

NIRPC Full Commission Meeting  
NIRPC/Forum Building, Portage, IN  
January 17, 2013  
Minutes

Chairman Geof Benson called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and self-introductions of the commissioners.

Commissioners present included Nancy Adams, Roosevelt Allen, Jr., John Bayler, Geof Benson, Bob Carnahan, Christine Cid, Tom Clouser, Anthony Copeland, Jon Costas, Chet Dobis, Stan Dobosz, Richard Ludlow, Tom McDermott, Blair Milo, Ed Morales, Rich Murphy, Diane Noll, Anthony Pampalone, Shawn Pettit, Pamela Richard, Bob Schaefer, Tom Schmitt, Dave Shafer, James Simmons, Brian Snedecor, James Snyder, Keith Soderquist, Joe Stahura, Greg Stinson, James Ton, and David Uran.

Others present included Dan Bearss, Dave Decker, Michael Griffin, Diana Lozman, Jack Arnett, Lorelei Weimer, Christine Livingston, LuAnn Franklin, David Nellans, Joe Simonetto, Joe Crnkovich, Ryan Sagar, Bob Sz kay, Lauren Rhein, Sergio Mendoza, Rufus Purnell, Beth Barrett, Rebecca Williams, Bob Alderman, Jim Nowacki, Keith Benman, Carole Carlson, Kevin Crawford, Barb Young, Brad Donovan, Carly Smith and Daryl Lampkins.

Staff present included David Hollenbeck, Ty Warner, Steve Strains, Belinda Petroskey, Mitch Barloga, Bill Brown, Jack Eskin, Gary Evers, Kevin Garcia, Sarah Geinosky, Allen Hammond, Angie Hayes, Eman Ibrahim, Kathy Luther, Jody Melton, Stephen Sostaric, John Swanson and Mary Thorne.

Two certificates of appointment were presented in proper form for Dave Decker, LaPorte County Commissioner and Michael Griffin, Town of Highland.

The Norman E. Tufford Award was presented to two commissioners: Chet Dobis, Governor's appointee and Stan Dobosz, Griffith Town Council. The award was also presented to two former NIRPC staff: Hugh Rhein, posthumously and Lauren Rhein.

Nominating Committee Report – Geof Benson reported that the five-person committee is nominating the following slate of officers and executive board members for 2012:

Chairman	David Uran
Vice-Chair	Brian Snedecor
Treasurer	Blair Milo
Secretary	Jim Ton

Executive Board Members are:

La Porte County	Dave Decker	Porter County	Nancy Adams
La Porte County	Bob Schaefer	Porter County	Don Ensign
Lake County	Roosevelt Allen, Jr.	Lake County	Anthony Copeland
Governor's Appointee	Chester Dobis		

Tom McDermott motioned to approve the 2013 slate of officers; Shawn Pettit seconded; motion carried. Michael Griffin moved to close the slate of officers as presented; Stan Dobis seconded; motion carried.

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Chairman Benson congratulated the new officers and executive board members and said that he was honored to have served as NIRPC's chairman for the past year. He added that he was proud of the accomplishments made by the commission and staff during 2012. Geof Benson completed his chairmanship by turning over the gavel to newly-elected chairman, Dave Uran.

Dave Uran assumed the chair and reflected on the milestones for 2012 including the appointments of 19 new commissioners, two commissioners serving with the National Association of Regional Councils, the award winning 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan, the retirement of John Swanson and the selection of Ty Warner as the new Executive Director. He presented Geof Benson with a plaque recognizing his service to NIRPC for 2012. He reminded the commissions to turn in their committee preferences before the February 21 Executive Board meeting.

Jim Ton moved to approve the minutes of the December 13, 2012 meeting; seconded by Bob Schafer; motion carried.

The consent agenda was approved on a motion by Geof Benson; seconded by Brian Snedecor; motion carried.

A presentation on the Northern Indiana Tourism Development Commission and its impact on the region was made by Dan Bearss, Commission Executive Director, and others. The Commission is a regional partnership of the Convention and Visitors Bureaus of seven northern Indiana counties including LaPorte and Porter, working in cooperation with INDOT's Indiana Toll Road division, the Indiana Tourism Division and with local businesses to increase tourism spending in northern Indiana. Their mission is to increase employment and the economic development of the hospitality industry throughout northern Indiana. Marketing strategies to the 32 million people living within a three-hour drive of northern Indiana were highlighted. For more information, go to [www.northernindianagetaways.com](http://www.northernindianagetaways.com).

Brian Snedecor motioned to approve the IT contract with OnSite LLC. They will charge the same amount for a three-year contract with two one-year options which is \$2,900 under budget. Dave Shafer seconded; motion carried.

Nancy Adams announced the 2040 Comprehensive video which was shown to the commission. The video was created through the Legacy Foundation of Lake County, Discovery Alliance, and the Dean White foundation to match federal funding from the Federal Transit Authority FTA and produced by Smith Donavon through work by NIRPC staff. Participants of the video included Pierre DeBois, Raymundo Garcia, Gloria Lupo, Kevin Crawford, and Nathan Hale School Principal Penny Banfield.

Stan Dobosz reported on the Transportation Policy Committee meeting held on January 8. Gary Evers described Amendment #21 containing projects for Cedar Lake, LaPorte County and Portage. Commissioner Dobosz motioned to approve Resolution 13-01 to adopt the 21<sup>st</sup> amendment of the FY 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program, seconded by Shawn Pettit; motion carried. The next TPC meeting is February 12 at 9:00 a.m.

Dave Shafer reported on the Legislative Committee meeting on December 14. Bill Hanna of the RDA and Dave Wellman met with the committee to discuss the RDA's forthcoming reauthorization of its state funding during the 2013 session of the Indiana General Assembly. This would enable them to expand development activities

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in Lake and Porter counties. Dave Shafer motioned to approve the position paper in support of the RDA as recommended by the committee; Tom Clouser seconded; motion carried. The committee also recommended Resolution 13-2 to request retention of Bob Alderman as INDOT LaPorte District Director; Bob Carnahan seconded. Discussion followed. Motion carried.

Bob Alderman, Deputy Commissioner for INDOT-LaPorte District, reported that INDOT spent just under \$67 million in Lake, Porter and LaPorte counties. He asked the commission to contact him with any projects or problems. Winter preparation is underway.

Roosevelt Allen, Jr. reported that the CEDS Committee met January 7, January 11 and today. In order to obtain planning and operations grants for proposed projects under the EDA, you must be part of our CEDS. Documentation must be submitted and approved by the EDA in order for northwest Indiana to be approved and designated as an economic development district by the EDA. The planning grant is being closed out and reimbursement forms are being submitted. The committee hired Janet Cypra to assist in the updating and application for an operating assistance grant, which will allow us to hire our own staff. Forty-two projects were submitted to the CEDS and scored. The website is up and running. The next Economic Development District meeting is on January 25 at 9:30 a.m. at NIRPC.

Other Business: Geof Benson invited everyone to the reception to be held on January 18 at NIRPC from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. to welcome Ty Warner and say farewell to John Swanson.

Public Comment: Jim Nowacki, resident of Gary, inquired as to the disposition of the remaining assets of the Regional Bus Authority. Ty Warner responded that the \$150,000 went directly to Gary, not through NIRPC.

Announcements:

Bob Carnahan referenced an article in the Times on John Swanson.

Dave Shafer had the opportunity as NARC President to welcome the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress on January 6. Yesterday, he, the NARC Executive Director and two other NARC officers met in D.C. with the Executive Director and officers of the American Planning Organizations (AMPO) to begin discussions on federal transportation policies and legislation.

Report of the Executive Director: Ty Warner thanked John Swanson both for his leadership and for his assistance in transitioning Ty into NIRPC. Ty spent the last two weeks meeting many local officials and region leaders. He remarked that he is extremely impressed with NIRPC staff and the outstanding work being done. NIRPC has received national prominence, receiving several awards for the 2040 Plan, the video of which will be shown to a national audience at the American Planning Conference in Chicago in April. Ty will be meeting with team leaders and staff and then move out across the region.

Having no further business, Chairman Uran adjourned the meeting at 10:30 a.m.