

Minutes of the February 16, 2012, NIRPC Executive Board Meeting

Chairman Geof Benson called the meeting to order and led all in the Pledge of Allegiance. Self-introductions were made.

Commissioners present were Nancy Adams, Roosevelt Allen, Jr., John Bayler, Geof Benson, Kevin Breitzke, Bob Carnahan, Tom Clouser, Anthony Copeland, Stan Dobosz, Karen Freeman-Wilson, Ken Layton, Patrick Margraf, Diane Noll, Bob Schaefer, Dave Shafer, Brian Snedecor, and James Ton. Staff present included John Swanson, Tom Vander Woude, Kathy Luther, Angie Hayes, Hubert Morgan, La' Kisha Girder, Eman Ibrahim, Jody Melton, Kevin Garcia, Gabrielle Biciunas, Bill Brown, David Hollenbeck and Kathy Dubie.

Report of the Chairman: Geof Benson listed the Chair and Vice-Chair for all NIRPC committees and said that the committee assignments were distributed to all commissioners today. He added that the nine representatives from NIRPC currently serving on the Northwest Indiana Economic Development District are: Tom McDermott, Jr., Richard Murphy, Jim Snyder, Nancy Adams, Ken Layton, Roosevelt Allen, Jr., Stan Dobosz, Greg Stinson, and Blair Milo.

He also reported on his recent attendance at the National Association of Regional Councils' National Conference of Regions. He asked David Shafer, Brian Snedecor, and John Swanson to add comments. Mr. Shafer provided an overview of the speakers and announced that Mr. Benson was elected to the NARC Board of Directors. He filled the vacancy created by Kathy Chrobak when she resigned from the board. Brian Snedecor echoed comments made by Mr. Shafer and said the speakers were very impressive. He added that it was a very worthwhile conference. John Swanson reported that the NIRPC group was able to meet with Congressmen Donnelly and Visclosky and Senators Coats and Lugar during their trip to the NARC conference. He provided information on what issues are currently on the minds of the federal legislators.

Tom Vander Woude, NIRPC staff, gave a report on the rail study of the Northwest Indiana at-grade crossings. He provided an overview of railroads currently operating in northwest Indiana along with their locations. Local problems also exist at the national level. Questions/answers followed.

Hubert Morgan and La' Kisha Girder reported that NIRPC is beginning the process of updating its Public Participation Plan. The process will officially kick off at the March 13 Transportation Policy Committee meeting. All were encouraged to be active in the process.

On a motion by Brian Snedecor, second by Ken Layton, the January, 2012, minutes were approved.

On a motion by Jim Ton, second by Brian Snedecor, the consent agenda was approved.

Finance & Personnel Committee: Chairman Brian Snedecor reported that the committee met earlier today and approved two actions for Commission consideration. The first action would amend the 2012 budget to establish a line item for donations to be used to fund the 2012 Cornucopia. On a motion by Brian Snedecor, second by Ken Layton, the motion passed. Secondly, Mr. Snedecor explained a grant application request made at today's F & P meeting. Nancy Adams moved that the application be approved. The motion was seconded by Jim Ton. Eman Ibrahim explained that efforts are being made to fund an outreach tool to be used in conjunction with the Comprehensive Regional Plan. The current grant request is to be submitted to the Porter County Community Foundation for \$3,000 to match

federal planning funds through the Indiana Department of Transportation. Requests to Legacy Foundation and Unity Foundation will follow. The motion was approved.

Transportation Policy Committee: Chairman Stan Dobosz reported on topics discussed at the last committee meeting. Gary Evers briefly explained Resolution 12-05, which would amend the Transportation Improvement Program by adding three projects. On a motion by Jim Ton, second by Ken Layton, the resolution passed.

Eman Ibrahim explained Resolution 12-06, which would amend the Unified Planning Work Program to add a planning project for the GPTC. On a motion by Ken Layton, second by Jim Ton, the resolution passed.

Finally, Bill Brown added comments regarding INDOT and transit operators' reports on ridership and projects.

Northwest Indiana Economic Development District: Vice-Chairman Roosevelt Allen, Jr. reported on recent activities. They recently re-organized and elected Tom Keilman as Chairman for 2012. He announced that new projects from the LPA's are needed. Informational packets will be sent out to NIRPC's board members. They want to make sure that projects are ready to let if finances allow. Committee meetings will be scheduled soon.

David Hollenbeck reviewed certificates of appointment. While the certificate from the Town of the Pines was incomplete, certificates from Trail Creek and Wanatah were in order. The new commissioners were welcomed.

INDOT: Angie Fegaras announced that Mike McPhillips has been re-assigned to the Indiana Toll Road. Bob Alderman will serve as acting district director.

Report of the Executive Director: John Swanson displayed the award recently received from South Shore Clean Cities for NIRPC's promotion of alternative fuels. Mr. Swanson also announced that a new, part-time director for the Indiana Association of Regional Councils has been hired.

On a motion by Brian Snedecor, second by Ken Layton, the meeting was adjourned.