

CONNECT's 12th Annual Legislative Session Resolutions
May 19, 2022

Resolution 22-01

Election of the Board of Officers

Presented by Phyllis Anderson, Oakmont, Assistant Manager

To hear and act on the report of the Nominating Committee.

The Nominating Committee recommends the Congress to elect the following officers:

To elect as chair for a term of one year
Andrew Flynn, Commissioner, Mt Lebanon.

To elect as vice chair for a term of one year
Shawn-Alfonso Wells, Councilperson, Swissvale.

To re-elect as the secretary/treasurer for a term of one year
Mary Ellen Ramage, Manager, Etna.

To re-elect as the manager representative for a term of one year
George Zboyovsky, Manager, Brentwood.

To appoint as immediate past chair for a term of one year
Patricia DeMarco, Council Vice President, Forest Hills.

To re-elect as the Allegheny County representative for a term of one year
Rich Fitzgerald, County Executive, Allegheny County

To elect as the representative of the Mayor's Office of the City of Pittsburgh for a term of one year
Ed Gainey, Mayor, City of Pittsburgh.

Resolution 22-02

Welcoming New Members

Presented by Mary Ellen Ramage, Etna, Manager and CONNECT Treasurer/Secretary

WHEREAS the Boroughs of Mt Oliver, Oakmont, and Fox Chapel have requested membership to join CONNECT; and

WHEREAS the Boroughs of Mt Oliver, Oakmont, and Fox Chapel have met the criteria set in the “Policy on inviting new municipalities to join the Congress of Neighboring Communities” that was accepted by the CONNECT Executive Committee in February of 2015.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Boroughs of Mt Oliver, Oakmont, and Fox Chapel are accepted as member municipalities by the Congress of Neighboring Communities.

Resolution 22-03

Strategic Planning

Presented by Mary Ellen Ramage, Etna, Manager and CONNECT Treasurer/Secretary

WHEREAS CONNECT is celebrating over ten years of collaboration, innovation, and action in many prioritized policy areas, and

WHEREAS CONNECT’s previous three-year strategic plan drew to a close.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CONNECT will convene a Strategic Planning Committee, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CONNECT’s Board of Officers will function as a strategic planning committee and interested members are open to join, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this committee will present a strategic plan to the CONNECT Executive Committee in 2022.

Resolution 22-04

Transportation

Presented by Ben Estell, Dormont, Manager and Chair of Nominating Committee

WHEREAS CONNECT municipalities worked from early 2018 through 2019 with Port Authority of Allegheny County (PAAC) and Dover Kohl & Partners to endorse and utilize Transit Oriented Development in their communities, and produced a Best Practices Guide, Executive Summary, and 10 Municipal Toolkits; and

WHEREAS in the Environmental & Economic Development and Transit & Access Committee Meetings, members and partners have identified structural, capacity, and funding barriers that have slowed the implementation process of said Toolkits in our municipalities; and

WHEREAS there are partners, such as Mobilify Southwestern Pennsylvania and other similarly missioned NGO’s in our region spearheading these initiatives in our communities, who recognize the challenges to and need for these toolkits; and

WHEREAS members would benefit from an implementation group, led by such a partner, that encourages municipalities to become transit-oriented communities through education on the

components and benefits of transit-oriented development, reassessment of their zoning codes, and guidance throughout the implementation process; and

WHEREAS PAAC has adopted its 25-year NEXTransit long-range plan to better serve Allegheny County, and TOD contributes to emissions reductions, advancing both the NextTransit and CONNECT Climate Action Plans

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED CONNECT commits to moving forward with each other on the NEXTransit Plan and meaningful implementation of TOD Toolkits by sustaining a Mobilify/PAAC/CONNECT partnership that organizes human capital and secures funding for a TOD Implementation Group led by Mobilify; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CONNECT members will reference the Transit Oriented Development Best Practices document developed by our members and partners before development and will continue to use, share, and leverage the municipal toolkits to work together and bring funding to these projects

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that members endorse and participate in the TOD Implementation Group offering shared staff capacity and encouragement for municipalities to become transit-oriented communities

Resolution 22-05

CONNECT Climate Action Plan

Presented by Brittany Reno, Sharpsburg, Mayor and Immediate Past Chair of CONNECT

WHEREAS in 2020, CONNECT recognized our communities' contributions to and future risks caused by climate change and in 2021-2022, the most recent IPCC report has amplified concern and urgency for action; and

WHEREAS the development and coordination of Climate Action Plans embodies many issues CONNECT has, and continues to, address, such as stormwater flooding, transportation issues, energy concerns, air quality, and utilities coordination; and

WHEREAS in 2020, CONNECT members resolved to support the creation of a regional Climate Action Plan that enables greater collective action on these issues, advocates for necessary federal and state legislation to support local efforts, and seeks to be supportive of existing and future individual Plans within our membership, and at the city, county, and regional levels; and

WHEREAS such a Plan has been completed by member governments and CONNECT Staff through the Infrastructure & Utilities Working Group, in consultation with experts at ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability, PADEP, and local partner organizations; and

WHEREAS the CONNECT Climate Action Plan includes recommendations and paths for local governments to lower greenhouse gas emissions, reduce vulnerabilities, and generate cost savings within their communities; and

WHEREAS experienced local environmental and community development NGO's and utilities, such as Sustainable Pittsburgh, Mobilify Southwestern Pennsylvania, and Green Building Alliance have expressed their readiness to help our communities achieve the goals in this Plan through partnerships, MOUs, and applications for funding; and

WHEREAS federal, state, and private funding may be made available to communities and regions who possess a climate action plan

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CONNECT formally adopts the CONNECT Climate Action Plan and CONNECT and member governments voluntarily participate toward the implementation of the goals within, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the organization CONNECT commits to implementing identified actions found in the climate plan in areas of energy, transportation, waste, water & wastewater management, land use, and equity and will pursue funding, model policies, and coordinate projects with partner organizations in these sectors on behalf of our municipalities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CONNECT will continually update the Plan as necessary, share data, and work to provide relevant materials on an accessible online space for members to best utilize; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CONNECT will continue to expand its presence as a regional center of excellence for local government climate action planning, and support through partnerships and/or staff capacity any municipality looking to pass and act on a local climate resolution or climate plan, especially those that include language on working to advance the membership-wide climate plan.

Resolution 22-06

Recycling/Materials Management

Presented by Andrew Flynn, Mt Lebanon, Commissioner and Incoming CONNECT Chair

WHEREAS fragmentation of regional recycling programs makes it difficult to move toward a more circular economy and recycling continues to be one of the key issues of the Economic & Environmental Development Working Group since 2019; and

WHEREAS proper recycling and materials management contribute to shared economic efficiencies and cost savings, emissions reductions, and advance CONNECT's Climate Action Plan; and

WHEREAS CONNECT, with the support of the County, released a regional recycling report in 2020, whose recommendations for action included forming an exploratory committee to begin the creation and engagement of a central regional materials management entity; and

WHEREAS members and partners present in the December 2021 Recycling and Materials Management Subcommittee Meeting recognized the need for leadership of this initiative to include the County, City, and local nonprofits that lend deep subject matter expertise, such as Sustainable Pittsburgh and Pennsylvania Resources Council; and

WHEREAS the duties of a MSMM Committee should include: 1. Presenting jurisdictional options and optimal waste reduction strategies in municipalities 2. Proposing municipal procurement strategies to reduce waste and improve reuse of materials - including municipal composting and shared recycling services 3. Improving data collection and standardization among waste management contracts by developing a chart of waste contracts' basic terms and expiration dates throughout our membership 4. Developing a model recycling program ordinance for communities.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CONNECT endorses, and will participate in, the creation of a regional Materials Management Standardization Committee that works to better coordinate recycling services in our fragmented region; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CONNECT calls on its member municipalities to support the regional effort by joining and voluntarily contributing necessary information to the objectives of the Committee such as contracts and waste data; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that by or before the 2023 Annual Legislative Session, as determined by members, the Committee will create a 5-year plan to develop this program and will have secured buy-in from agencies to fund a pilot in Allegheny County.

Resolution 22-07

Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD)

Presented by Tim Rogers, Shaler, Township Manager

WHEREAS since 2017, CONNECT members have committed time and resources to addressing the rise of opioid overdoses in their municipalities; and

WHEREAS people with opioid use disorders and other behavioral health issues are often repeatedly arrested for problematic behaviors and cycle through the criminal justice system; and

WHEREAS law enforcement officers and other stakeholders in CONNECT communities have identified the need for new tools to assist people with unmet behavioral health needs; and

WHEREAS criminal legal system involvement disproportionately affects people of different demographics in CONNECT communities, and repeatedly arresting these community members often does not address the root causes of their problematic behaviors; and

WHEREAS CONNECT has worked closely with the Allegheny County Department of Human Services and Allegheny County Health Department to secure programmatic and financial support for LEAD, and

WHEREAS CONNECT's municipal councils, managers, police departments, social workers, and community members, with the support of the LEAD Program Director and LEAD Community Engagement Coordinator, have worked for the past two years to plan a LEAD pilot in CONNECT member municipalities and their neighboring communities; and

WHEREAS CONNECT has facilitated the creation of an ongoing county-wide policy coordinating group (PCG) and local PCGs to stakeholders to develop and implement LEAD policies and procedures.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that CONNECT will continue to utilize the LEAD Support Bureau's assistance and adopt best practices to explore and pilot pre-arrest diversion projects.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CONNECT municipal member representatives will be open to engaging in dialogue with law enforcement and community members about LEAD.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CONNECT will support the initial LEAD pilots and the county-wide Policy Coordinating Group.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CONNECT will support the exploration of LEAD in CONNECT and the potential to pilot in select CONNECT member municipalities.

Resolution 22-08

Future of Fire

Presented by Greg Porter, Etna, Councilmember and Fire Chief

WHEREAS, Throughout Pennsylvania, the number of volunteer firefighters decreased by 87% since 1970; and

WHEREAS the current volunteer firefighter population continues to age while recruitment and retention efforts are becoming more difficult for many independent fire departments; and

WHEREAS, according to the Spring 2019 CONNECT report, there is more fire equipment than there are firefighters to operate the equipment within our region, creating an inefficiency of services for our residents; and

WHEREAS increased costs to maintain our current fire services—combined with decreasing tax bases and budget shortfalls—has put more pressure on municipalities to share services with their neighbors; and

WHEREAS, in 2020, CONNECT issued a report discovering a need to build trust and collaborative capacity between elected officials and their respective fire officials; and

WHEREAS there is an increasing need to provide transparent and accurate data reporting for our municipalities, fire officials, and technical experts; and

WHEREAS, CONNECT has received funding from the PA Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) and the Jefferson Regional Foundation to assist municipalities, fire departments, and community members in organizing a needs assessment to discover innovative shared service models within CONNECT; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CONNECT—in partnership with its members, the County, and the DCED—is committed to initiating a needs assessment to fully assess collaborative capacity levels within CONNECT; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that CONNECT will endorse, and will participate in, the creation of a Future of Fire Summit to bring our membership’s municipal delegations and fire officials together to commit to building new collaboration in our region; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CONNECT will explore new opportunities to support Allegheny County, its fire departments, and its municipalities by building new research and data collection measures to create more transparency for our fire departments and municipalities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED CONNECT will call on its member municipalities to support the need for increased shared services with its fire officials, with CONNECT, and with Allegheny County to keep our departments sustainable and our communities safe.

Resolution 22-09

Communications and Technology

Presented by Tim McLaughlin, Aspinwall, Council President

WHEREAS graduate students from The University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public & International Affairs (GSPIA) Fall 2021 capstone class completed a report with recommendations for digital governance and cross-municipality communications; and

WHEREAS CONNECT has convened members around the issue of municipal communications and technology in our Communications & Technology Visioning session in February 2022 and a Communications & Technology Working Group meeting in March 2022; and

WHEREAS CONNECT members have stressed a need for shared services to take the burden off of limited municipal staff and municipal resources.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CONNECT has formed the Communications & Technology Working Group as a long-term tool to address the needs of municipal communications & technology systems.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CONNECT will utilize a consultant to research best practices in municipal communications and technology systems, providing shared resources for CONNECT members.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CONNECT will serve as a model by utilizing these resources to improve their own communications and technology.