



**SEDA-COG JOINT RAIL AUTHORITY MEETING MINUTES**  
**Wednesday, October 9, 2024**  
**Union County Government Center, Lewisburg, PA**  
**12:30 p.m.**

**AUTHORITY MEMBERS PRESENT**

Frank Dombroski, Montour County  
Russ Graham, Centre County  
John Gummo, Clinton County  
Scott Harvey, Lycoming County  
Lisa Hoover, Northumberland County  
Robert Hormell, Northumberland County  
Rick Jenkins, Columbia County (via teleconference)  
Brent Jones, Clinton County  
Michael Krentzman, Mifflin County  
Rick Maloyed, Snyder County  
Dave Park, Snyder County  
Patty Perez, Columbia County  
David Schultz, Lycoming County  
John Spychalski, Centre County  
Jennifer Wakeman, Montour County  
Eric Winslow, Union County (via teleconference)  
Chuck Wunz, Union County

**JRA OPERATOR**

Jeb Stotter, President & CEO  
Diana Williams, Treasurer/Controller

**GUESTS**

John Ashbridge, Carload Express  
Erik Bergenthal, Carload Express Legal Counsel (via teleconference)  
Bob George, Syensqo  
John Lavelle, Lycoming County Planning Deputy Director  
Joshua Owens, Pennsylvania Environmental Solutions Inc.  
Jenny Picciano, Lycoming County Community Planning Development  
Shannon Rossman, Lycoming County Planning Director

**JRA LEGAL COUNSEL**

Jen Bauer, McQuaide Blasko  
John Bee, Esq., McQuaide Blasko  
Tom Schrack, Esq., McQuaide Blasko

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### **JRA CONSULTING PROFESSIONALS**

Stephen Lendway, Operating Agreement Consultant (via teleconference)

Jason Shura, P.E., Stiffler McGraw (via teleconference)

### **JRA STAFF**

Steven Beattie, Executive Director

Tina Heintzelman, Program Assistant

Kyle Postupack, Property & Maintenance of Way Manager

## **CALL TO ORDER**

### **Call to Order**

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 12:45 p.m.

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

The Chairman led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Welcome – Chairman’s Statements**

The Chairman stated that the use of audio or video recording devices at the public meeting is permitted. The Authority does not require pre-registration for recording purposes; however, any individual intending to record all or any part of the meeting must notify the Chairman or the Executive Director in advance of such recording. If the Authority recesses to Executive Session, no recording of that session shall be permitted.

### **Public Forum**

The Chairman asked if there is any public comment to come before the Board. There were no public comments.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS**

### **Approval of the September 11, 2024, JRA Meeting Minutes**

*Dr. Spsychalski made a motion for the Board to approve the September 11, 2024, SEDA-COG Joint Rail Authority Meeting Minutes; Ms. Perez seconded the motion; motion carried.*

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### Treasurer's Report

Ms. Wakeman presented the Treasurer's Report for September, as well as the JRA's Loan Summary, Money Market Account Financial Statement, the PIB Loan Financial Statement, and the JRA's detailed accounting associated with the operating fees paid by the Operator. Ms. Wakeman mentioned there was a voided check to the Williamsport Water Authority that was never sent.

*Mr. Park made a motion for the Board to accept the Treasurer's Report for the month of September 2024; Mr. Harvey seconded the motion; motion carried.*

### Staff Report and Events Calendar

Mr. Beattie summarized the status of various construction projects and calendar highlights:

- Attended City of Williamsport Planning Commission and City Council meeting for Lot Add-on Subdivision approval.
- A virtual meeting to present the RTAP 2024 grant application for the JVRR/NBER Bridge Bundle will be held Oct. 10 with PennDOT staff.
- A pre-construction meeting for the Bellefonte Yard and Hilex Turnout was held Oct. 8, with construction to begin next week.
- The JRA was asked to participate in an open discussion with stakeholders related to flooding in and around Unionville on the Nittany Main. The JRA has made numerous improvements in 2012 and 2015 to assist with flooding issues. The flood on Aug. 9, 2024, was deemed a 25-year storm event and caused significant damage to homes and property. It was determined that two parallel culverts under the Nittany Main clogged with debris during the storm event. JRA and Operator staff will make improvements in and around the culverts to keep debris from clogging the culverts. A meeting with the borough, residents and PennDOT is scheduled for Oct. 9.
- Fall track inspections will be held the week of Oct. 21. If Board members would like to join the inspection team, reach out to JRA staff.
- BHRS Excursions for December have been approved by the Operator and Executive Director.

### Operator Status Report

A copy of the Operator's Report was provided to Board members via email and copies were provided to Board members at the meeting. Mr. Stotter said the Inaugural Veterans Benefit Voyage is scheduled for Nov. 9, with passenger train rides leaving from Hufnagle Park, Lewisburg. One hundred percent of the proceeds from the rides will benefit Expedition Orange and Lycoming County Hometown Heroes.

## OLD BUSINESS

### Bridge Engineer's Report

Mr. Shura reviewed the Bridge Engineer's Report provided in the meeting packet:

- Three plan reviews were completed: Susquehanna River Walk Extension in Williamsport, Berwick Area Joint Sewer Authority at South Eaton Street and land development plan for Old Dominion Freight Line.
- The 2024 Bridge Safety Inspections are complete, and reports have been submitted to JRA staff. There were three underwater bridge inspections due this year. It is anticipated they will be completed in October/November 2024 by Marine Solutions Inc.
- Fieldwork on the Shamokin Valley Railroad Section 130 Corridor Project is complete. A substantial completion punchlist inspection is scheduled for Oct. 15.
- Work on the NBER/Milesburg Moose Run Bridge replacement project is slated for spring 2025. Shop drawings for the precast concrete box culvert were received last month and returned with some minor comments to the fabricator.
- Substantial completion punchlist inspection on the NSHR Bridge 191.52 project took place on Oct. 8.
- NBER Bridge Rehabilitation project is nearly complete. Substantial completion punchlist inspection for Bridge 36.90 on the Bellefonte Branch was completed on Oct. 4. Bridge 16.75 is nearly complete. Shotcrete work is anticipated to be done in mid-October. Final inspection is planned for the week of Oct. 21<sup>st</sup>.

## NEW BUSINESS

### Place Contract 2024-05 for Public Bid; Newberry Yard Fabric Structure Repair

This project is for the public bid letting for the repair of the existing fabric structure located in the Newberry Yard and presently leased by Newpark. The fabric began failing approximately 2 years ago and is no longer under warranty. Repair includes the removal of approximately 80 feet of the west end of the fabric and replacing it in-kind. The Bid will also include the cost associated with replacement of the rear overhead door, patching of old penetrations, and the adjustment of tensions cables and straps. The probable construction cost is opinioned at \$171,000. If approved, bids will be due on November 4<sup>th</sup> for review by the Board at the November meeting.

*Mr. Krentzman made a motion to approve the public bidding for Contract 2024-05, Newberry Yard Fabric Structure Repair Project; Mr. Maloyed seconded the motion; motion carried.*

### Ratify Change Order No. 1 for Contract 2023-02 (SVRR Safety Corridor Project)

Contract 2023-02 addresses the Section 130 Safety Corridor upgrades on the SVRR. The current contract amount is \$2,534,755 and 100% paid by PennDOT. A contract increase of \$47,446.79 is presented due to the discovery of a corrugated metal cross pipe under the Reed Industrial Track

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that is severely degraded. The repair included the complete replacement of the existing culvert with a 30" HDPE. Due to time constraints, the Executive Director authorized the work prior to the Board Meeting, subject to Board ratification, and work was completed the week of September 16<sup>th</sup>. This work will not be reimbursed by PennDOT and will be covered by the JRA.

*Mr. Harvey made a motion to ratify approval of Change Order No. 1 for Contract 2023-02 in the amount of \$47,446.79 to Chesapeake Thermite Welding LLC; Ms. Perez seconded the motion; motion carried.*

### **Approve Change Order No. 2 for Contract 2023-02 (SVRR Safety Corridor Project)**

Contract 2023-02 addresses the Section 130 Safety Corridor upgrades on the SVRR. The current contract amount is \$2,534,755 and 100% paid by PennDOT. A contract increase of \$29,774.16 is presented due to changes required at Fourth Street, including asphalt removal and disposal, tie disposal, cutting of ties and filling void along track sides; additional rail at Lenker Street; ballast at Haas Street; Removal of trees and grading to install pipe at Shamrock Street. The change order will increase the Contract Amount to \$2,611,975.95. This work will be reimbursed by PennDOT.

*Ms. Hoover made a motion to approve Change Order No. 2 for Contract 2023-02 in the amount of \$29,774.16 to Chesapeake Thermite Welding LLC; Dr. Spsychalski seconded the motion; motion carried.*

### **Approval of Payment Application Nos. 3 and 4 for Contract 2023-02**

Contract 2023-02 addresses part of the SVRR Safety Corridor Project and is fully funded by PennDOT Section 130 funding; The contract award was in the amount of \$2,534,755, approved by the Board on August 9, 2023. This project is 86% complete and on schedule for a late October construction completion. Payment Application No. 3 is in the amount of \$701,068.82 and Payment Application No. 4 is in the amount of \$47,446.79 (Culvert Replacement).

*Ms. Wakeman made a motion to approve Payment Application No. 3 for Contract 2023-02 in the amount of \$701,068.82 and Payment Application No. 4 in the amount of \$47,446.79 for payment to Lycoming Supply Inc.; Mr. Maloyed seconded the motion; motion carried.*

### **Approval of Payment Application No. 2 for Contract 2024-01**

Contract 2024-01 is part of the RTAP 21 Bridge Bundle Project and is 70% funded by PennDOT RTAP 21 funding; The contract award was in the amount of \$859,999, approved on February 14, 2024, by the Board for NBER Bridges 16.75 on the Bell Branch and NBER Bridge 36.90 on the Nittany Main. This project is 49% complete and appears to be on schedule for late October completion. Payment Application No. 2 is in the amount of \$329,865.70.

*Dr. Spsychalski made a motion to approve Payment Application No. 2 for Contract 2024-01 in the amount of \$329,865.70 for payment to Lycoming Supply Inc.; Mr. Park seconded the motion; motion carried.*

**Approval of Payment Application No. 1 for Contract 2024-02**

Contract 2024-02 is part of the RTAP 21 Bridge Bundle Project and is 70% funded by PennDOT RTAP 21 funding; The contract award was in the amount of \$139,000, approved on June 12, 2024, by the Board for NBER 26.01. This project is 100% complete with no further punchlist items. Payment Application No. 1 is in the amount of \$139,000.

*Ms. Perez made a motion to approve Change Order No. 1 for Contract 2024-02 in the amount of \$139,000 for payment to Gregori Construction Inc.; Mr. Schultz seconded the motion; motion carried.*

**Let Contract 2024-04 for Public Bid; SIT Section 130 Safety Upgrades Project**

This project is for the public bid letting for the rehabilitation of five at-grade crossings on the SIT in Snyder County. Four crossings will be replaced at North Market Street, Clifford Road, Pawling Station Road and Freeburg Road. A fifth crossing at University Avenue will include improvements to adjacent sidewalks to meet ADA and PROWAG requirements. The existing crossing at Strawberry Alley will be removed as part of the North Market Street crossing replacement. The probable construction cost is opinioned at \$1,496,730. This does not include the costs of the signal upgrades.

*Mr. Park made a motion to approve the public bidding for Contract 2024-04, SIT Section 130 Safety Upgrades Project following execution of all temporary and permanent access agreements; Mr. Gummo seconded the motion; motion carried.*

**Approval of Change Order No. 1 for Contract 001.2023.01 (NBER Bellefonte Yard and Hilex Turnout)**

Contract 001.2023.01 addresses the Nittany and Bald Eagle Bellefonte Yard & Hilex Turnout. The original contract amount was \$1,194,752, approved by the Board on September 13, 2023. A contract reduction of \$42 is presented due to a mathematical error contained in the bid. The change order will reduce the Contract Amount to \$1,194,710. This change order also extends the substantial completion date to December 31, 2024, due to delays in material delivery.

*Dr. Spsychalski made a motion to approve Change Order No. 1 for Contract 001.2023.01 to reduce the contract amount to \$1,194,710 and extend the project substantial completion date to December 31, 2024, to Chesapeake Thermite Welding LLC.; Mr. Maloyed seconded the motion; motion carried.*

**Approval of Change Order No. 2 for Contract 001.2023.01 (NBER Bellefonte Yard and Hilex Turnout)**

Contract 001.2023.01 addresses the Nittany and Bald Eagle Bellefonte Yard & Hilex Turnout. A contract increase of \$8,267.77 is presented to replace additional rails trailing out of turnout with two rails and two turnouts. The second rail removes a single section of 133# RE rail that has numerous thermite welds on the north side. The change order will increase the Contract Amount to 1,202,977.77, including Change Order No. 1.

*Ms. Perez made a motion to approve Change Order No. 1 for Contract 001.2023.01 in the amount of \$8,267.77 to Chesapeake Thermite Welding LLC.; Ms. Wakeman seconded the motion; motion carried.*

**Amendment No. 1 to Confirmation of Assignment 24-002 (2024 Bridge Safety Inspection Services)**

The original Confirmation of Assignment 24-002 included the performance of annual bridge safety inspections on the JRA system in calendar year 2024, approved by the Board on February 14, 2024. Per an FRA audit, SMA seeks to prepare load rating computations for the following bridges, in accordance with recommendations by the FRA: White Deer & Reading Railroad Bridge 176.78, SIT Bridge 0.09, SIT Bridge 0.40, SIT Bridge 0.90, SIT Bridge 6.42. SMA will update the current Bridge Management Program, dated January 1, 2024, to address all recommendations by the FRA to include, but not be limited to, the following: Bridge inventory for each railroad will be updated to include date for all engineering judgment load ratings, add John P. Conrad to the Railroad Bridge Engineer list per FRA requirement and indicate Mr. Conrad's status as deceased, include recommended safe load capacity for the bridges listed above and recommendation will be made for maximum car weight and minimum car length to be included in the timetable for each railroad.

*Ms. Wakeman made a motion to approve Amendment No. 1 to Confirmation of Assignment 24-002, 2024 Bridge Safety Inspection Service in the amount of \$29,400; Mr. Schultz seconded the motion; motion carried.*

**REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES**

**Property Management Committee**

**1a. Bridgewell Resources LLC – License Agreement (Newberry Yard)**

Bridgewell Resources LLC (Bridgewell) has a license agreement to store utility poles at two locations in the Newberry Yard. The original license was for a six-month term but needs to be

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extended. Bridgewell requested to extend the license on a month-to-month basis because they are storing poles in these areas as temporary spillover areas from their leased sites in the Newberry Yard. For the extension, Bridgewell will be assessed a fee of \$300 per month.

***Mr. Park made a motion for the Board to approve the license agreement with Bridgewell Resources LLC; Mr. Dombroski seconded the motion; motion carried.***

1b. Comcast Cable Communications Management – License Agreement (LVRR – Williamsport)

Comcast Cable Communications Management, LLC (Comcast) contacted JRA staff about overlashing an existing wire with a new 48ct fiber optic cable, just east of the Maynard Street grade crossing in Williamsport. The transverse overhead crossing will be no less than 27' from top of rail with sag. Comcast will be assessed an annual fee of \$2,530 and a one-time fee of \$1,000 for the license preparation fee. All plans have been reviewed and approved.

***Mr. Park made a motion for the Board to approve the license agreement with Comcast Cable Communications Management; Mr. Jones seconded the motion; motion carried.***

1c. Berwick Area Joint Sewer Authority – Easement Agreement (NSHR – Berwick)

The Berwick Area Joint Sewer Authority (BAJSA) will install a 30-inch PVC gravity stormwater sewer pipe in a new 42-inch steel casing pipe under the NSHR via jack and bore, west of the South Eaton Street grade crossing in Berwick. The pipe is part of a larger project being constructed to satisfy a PADEP, Chesapeake Bay MS4 Nutrient Removal Mandate. BAJSA will be assessed an annual payment of \$3,300 and a one-time document preparation fee of \$1,000. BAJSA has also requested a variance from the JRA's insurance limits from \$5 million per occurrence and \$10 million general aggregate to \$2 million per occurrence and \$4 million general aggregate. All plans have been reviewed and approved.

***Mr. Park made a motion for the Board to approve the easement agreement with Berwick Area Joint Sewer Authority; Mr. Maloyed seconded the motion; motion carried.***

1d. Sechler Garage Demolition (Newberry Yard)

The Sechler Garage is the only building left of the Sechler property that the JRA purchased in the 2000s off Catawissa Avenue in the Newberry Yard. The parcel is now used as a laydown area for the M/W department, and some miscellaneous items are stored in the garage. The garage is in disrepair and has now started to lean. It has now become a safety issue and must be demolished. Lycoming Supply has submitted a quote of \$3,540 to demo the building and remove the materials. The concrete pad will remain in place.

***Mr. Park made a motion for the Board to approve the demolition of Sechler Garage in Newberry Yard; Ms. Wakeman seconded the motion; motion carried.***



1e. Lycoming County & Penn College – Susquehanna River Walk Extension Memorandum of Understanding (LVRR – Williamsport)

JRA staff has been working with Lycoming Co. Planning, Penn College, LVRR, and PennDOT on a proposed rail trail that partially occupies the LVRR ROW and has two separate pedestrian rail grade crossings. The term of the MOU says that the project funding shall be procured within five years of the effective date, and construction shall be completed within eight years. Any party can terminate the MOU if funding is not obtained within five years. The County will be responsible for applying for and complying with grants; obtaining funding for the project; design, construction, engineering, and administration of projects and contracts; cooperating with Penn College and the JRA; and executing and complying with the Easement Agreement for the trail. The JRA's responsibilities include: supervising work performed within the JRA ROW; reviewing and approving railroad grade crossing construction plans; administering Section 130 funds; cooperating with other parties; and executing and complying with Easement Agreement. Penn College's responsibilities include: cooperating with other parties; constructing grade crossing surface between the campus properties; entering into an operations and maintenance agreement to pay for electricity for signals and gates for the crossing to be used by Penn College employees.

The JRA will also be reimbursed for any costs incurred during the project, such as time spent reviewing plans by the JRA's engineer.

*Mr. Park made a motion for the Board to approve the Susquehanna River Walk Extension Memorandum of Understanding with Lycoming County and Penn College subject to any non-material changes approved by JRA staff and Solicitor; Mr. Hormell seconded the motion; motion carried.*

1f. Lycoming County – Susquehanna River Walk Extension Easement Agreement (LVRR – Williamsport)

JRA staff has been working on an easement agreement with Lycoming County for the River Walk Extension, which would occupy JRA property west of the Maynard Street grade crossing in Williamsport and have two pedestrian grade crossings. Lycoming County has requested an exception to the JRA's Rail-with-Trails Standards because portions of the trail do not meet the special exception standard or 20 feet from centerline of track. Lycoming County would pay the JRA \$1 for the easement for 25 years.

*Mr. Park made a motion for the Board to approve the easement agreement with Lycoming County for a term of 25 years including a temporary construction easement with the county subject to any non-material changes approved by JRA staff and Solicitor; Mr. Harvey seconded the motion; motion carried.*

1g. Newpark Drilling Fluids – Lease Agreement Amendment (LVRR – Newberry Yard)

Newpark Drilling Fluids (Newpark) has leased a site from the JRA in the Newberry Yard since 2019. The original lease term was five years and will end on October 30, 2024. Newpark wishes to amend its lease to extend its term for another five years. Newpark will pay an annual amount of \$37,500, payable in monthly installments of \$3,125. The annual rent will be subject to annual CPI increases. Newpark will also be responsible for replacing the filter fabric in the track and keeping vegetation below 6" around the building. Additionally, they will replace the garage doors on the east end of the building, and the JRA will reimburse Newpark for 50% of the costs due to their age and condition.

*Mr. Park made a motion for the Board to approve the lease agreement amendment with Newpark Drilling Fluids; Mr. Hormell seconded the motion; motion carried.*

1h. SCI Rockview – License Agreement (NBER – Benner Twp.)

JRA staff was contacted by SCI Rockview staff about constructing a fence on the ROW of the NBER – Corning Branch. SCI Rockview has a sawmill and a wood shop. The inmates processed the lumber at the mill, dried the lumber, and created the split rail fence in the wood shop. They would like to build the fence before winter. The fence would be flush with an existing gate owned by the prison 17' from the centerline of track. The ROW is 36' on the south side of the track. The license agreement would memorialize ownership of the fence and allocate maintenance responsibilities to SCI Rockview. JRA staff is requesting that the PMC waive all fees associated with the agreement since the addition of a hand-built fence of the finest craftsmanship improves the property.

*Mr. Park made a motion for the Board to approve the license agreement with SCI Rockview subject to review and approval of the form by JRA staff; Mr. Krentzman seconded the motion; motion carried.*

**LEGAL**

Solicitor Schrack stated he had nothing further to discuss in public session and recommended the Board recess into executive session.

Chairman Graham recessed the regular meeting at 1:43 p.m. to convene into executive session at 1:50 p.m.

Chairman Graham reconvened the regular meeting at 2:20 p.m.

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Solicitor Schrack stated that the Solicitor and JRA Board and staff had an executive session to discuss items related to ongoing litigation. No action was taken in executive session and no action is recommended to be taken at this time.

With there being no further business to come before the JRA Board, Chairman Graham adjourned the meeting at 2:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Steven M. Beattie, Executive Director

I hereby certify these minutes were approved by the SEDA-COG Joint Rail Authority Board of Directors on November 13, 2024.



~~Secretary~~/Assistant Secretary