RVT has not made the determination to suspend that service route.

Mark Murawski asked Todd, Dan Merk, and Patti Jackson-Gehris if any riders are contacting any of the RVT, STEP Inc., or UPMC services for transportation if a rider tests positive for COVID-19. Dan stated that STEP, Inc. has specific criteria and questions for riders to determine if they have COVID-19 and that STEP uses those measures to provide transportation services. Patti stated that UPMC also has policies in place that addresses patients with transportation issues such as UPMC being able to perform "at home" testing for certain patients. Todd stated that RVT has received guidance from FTA and PennDOT on what policies and measures to have in place.

Mark asked Todd is the Lysock-View service was still being County subsidized. Todd stated that RVT did have a conversation with the Lycoming County Commissioners regarding the service and RVT and the Commissioners have an agreement in place for services to be provided.

Brian Patchett from North Central Sight Services asked if someone is symptomatic with COVID-19 and is following all public health guidelines (wearing a mask, social distancing, etc.) would that individual be allowed to ride the RVT buses or STEP, Inc. vehicles? Todd and Dan both

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stated that RVT and STEP, Inc. do have policies in place to assist those individuals and are able to work with them to get them the service they need.

RVT Services Update into Fiscal Year 2021-2022

Todd Wright reminded the Committee that RVT had some changes to their administration in the beginning of 2020. Todd informed the Committee that, since 2012 RVT has managed the Endless Mountain Transportation Authority (EMPTA), which provides fixed-route and shared ride services in Bradford, Sullivan, and Tioga counties. One of the goals under the old RVT administration was to regionalize with EMTA to become a larger regional transit authority. That concept is still something that RVT and EMTA are interested in pursuing.

Todd stated that one of the issues is that RVT is the only transit provider in the Commonwealth that is owned by a municipality, in RVT's case the City of Williamsport. Looking towards Fiscal Year 2021-2022 one of RVT's main goals is to transition to their own municipal authority, separate from the City of Williamsport. The new RVT General Manager, Adam Winder, is focusing on moving RVT in that direction. One benefit of that transition is that it would allow larger regionalization efforts to become more feasible.

Mark Murawski asked if the RVT authority concept would focus specifically on public transit, or if the authority would be multi-modal focused. Todd stated that RVT is working with Jill Nagy, the PA Safety Solicitor, and reviewed a couple different models in their efforts to approach the City of Williamsport.

STEP, INC. SERVICE UPDATE

STEP's On-Line Reservation System

Dan Merk updated the Committee on STEP, Inc.'s online reservation process. Dan stated that since STEP developed the process they have been able to provide approximately 650 trips. STEP, Inc. customers enjoy the system, and it has been very helpful to STEP, Inc.'s customer service abilities.

STEP's On-Line Application Process

Dan stated that STEP, Inc. now has a consolidated application process. Customers can use the fillable pdf, complete, and submit the application to STEP, Inc. for any of STEP's programs. The new process captures all the data STEP needs to review and enroll customers in all STEP, Inc. transportation services.

PENNDOT's Transit Eligibility System

Dan informed the Committee that STEP, Inc. is a member of the committee that is assisting PennDOT with the creation of the PennDOT Transit Eligibility system. Dan stated that when the system is completed it would allow individuals to register for transit services and programs online and replace the paper applications currently being used. Dan believes that once the system is completed it will be more consumer friendly and will increase access to transportation.

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STEP, Inc. General Transportation Update

Dan Merk stated that STEP, Inc. is still handling the COVID-19 issues as they arise. STEP, Inc. is still working on addressing transportation needs in their service area, and increasing transit accessibility whenever possible.

Mark Murawski asked Dan if STEP, Inc. received any of the CARES Act funding. Dan stated that the original CARES Act funding did not provide funding for shared-ride providers. However, PennDOT is looking at different funding sources to assist STEP, Inc. and other shared-ride operators. Dan stated that STEP, Inc. is running approximately 62-64% compared to 2019 trips.

Mark asked if Dan had an update on the Pittsburgh Air-ride company. Dan informed the Committee that STEP, Inc. has had no dialogue with Pittsburgh Air-ride. Dan stated that STEP, Inc. had the Public Utility Commission (PUC) hearing and are awaiting the final decision.

Todd Wright asked Dan if STEP, Inc. has received any ridership from the for ride program. Dan stated that STEP, Inc. receives a few riders from that program, but not many.

CONSUMER COMMENTS

There were no consumer comments.

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING DATE

Sal stated that the next scheduled WATS Transit Advisory Committee meeting will be **Thursday, May 13, 2021** at 2:00 p.m. Dial-In Number: 267-332-8737, Conference Code: 372 140 235#.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURN

Hearing no further business or public comment, Sal called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dan Merk gave the motion and Todd Wright seconded. Sal adjourned the meeting at 2:57 p.m.

Respectfully, Submitted,
Scott Williams
WATS Secretary

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WATS Transit Committee

SIGN IN SHEET (Please **PRINT** clearly)

LOCATION: Due to the current public health emergency the meeting DATE 12/10/2020

Was held via teleconference, Dial-in # 267-332-8737 Conference Code: 778 000 428

	Name	Organization
1	Dan Merk	STEP, Inc. Transportation Manager
2	Todd Wright	River Valley Transit, Contract Services Manager
3	Emily Camerer	Hope Enterprises, Community Resources Coordinator
4	Shannon Rossman	Lycoming County Department of Planning & Community Development (PCD), Director
5	Scott Williams	PCD/WATS MPO
6	Mark Murawski	PCD/WATS MPO
7	Patti Jackson-Gehris	UPMC, Vice President of Market Development & Communications
8	Brian Patchett	Northcentral Sight Services
9	Sal Vitko	PCD/WATS MPO
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