

QUAKER VALLEY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
MONTHLY BOARD OF DELEGATES MEETING

October 16, 2024

The meeting took place at the Leetsdale Borough Building (373 Beaver Street, Leetsdale, PA 15056) and was broadcast via Zoom.

President Carrier called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call was taken.

The following members were in attendance:

Aleppo:	Glen Osborne: Barbara Carrier
Avalon:	Glenfield: Joel Kaminski*
Bell Acres:	Haysville: Amy Paff*
Bellevue: Dan McKelvey*	Kilbuck: Daryl Hartman
Ben Avon:	Leet: Donna Adipietro
Edgeworth: Ellen Politi*	Leetsdale: Maria Napolitano*
Emsworth:	Sewickley: Julie Barnes
Sewickley Heights: Nate Briggs*	

Public Comment:

Approval of September 18, 2024 Meeting Minutes:

Ms. Adipietro moved to approve the September 18, 2024 meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Hartman seconded the motion. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

Approval of September Financial Reports, Payroll, and Unpaid Bills:

Ms. Paff moved to approve the September financial reports, unpaid bills, and employee payrolls as presented. Ms. Barnes seconded the motion. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

President's Report:

In an effort to select a meeting location(s) for the 2025 calendar year, President Carrier inquired regarding the Board's opinion of the 2024 meeting locations (Sewickley Public Library & the Leetsdale Borough Building). Executive Director Connors noted that previous to the 2024 year, each monthly Board meeting rotated between QVCOG member communities. Mr. Hartman & Ms. Barnes noted that the Sewickley Public Library is conveniently located within the region. President Carrier cited the size of the meeting space within the Library as an asset to having future meetings there.

After some discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Barnes to conduct all 2025 QVCOG Board of Delegates meetings on the third Wednesday of each month at the Sewickley

Public Library. Mr. Hartman seconded the motion. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

Route 65 Report:

Executive Director Connors noted that he was invited to speak to Mobilify at their monthly “Transportation Breakfast” on September 26th. He noted he provided a brief update regarding the formation of the intergovernmental agreement and the overall municipal approval process. He cited that he utilized the two-page pamphlet to summarize the organization’s analysis of Route 65. He also highlighted that the Route 65 Committee convened on October 7th.

Emergency Preparedness Committee Report:

Executive Director Connors reported the Tri-Boroughs Emergency Preparedness Committee convened on October 10th. Ms. Paff & President Carrier cited that their communities are progressing through the approval and implementation process for their respective Emergency Operation Plans.

Grant Status Report:

Executive Director Connors provided brief updates concerning all active and recently awarded CDBG and GEDTF projects.

Executive Director’s Report:

2025 Municipal Intern Program Application Details Announced – Executive Director Connors cited that the Local Government Academy (LGA) has announced that the Municipal Intern Program (MIP) application period will be a little earlier this year. He highlighted that this timing change aims to better align with academic calendars and seeks to enhance student recruitment efforts. He stated that MIP project applications are due by 4:00 p.m. on **December 3rd**. He noted that eligible placement sites include municipalities, COGs, and municipal authorities throughout the southwestern region of Pennsylvania. He encouraged those interested in the program to join LGA for an informational webinar on October 29th at 12:00 p.m. noting that registration details are available on their website, localgovernmentacademy.org.

Re-Scheduled Hard to Recycled Event – Executive Director Connors reported that in partnership with the Pennsylvania Resources Council (PRC) the QVCOG has financially supported the return of a “Hard to Recycle” event to the region. He cited that the event has been scheduled for Saturday, October 26th from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. He noted that the event is set to take place at the Leetsdale Industrial Park, (380 Industrial Drive, Leetsdale, PA 15056). He highlighted that Hard to Recycle events provide responsible and convenient disposal for items that are not eligible for curbside recycling. He stated that the event requires all participants to register in advance citing that additional details of the event, including disposal fees and registration details can be found at qvcog.org.

Volunteers Needed! – Executive Director Connors continued by noting that PRC is in need of volunteers for the October 26th HTR event. He cited that being able to provide volunteers at this event will help the QVCOG in securing a future HTR date in 2025 and beyond. He highlighted that volunteers may dispose of **up to \$60 worth of hard to**

recycle material for free. He stated that volunteers will be asked to direct traffic, check trunks, write receipts, or check in registrants. He encouraged anyone interested in volunteering to send an email to pconners@qvcog.org.

Police Set to Tour of FBI's Criminal Justice Information Service Center – Executive Director Connors reported that QVCOG Police Departments have been invited to an exclusive one-day free event set to take place on October 25th beginning from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. He stated that the event is open to **all law enforcement personnel** and will provide those attending with an opportunity to learn about the CJIS Division and its services, as well as the valuable resources the FBI offers to the law enforcement community. He highlighted that attendees will delve deeper into the operations of the National Threat Operations Center, which serves as a central intake point for tips. He highlighted that the FBI's Biometric Services Section will also provide an overview of the latest biometric capabilities used by law enforcement partners, as well as the newest enhancements to the FBI's biometric capabilities. He continued by reporting that personnel from the National Crime Information Center and National Instant Criminal Background Check System will be on hand to provide attendees with an overview of their respective services and highlight the many capabilities that can potentially help save the lives of law enforcement partners. Lastly, he stated that the event will include a bus tour of the CJIS campus and a rare opportunity to tour the area where all CJIS data is housed, including the National Crime Information Center system. He encouraged any law enforcement personnel interested in attending the event to send an email to Ms. Kimberly Spellman at kspellman@fbi.gov.

Active Allegheny Application Details Announced – Executive Director Connors reported that the application window for the 7th round of the Active Allegheny Grant Program is now open through **November 8th**. He highlighted that this initiative provides financial support to local communities to help them plan and design transportation projects that enhance bicycle and pedestrian access to key destinations and transportation systems, promoting physical activity and increasing mobility among residents. He noted that applicants may request up to \$50,000.00 for planning and engineering projects. He highlighted that multi-municipal applications are highly encouraged. He cited that program guidelines, recently awarded projects, and other details can be found at qvcog.org.

New Business

Approval of 2025 Operating Budget: On September 18th Executive Director Connors stated that he, Board President Carrier, and Board Vice-President Julie Barnes convened following the Board of Delegates meeting to review the draft Budget for 2025. He provided highlights of the proposed Budget below:

Highlights

- By using the current and available data, 2024 Regional Asset District (RAD) revenue collections have plateaued, or in some cases, have fallen. RAD revenues are traditionally utilized by the QVCOG to increase the Capital (savings) Fund. As a reference point, 2023 RAD revenue for the QVCOG totaled \$23,045.31, with 70% of that amount being transferred to the organization's savings account. The remaining 30% is infused into the general fund. Based on available data, 2025 RAD

revenues are anticipated to be minimal. The decrease in RAD revenues may be attributed to a decrease in consumer spending and a “cooling off” of inflation from 2023 levels. Less money spent by consumers correlates to lower sales tax collections. Please note, RAD revenues in Allegheny County are directly linked to the additional 1% state sales tax.

- 2024 witnessed yet another organizational record setting grant award through the Act 101 Section 904 Recycling Performance Grant Program. The most recent award was \$26,888.34 (based on 2022 commercial and residential recycling rates). Please note, this was a 2.9% increase year over year. The QVCOG anticipates receiving a similar award amount in the coming year (a \$25,000.00 award has been budgeted). Of the award a large portion is directly paid to member communities (overall amount based on reported residential recycling tonnage) with the remaining award paying for the drop-off glass recycling program and partnership with PRC for a future Hard to Recycle Event;
- CDBG Project Management income that is received from Allegheny County Economic Development is anticipated to remain at recent levels. The QVCOG is budgeting \$35,000.00 for CDBG Project Management in 2025;
- No growth has been budgeted for the QVCOG’s “Service Fee” revenue stream. This budget line item includes both the Proactive Code Enforcement and Zoning Technical Assistance Programs. Please note, Leet Township & Aleppo Township are currently the only customers utilizing either of the programs (ZTA);
- The 5-year Waste and Recycling Contract (2022-26) includes a franchise fee (\$1 for each household serviced in the participating communities). An expected \$10,416.00 will be deposited over the course of 4 quarterly payments into the General Fund;
- General operating costs (i.e., rent, telephone, software, etc.) are expected to remain near or at current levels. However, the “office supplies” line item has remained at an elevated level to allow for the procurement of a new Meeting Owl in 2025. The current unit is nearing 4 years old and is experiencing audio/visual performance degradation;
- Personnel expenditures for 2025 are budgeted to remain comparable with the 2024 Budget. No major staff changes/additions are being proposed. The Executive Director salary has been budgeted for an increase of 3.5% and a total of \$6,000.00 has been budgeted for a possible seasonal intern through the Local Government Academy’s Municipal Intern Program. If selected as a host site, 50% of the intern’s wages would be reimbursed through the Program.

He summarized by citing that the proposed budget allows for the continued growth of QVCOG services and programming while remaining conservative towards overall expenditures. He highlighted that after convening with the Board President and Vice President, he believes the proposed Budget accurately reflects the QVCOG’s ability to provide a high level of service to each of its 15 member municipalities and their residents for the 2025 fiscal year and beyond.

Mr. Hartman moved to approve the 2025 Operating Budget as presented. Ms. Barnes seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous voice vote.

Old Business

Consideration of Updates to Route 65 Intergovernmental Agreement: Executive Director Connors reported that at its June 19, 2024 meeting the QVCOG Board of Delegates unanimously voted to approve an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) for the continued evaluation of Route 65. He cited that the intent of the agreement was to agree upon a general commitment that could be utilized to further bolster future grant applications and funding opportunities. He noted that such funding could be utilized to develop a potential Master Plan for the Boulevard as well as additional planning opportunities. He highlighted that to date 9 QVCOG Member Communities have approved the original IGA. He noted that some communities who have not yet approved the IGA have highlighted concerns regarding the original language, specifically, some had concerns with the potential of any financial commitment tied to the Agreement. He continued by highlighting that other member communities and their solicitors expressed concerns with the original IGA's expressed intent to develop a Route 65 Commission, which would require more formality and additional steps prior to enactment.

He stated that in order to alleviate these concerns, the Route 65 Committee convened on October 7th to review the original Agreement and have suggested some minor revisions. He noted that these revisions seek to meet the requests of member communities without changing the overall vision and character of the original IGA. He cited that these suggested revisions have been reviewed by QVCOG Solicitor Racunas. He reported that per Solicitor Racunas, the updated Agreement can be re-circulated to the municipalities who have already approved the prior language citing the two small changes that have been made based on the suggestion of a few of the other members. Those communities can be informed that Solicitor Racunas does not feel that these changes are material changes and, therefore, should not require a re-vote of the Agreement. Solicitor Racunas cited that a community's individual Solicitor feels differently, the community can certainly re-consider/approve the Agreement.

Ms. Barnes moved to approve the revised Route 65 Agreement as presented. Ms. Adipietro seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous voice vote.

Other Concerns of the Delegates:

Edgeworth Borough - Ms. Politi noted that the Beaver Road Wall Repair Project will begin the week of October 21st and will continue through the month of November. She also noted that a traffic signal will be installed.

Glen Osborne Borough - Ms. Carrier noted her community's excitement for the installation of traffic cameras at the intersection of Route 65 and River Road. She stated that Glen Osborne Borough and the Sewickley Borough Police Department are currently in discussions to formalize the payment mechanism for the legacy costs associated with the cameras. Lastly, Ms. Carrier stated that new fencing will be installed within Mary Roberts Reinhart Nature Park.

Kilbuck Township - Mr. Hartman noted that the Township is in the process of working with the Commonwealth to take formal ownership of the Dixmont Cemetery which encompasses 1.1 acres. He highlighted the Township's recent initiative led by Ms. Hailey McClain (Municipal Intern through the Local Government Academy's seasonal Program) to clean up the cemetery.

Leetsdale Borough - Ms. Napolitano highlighted that Leetsdale Borough is seeking various grant opportunities, including for the hire of a part-time employee and playground improvements to Henle Park.

Sewickley Borough - Ms. Barnes noted a new public space recently named Walnut Green is nearing completion. She also highlighted the Borough is working with Gateway Engineers to develop a pedestrian centric traffic study. She concluded by noting that she will be attending an upcoming sustainability conference.

Adjournment: Mr. Hartman moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Ms. Adipietro. The motion was carried by unanimous voice vote and the meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

The next meeting will take place at the Leetsdale Borough Municipal Building (373 Beaver Street, Leetsdale, PA 15056) on November 20, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting will also be broadcast via Zoom. Please visit qvcog.org for further information.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patrick M. Conners
Executive Director