

NIRPC Commission Meeting
Construction Advancement Foundation
2050 Southport Road, Portage, IN
February 18, 2016
Minutes

Chairperson Blair Milo called the meeting of the Full Commission to order at 9:10 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Executive Board members present included Anthony Copeland, Dave Decker, Michael Griffin, Blair Milo, Greg Stinson and Jim Ton.

Other Commissioners present included Kyle W. Allen, Sr., Jeanette Bapst, Geof Benson, Toni Biancardi, Kevin Breitzke, Christine Cid, Jon Costas, Bill Emerson, Jr., Will Farrellbegg, Thomas Fath, Karen Freeman-Wilson, Sylvia Graham, Richard Hardaway, Jack Jeralds, Cary Kirkham, Kathy Kniola, Nicole Markovich, Tom McDermott, Ron Meer, Nick Meyer, Roger Miller, Diane Noll, Lori Reno, Rick Ryfa, Dave Shafer, Brian Snedecor and George Topoll.

Guests present included Susan Orona, Justin Mount, Deb Backhus, Kevin Kirkham, Matt Deitchley, Lyndsay Quist, Val Gomez, Jeff Huet, Dean Button, Michael Kuss, Colin Highlands, Rick Powers, Julia Surber, Carl Lisek, Rebecca "Sis" Williams, Jill Murr, Christin Lazarus, Mark Bouman, David Wright, Jim Nowacki, Ebony Tillman, Dorreen Carey and Andrew Steele.

Staff present included Ty Warner, Steve Strains, Kathy Luther, Angie Hayes, Eman Ibrahim, Gary Evers, Mitch Barloga, Belinda Petroskey, Kelly Wenger, James Winters, Sarah Geinosky, Scott Weber, Stephen Sostaric and Mary Thorne.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the December 17, 2015 meeting of the Executive Board were approved by a vote, after a motion by Michael Griffin and a second by Kyle W. Allen, Sr.

Report of the Chair – Blair Milo:

- **Norman E. Tufford Award:** Ty Warner presented the Norman E. Tufford Award posthumously to former NIRPC Board member and 2015 Treasurer, Roosevelt Allen, Jr. Accepting the award were Cousin Kyle W. Allen, Jr., Sister Valerie Broadnax and Aunt Mary Ann Guyton. A moment of silence was observed in memory of Mr. Allen. A copy of an entry into the Congressional Record was provided wherein Rep. Pete Visclosky paid tribute to Mr. Allen for his lifetime of service to Northwest Indiana.
- Brian Snedecor announced that the Nominating Committee based their recommendations on attendance, sub-committee involvement, leadership, interest in service and engagement in NIRPC. The Committee's recommendations for the slate of Officers and Executive Board members for 2016 are:

Chairman	Jim Ton
Vice-Chair	Michael Griffin
Treasurer	Diane Noll
Secretary	Geof Benson

Executive Board Members are:

Lake County	Anthony Copeland
Lake County	Tom McDermott
La Porte County	Blair Milo, Immediate Past Chair
La Porte County	Dave Decker
Porter County	Kevin Breitzke
Porter County	Greg Stinson
Governor's Appointee	Ed Soliday

On a motion by Brian Snedecor and a second by Jon Costas, the Full Commission voted to approve the slate of officers and Executive Board as recommended by the Nominating Committee.

- **Exchange of Gavel:** Ty Warner thanked Blair Milo for her service to the Commission and accomplishing her goal of recreating the new committee structure and said he looked forward to her continued involvement. Blair Milo turned the gavel over to the new Chair, Jim Ton, who said he appreciated the opportunity to be involved in NIRPC.
- **Schedule of NIRPC Meetings:** Jim Ton referred to the schedule of meetings for 2016 shown in the packet, explaining that there are 53 Commissioners and, as required by NIRPC's enabling legislation, four meetings of the Full Commission are required to conduct certain business such as election of officers, budget approval and the adoption and amendment of bylaws, rules, and procedures for the operation of the Commission. Commissioners are expected to attend those four meetings. Also, while not required, all Commissioners are free to attend any of the Executive Board meetings.
- **Committee Assignments:** Jim Ton explained the assignments of participation in the committees. The new committee structure was shown in the materials. Commissioners will receive an electronic transmission asking to respond to the assignments they would like to have. At least two committee selections are required. Commissioners will be asked to provide their preferences, as first choices may not be able to be accommodated.

Presentation: Mark Bouman, Chicago region program director for The Field Museum, presented an update on the feasibility study for a National Heritage Area. The Calumet Heritage Partnership is continuing work on a feasibility study. The heritage area must be designated by the U.S. Congress. The area would be anchored by the Pullman National Monument on the west and the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore on the east. This is a big year as the National Park Service is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year; the National Lakeshore is celebrating its 50th; the state of Indiana is celebrating its bicentennial and NIRPC is celebrating its 50th. Friday, the Pullman National Monument is celebrating its first anniversary of when President Barack Obama signed the declaration creating the monument. There are 49 National Heritage Areas nation-wide. The Calumet Heritage Partnership will solicit public comment on the heritage area project in May. Ty Warner said The Field Museum is a great partner for Northwest Indiana.

Report of the Executive Director:

- Ty Warner reported that NIRPC has begun its “soft launch” of its 50th Anniversary. A 50th Anniversary logo is on nameplates, stationery, etc. and the packet cover shows the NIRPC office locations since 1966. Steve Strains is assembling a history of the agency.
- Ty Warner welcomed the new Commissioners and provided them with a welcome packet. Staff is available to answer any questions any Commissioner may have.
- Ty Warner, Blair Milo, Geof Benson and Dave Shafer attended the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) Conference in Washington D.C. The main platform was on transportation funding. Three of four of NIRPC’s transportation positions were addressed in the FAST Act (Fixing America’s Surface Transportation). The FAST Act creates a sustainable financing source for the next five years but funding sources after the five-year period need to be identified.
- Ty Warner welcomed Susan Orona, the new representative from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Region 5 office in Chicago.
- Kathy Luther received an award from South Shore Clean Cities (SSCC) for Empowering Women Woman of the Year for 2015 at the SSCC annual meeting on Tuesday, February 16.
- The NIRPC 2015 Year in Review was provided, reflecting the accomplishments of the agency over the past year.

Finance & Personnel Committee:

- Diane Noll, Treasurer, reported that the committee met this morning. Items were reviewed and approved. A budget amendment adds new revenue, which is a reimbursement from the old postage meter in the amount of \$1,490 as recommended by the Finance & Personnel Committee. Geof Benson made a motion seconded by Michael Griffin. Greg Stinson said the amendment needs to be amended with the new revenue number. Geof Benson amended his motion and Michael Griffin amended his second. The Commission voted to approve the budget amendment pending the amended revenue number.
- Diane Noll described the budget amendment which transfers funds in the amount of \$2,730 from Capital Outlays to Contractual to cover a program change for the Surface Transportation Program (STP) funded Trail Projects as recommended by the Finance & Personnel Committee. On a motion by Geof Benson and a second by Richard Hardaway, the Commission voted to approve the budget amendment as presented.
- Diane Noll described the contract between NIRPC and South Shore Clean Cities for the provision of professional education and training services as recommended by the Finance & Personnel Committee. On a motion by Geof Benson and a second by Richard Hardaway, the Commission voted to approve the contract between NIRPC and South Shore Clean Cities.

Environmental Management Policy Committee:

Geof Benson reported that the minutes of the January 7 meeting were in the packet. The committee heard a presentation on NIPSCO Pipeline upgrade projects in Northwest Indiana and a presentation on Urban Waters Five Star Program Grants.

Presentation: Kevin Kirkham and Deb Backhus presented on the NIPSCO Public Electric Vehicle Charging Station Program incentives made available for a limited time. He explained the charging stations, cost credits and other parts of the program, as well as the eligibility and requirements.

Transportation Policy Committee:

- Dave Decker reported that the committee met on February 9 and heard a presentation from Craig Phillips on Michigan City's US Hwy 421/S Franklin Street "South Gateway" Corridor Plan. The plan was produced to enhance development opportunities near the I-94 interchange.
- Eman Ibrahim presented Resolution 16-01, Amendment #5 to the FY 2016 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), which is a safety planning study for the area surrounding I-65 and US 30 in Hobart and Merrillville. The project funding of \$300,000 is 100% federally funded through the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP). On a motion by Kevin Breitzke and a second by Brian Snedecor, the Commission voted to adopt Resolution 16-01, FY 2016 UPWP Amendment #5. Brian Snedecor thanked NIRPC for this insight and vision to undertake this study.
- Gary Evers presented Resolution 16-02, Amendment #10 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program adding 9 new INDOT projects and project phases for surface reinforcement treatments in Hebron, Crown Point and Merrillville, installation of pavement markings and signs throughout the LaPorte District and repair of damaged overhead sign structures on the Borman near Munster. On a motion by Greg Stinson and a second by Michael Griffin, the Commission voted to adopt Resolution 16-02, Amendment #10 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program.
- Gary Evers presented Resolution 16-03, Amendment #11 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program for two sign replacement projects in Griffith, one sign replacement project in Merrillville, two sidewalk projects in Cedar Lake and a reconstruction phase on SR 152 in East Chicago using relinquishment funds from Dickey Road. On a motion by Geof Benson and a second by Karen Freeman-Wilson, the Commission voted to adopt Resolution 16-03, Amendment #11 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program.
- Belinda Petroskey presented Resolution 16-04, Amendment #12 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program for transit, adding a vehicle replacement project for Michigan City and modifying existing transit projects for NIRPC, Opportunity Enterprises, Porter County Aging & Community Services, South Lake County Community Services and East Chicago Transit. Total new funds are \$234,980 at an 80/20 federal/local match. On a motion by Geof Benson and a second by Sylvia Graham, the Commission voted to adopt Resolution 16-04, Amendment #12 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program.
- Gary Evers presented Resolution 16-05, Amendment #13 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program for 18 Local Public Agency (LPA) projects in Lake, Porter and LaPorte Counties. On a motion by Greg Stinson and a second by Geof Benson, the Commission voted to adopt Resolution 16-05, Amendment #13 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program.
- Gary Evers presented Resolution 16-06 Amendment #14 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program for 16 INDOT projects in Lake and Porter Counties. On a motion by Kevin Breitzke and a seconded by Tom McDermott, the Commission voted to adopt Resolution 16-06, Amendment #14 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program .
- Gary Evers presented Resolution 16-07, Amendment #15 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program for 13 INDOT project phases in Lake County relating to the I-65 added travel lanes from US 30 to SR 2. On a motion by Dave Shafer and a second by Michael Griffin, the Commission voted to adopt Resolution 16-07, Amendment #15 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program.

- Gary Evers presented Resolution 16-08, the selection of new federal aid projects for FY 2016-2021, which are at high crash locations in Lake County, Crown Point, Porter County and Valparaiso. On a motion by Greg Stinson and a second by Kevin Breitzke, the Commission voted to adopt Resolution 16-08, the selection of new federal aid projects for FY 2016-2021.
- Dave Decker said the Transportation Policy Committee will meet on Tuesday, March 8 at 9 a.m. at the Construction Advancement Foundation Training Center location.

Indiana Department of Transportation: Rick Powers said he was pleased about the widening of I-65. With the good weather, the district has done great work for preservation of infrastructure. INDOT is in good shape this year and is hiring CDL-licensed drivers. Tom McDermott thanked INDOT for their work with the cable strip barriers along I-65, noting to the new Commission members that this is an example of the cooperation between NIRPC and INDOT, and that Commission members can help make a difference. Jim Ton added that INDOT has been very responsive in addressing issues in the Chesterton area.

Public Comment on Agenda Items:

Jim Nowacki, Gary resident, thanked Commissioners for their service to the region. He commented on some engineering issues with the road and sidewalk work that was previously done on the US 12/20 corridor.

Announcements:

- Tom McDermott extended an invitation to attend 219 Day at the Hammond Civic Center on 2/19/2016.
- Dennis Rittenmeyer shared a flyer on the Shared Ethics Advisory Commission's annual summit which will take place at Avalon Manor on March 3 from 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Jim Ton thanked the Commissioners for attending this important meeting. Hearing no other business, on a motion by Geof Benson and a second by Kyle Allen, Jr., Jim Ton adjourned the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

A Digital MP3 of this meeting is filed. Contact Mary Thorne at the phone or email below should you wish to receive a copy of it. DVD recordings will be available once they are received by NIRPC from the videographer.

For requests for alternate formats, please contact Mary Thorne at NIRPC at (219) 763-6060 extension 131 or at mthorne@nirpc.org. Individuals with hearing impairments may contact us through the Indiana Relay 711 service by calling 711 or (800) 743-3333.

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