

NORTHWESTERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

July 16, 2026 / NIRPC Dune Room – 8:00 a.m.

Members present

Austin Bonta, Bob Carnahan, Anthony Ferraro, David Phelps, Christian Hendron, Denise Ebert

Staff and others present

David Hollenbeck, George Topoll, Ty Warner, Talaya Jones, Meredith Stilwell, Tom Vander Woude, Lisa Todd, Darin Sherman, Kathy Luther

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Austin Bonta called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Review of Financial Status – March 2026

The March 2026 financials, bank reconciliations for the NIRPC general fund, CARES funds, Revolving Loan, and Marquette Greenway accounts, and expense and revenue reports for the NIRPC general and CARES funds were provided electronically for review before the meeting. The reports were also provided in the Committee meeting packet. Talaya Jones presented bank reconciliations and financial statements to those present. During the March Marquette Greenway reconciliation review, a question was raised about whether NIRPC has a cash policy, given the account balance and interest earned. Following discussion, Ty Warner stated that a draft would be ready for the next meeting.

As of March 31, 2026, year-to-date expenditures totaled \$1,275,466 of the \$15,929,800 budget. Total General Fund revenue for the period was \$170,877 of the \$6,199,690 budget. Talaya explained that reimbursement requests were sent in after the first quarter.

As of March 31, 2026, year-to-date NIRPC CARES fund expenditures totaled \$6,017 of the \$25,000 budget. Total CARES revenue collected for the period was \$6,225 of the \$23,000 budget.

The March 2026 General Fund claims totaling \$825,760.98 were presented. A question was raised regarding a check to Lake County Community Services, Inc. for \$38,533.00 and it was explained that it was for Enhanced Mobility Operating Assistance. On a motion from Bob Carnahan, seconded by Anthony Ferraro, with no opposition, the general fund claims were approved. The March 2026 Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) claims totaling \$242.98 were presented and approved on a motion by Bob Carnahan, seconded by Anthony Ferraro, and with no opposition.

Review of Financial Status – April 2026

The April 2026 financials, bank reconciliations for the NIRPC general fund, CARES funds, Revolving Loan, and Marquette Greenway accounts, and expense and revenue reports for the NIRPC general and CARES funds were provided electronically for review before the meeting. The reports were also provided in the Committee meeting packet. Talaya Jones presented bank reconciliations and financial statements to those present.

As of April 30, 2026, total expenditures were \$1,856,029 of the \$15,929,800 budget. Total General Fund revenue for the period was \$875,493 of the \$6,199,690 budget.

As of April 30, 2026, year-to-date NIRPC CARES fund expenditures totaled \$15,977 of the \$25,000 budget. Total CARES revenue collected for the period was \$16,186 of the \$23,000 budget.

The April 2026 General Fund claims totaling \$516,244.56 were presented. Bob Carnahan questioned a tree purchase, which was explained to be for the CommuniTree program. On a motion from Bob Carnahan, seconded by Denise Ebert, with no opposition. April 2026 RLF claims totaling \$16,667 were then presented and approved on a motion by Bob Carnahan, seconded by Denise Ebert, and with no opposition.

Review of Financial Status – May 2026

The May 2026 financials, bank reconciliations for the NIRPC general fund, CARES funds, Revolving Loan, and Marquette Greenway accounts, and expense and revenue reports for the NIRPC general and CARES funds were provided electronically for review before the meeting. The reports were also provided

in the Committee meeting packet. Talaya Jones presented bank reconciliations and financial statements to those present.

As of May 31, 2026, total expenditures were \$3,071,153 of the \$15,929,800 budget. Total General Fund revenue for the period was \$1,080,525 of the \$6,199,690 budget.

As of May 31, 2026, year-to-date NIRPC CARES fund expenditures totaled \$15,977 of the \$25,000 budget. Total CARES revenue collected for the period was \$16,187 of the \$23,000 budget.

The May 2026 General Fund claims totaling \$1,211,101.74 were presented and approved on a motion by Anthony Ferraro, seconded by Bob Carnahan, and with no opposition. A purchase to ABC Bus, Inc. for 455,385 was questioned and it was explained that this purchase was for the purchase of 2 low-floor buses for Valparaiso. May 2026 RLF claims totaling \$94.20 were then presented and approved on a motion by Anthony Ferraro, seconded by Bob Carnahan, and with no opposition.

NIRPC Resolution 26-09: Amend the MissionSquare 457(b) Retirement Plan

Meredith Stilwell presented Resolution 26-09, which amends NIRPC's MissionSquare 457(b) Retirement Plan to add a Roth contribution option.

The amendment is needed to comply with the SECURE 2.0 Act, enacted in December 2022. Effective January 1, 2026, participants age 50 or older, including those eligible for enhanced catch-up contribution limits for ages 60 through 63, must make catch-up contributions as Roth after-tax contributions if their prior-year Social Security wages exceed \$150,000.

Because NIRPC's retirement plan did not previously allow Roth contributions, Resolution 26-09 adds that option to ensure the plan remains compliant with the federal requirement.

On a motion by Bob Carnahan, seconded by Christian Hendron, and with no opposition, NIRPC Resolution 26-09 was favorably recommended for presentation to the Full Commission/Executive Board for approval.

Contract – Safe Streets and Roads for all (SS4A) Grant Program

Tom Vander Woude presented an overview of the contract with Lochmueller Group, in an amount not to exceed \$499,600, to develop a Regional Safety Action (RSA) Plan for NIRPC and the counties of Lake, Porter, and La Porte in Indiana. The plan is intended to improve roadway safety and significantly reduce or eliminate roadway fatalities and serious injuries within those jurisdictions.

The project is funded through the U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Program and requires a 20% local match. Work is expected to begin in late summer 2026 and be completed by December 31, 2027. For certain types of funding, the information provided by the RSA Plan is needed for participating communities to apply for implementation project funding.

Because NIRPC's attorney had not yet completed the final contract review, the Committee was asked to favorably recommend the contract to the NIRPC Commission, contingent upon attorney review and any necessary minor revisions.

On a motion by Bob Carnahan, seconded by Anthony Ferraro, and with no opposition, the contract was favorably recommended for presentation to the Full Commission/Executive Board for approval.

Contract: Drive Clean Indiana, Inc.

Kathy Luther presented the contract agreement with Drive Clean Indiana, Inc. (DCI) for professional education and training services from July 1, 2026, through December 31, 2027.

The total contract award to DCI is \$454,875. A 20% non-federal match of \$90,975 is required, resulting in an allocated reimbursement amount not to exceed \$363,900. Kathy clarified that while DCI cannot write grants, it can provide technical support.

Because NIRPC's attorney had not yet completed the final contract review, the Committee was asked to favorably recommend the contract to the NIRPC Commission, contingent upon attorney review and any

necessary minor revisions.

On a motion by Bob Carnahan, seconded by Christian Hendron, and with no opposition, the contract was favorably recommended for presentation to the Full Commission/Executive Board for approval.

Personnel updates

None

Other Business

Attorney Hollenbeck reported that a City of Valparaiso bus was involved in an accident in Chicago on June 23, 2026. The Chicago Police Department has not yet filed a police report; however, NIRPC has taken all appropriate actions, and the claims are being addressed. Although NIRPC owns the bus, it bears no legal responsibility or negligence related to the incident.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:54 a.m.