



North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, Inc.

FREIGHT INITIATIVES COMMITTEE

Freeholder Charles Kenny, Chair
Freeholder Joshua L. Hertzberg, Vice Chair

Meeting Minutes October 21, 2020

I. Roll Call

Freight Initiatives Committee Chair Freeholder Charles Kenny, Middlesex County, called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Ten voting members were present for the virtual meeting.

II. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the August 17, 2020 meeting was made by Morris County, seconded by Somerset County and carried unanimously.

III. NJTPA Freight Division Update

Anne Strauss-Wieder, Central Staff, said the NJTPA is working with the Council on Port Performance's Workforce Development Implementation Team to address the continuing and growing workforce shortages. The team, working with Prologis and a New Jersey business, recently developed a video to increase awareness of distribution job opportunities in New Jersey, which will be released by the end of the year. She also noted that August and September saw the highest monthly volumes of containers ever for the Port and that the largest vessel to ever serve the port arrived at Port Newark/Elizabeth in September, the CMA CGM Brazil which carries close to 15,100 TEUs (twenty-foot container equivalent units).

Ms. Strauss-Wieder also reported that the region's portfolio of industrial properties continues to grow, reaching 851 million square feet during the third quarter. She said e-commerce remains a huge driver of this activity, as is the food industry.

IV. Presentations: The Pharmaceutical and Food and Beverage Industries and Supply Chains – Managing through the Pandemic and Pivoting for the Future

Ronald T. Piervincenzi, PhD, Chief Executive Officer, United States Pharmacopeia (USP) spoke about the considerations in the critical pharmaceutical supply chain. He noted that his organization sets quality standards for medicines worldwide. Dr. Piervincenzi said that quality issues are often the root cause of drug shortages.

Dr. Piervincenzi said that USP has responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by creating an early warning system tracking one million medicines worldwide to identify supply chain risks. USP also created a team to reach out to COVID-19 vaccine manufacturers globally to inform them about the availability of USP standards and technical expertise to help them meet regulatory requirements.

Dr. Piervincenzi also touched on the development, manufacturing and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines and treatments. USP provides free information to help answer questions about ingredients, containers, sterility, labeling, packaging and distribution. He noted potential expansions of domestic pharmaceutical production, as well as shifts in the manufacturing processes from a “batch” approach to continuous production, which would create a more agile system.

Linda Doherty, President & CEO, New Jersey Food Council, briefed the committee on the trends affecting the New Jersey food, grocery and supplies industry. The Council is an alliance of food retailers and their supplier partners representing a \$136 billion industry. Ms. Doherty said the Council responded to the COVID-19 crisis by working with the Governor’s office to mobilize a Food Supply Chain Working Group that includes the Council and representatives from the Governor’s Office, several government agencies, the Port Authority, the Community Food Bank, NJEDA, Conrail and the NJTPA.

Ms. Doherty said in the early days of the pandemic in New Jersey the supply chain was disrupted by shortages caused in part by customers stockpiling certain products, such as toilet paper, hand sanitizers, disinfectant wipes and flour. She said a huge demand for these products continues, and there are still some gaps in availability. Food banks in the state have also been challenged.

Ms. Doherty noted that labor challenges affect the entire food supply chain, including manufacturing and warehouse facilities that must implement social distancing, installation of plastic screens, and other practices to ensure the health of workers. She said these operations are seeing an uptick in COVID-19 cases, and self-quarantine is causing operational disruption of a workforce whose positions are difficult to fill. She said there have been some packaging materials disruptions, posing further challenges to getting food products to market.

Ms. Doherty said the food industry supply chain has stabilized significantly but is still challenged by gaps in product availability. She said there are trucking challenges as well. Primary carriers face driver shortages, and the influx of e-commerce operators is causing yard congestion and problems with the delivery appointment schedules. There is also a demand for more overall capacity and refrigerated warehousing.

V. Two-Minute Reports on Freight Activities from Committee Members

- Andrew Ludasi, NJDOT, said the agency is starting the process for the New Jersey Statewide Freight Plan update; applications for the Rail Freight Assistance Program have closed and the grant process is underway; and there will be a virtual Freight Advisory Committee meeting on November 19.
- Jay Shuffield, Port Authority of New York & New Jersey (PANYNJ), said the agency is seeing a slight uptick in cargo at the airports, while passenger volume is still down. Traffic volume continues to rebound at the bridge and tunnel crossings.
- Alan Kearns, NJ TRANSIT, said the agency will begin work on the New Jersey State Rail Plan in collaboration with NJDOT.
- Byron Nicholas, Hudson County, said a new study will assess freight in the County and focus on trucking.
- Trevor Howard, City of Newark, said work began on the Port Industrial Redevelopment Plan, which will focus on infrastructure, land use, and community satisfaction in the port industrial area.

VI. Next Meeting: December 14, 2020 – Annual NJ Industrial Real Estate Update

VII. Adjournment

At 2:40 p.m., a motion to adjourn was made by Morris County, seconded by Sussex County and carried unanimously.

Freight Initiatives Committee
ATTENDANCE
October 21, 2020

VOTING MEMBERS	
Hon. Charles Kenny (Chair)	Middlesex County
Hon. Kathy DeFillippo	Morris County
Trevor Howard	City of Newark
Tom Drabic	Sussex County
Liza Betz	Union County
Byron Nicholas	Hudson County
Ken Wedeen	Somerset County
Genevieve Clifton	NJDOT
Alan Kearns	NJ TRANSIT
Stephanie Finch	PANYNJ
OTHER ATTENDEES	
Chris Helms	Bergen County
Rodney Oglesby	CSX
Rickie Clark	FHWA
Matt Van Hattem	HDR
Tom Malavasi	Hudson County
Adam Bradford	Hunterdon County
Scott Parker	Jacobs
Jeff Flumignan	MARAD
Michael Onder	Metro Analytics
J. Bonanno	Monmouth County
John Hayes	Morris County
Linda Doherty	New Jersey Food Council
Lou Millan	NJ TRANSIT
Andrew Ludasi	NJDOT
Various members of Central Staff	NJTPA
Leslie Fordjour	NYMTC
Blair Wegescheide	PANYNJ
Bill Schiavi	SJTPO
Ronald Piervincenzi	USP
Brian Appezzato	Warren County
Vimala Raghavendarn	
Cara Radzins	
Caroline Kieltyka	
Connor Schmiegel	
Dan Mulligan	
Ensu Lee	
George Bulow	
James Rhatican	
Jelena Matic	
Jim Hess	
Jobi Odeneye	
John McCreary	
Kristin Hadjstylianos	
Kurt Miles	

Leroy Kardon	
Lisa Destro	
Matt Waskiewicz	
Miki Krakauer	
Steven Polunsky	