

NIRPC Full Commission Meeting
6100 Southport Road, Portage, IN
April 19, 2018
Minutes

Call to Order - Chairman Geof Benson called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting was streamed live.

Commissioners present included Kyle Allen, Sr., Christopher Anderson, Geof Benson, Tim Bietry, Kevin Breitzke, Robert Carnahan, Christine Cid, Lori Colmar, Bill Emerson, Jr., Don Ensign, Will Farrellbegg, Tom Fath, Karen Freeman-Wilson, Michael Griffin, Richard Hardaway, Jack Jeralds, Justin Kiel, Cary Kirkham, Andrew Kyles, Tom McDermott, Diane Noll, Rick Ryfa, Carolyn Saxton, Tom Schmitt, Brian Snedecor, Mary Tanis, James Ton and George Topoll.

Guests present included Rick Powers, Hodge Patel, Leah Konrady, Lyndsay Quist, Rick Powers, Matt Deitchley, Ismail Attallah, Don Oliphant, Kelly Wenger, David Wright, Frank Rosado, Jr. Jim Nowacki and Andrew Steele. Joyce Newland participated via conference phone.

Staff present included Ethan Lowe, Ty Warner, Kathy Luther, Daria Sztaba, Trey Wadsworth, Talaya Jones, Dominique Edwards, Charles Bradsky, Mitch Barloga, Meredith Stilwell, Lisa Todd, Gabrielle Biciunas, Eman Ibrahim, Scott Weber, James Winters and Mary Thorne.

Public Comment – Jim Nowacki, Gary resident, commented on the sinkhole on State Route 51 in Hobart and potholes on the US Highway 12-20 and State Route 53 projects. He conveyed his disappointment in the RDA once again holding their board meeting at the same date and time as NIRPC's board meeting.

Minutes – On a motion by Jim Ton and a second by George Topoll, the minutes of the March 15, 2018 Executive Board meeting were approved as presented.

Report of the Executive Director – Ty Warner introduced Dominique Edwards, NIRPC's Public Participation Planner, and announced the Brownfields Education Panel on April 25 from 8 am to 11:30 am at the NIRPC-Forum Offices in Portage. The schedule of public meetings for the 2050 Plan was available. Mr. Warner also directed attention to the Local Trax Program for rail overpasses, as there is hardly a community in Northwest Indiana unaffected by rail crossing issues. He thanked INDOT for the program and offered NIRPC staff's assistance if communities need help with the application.

Trey Wadsworth presented on the 2050 Plan. Ten public meetings, nine of which are accessible by public transit, will be held around the three-county region. Engagement will also be solicited through internet surveys and NIRPC's committee meetings. Plan adoption is scheduled for May 2019. Ty Warner commented that the Northwest Indiana Forum kicked off their regional economic development strategy project in which we are also involved and this process will be in sync.

In response to a request for information several months ago by Ed Soliday, a joint presentation was given by INDOT and NIRPC staff on Vehicular Traffic Planning for South Lake County. Matt Deitchley and Lyndsay Quist outlined a plan stemming from HEA 1002, a 20-year funding plan for state and local highway investment. The South Lake County plan calls for \$5.1 billion to repair existing infrastructure in the first five years with a Next Level Roads initiative for larger projects down the road. For more information go to NextLevelRoads.INDOT.in.gov. Trey Wadsworth and Scott Weber discussed congestion management

in the region through the performance-based planning process. Congestion measures and targets will be set by INDOT later this year. For more information, email Trey at twadsworth@nirpc.org.

Report of the Chair – Geof Benson said he and Ty Warner were invited to Las Vegas next month to attend a project demonstration event on Hyperloop development. Mr. Warner and Benson explained it was a sealed tube or system of tubes through which a pod may travel free of air resistance or friction conveying people at high speeds while being very efficient, similar to the bank deposit tubes at a drive-through. In a global competition, the Chicago-Columbus-Pittsburgh corridor was selected for further exploration, and they will join colleagues from this corridor in the trip arranged by the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission in Columbus

Finance & Personnel Committee – George Topoll said the committee met this morning to review the financial status, reconciliation of expenses, and approve the claims register. No action was required by the Commission today.

Legislative Committee – Mary Tanis said the Times ran a story this morning on the support of the South Shore by Congressman Visclosky. The General Assembly will meet in a special session on May 14. Kathy Luther described the need for support for ongoing funding for coastal programs. Contact Mary Tanis or Tom McDermott for more information.

Environmental Management Policy Committee – Bill Emerson, Jr. said the committee held a joint semi-annual meeting earlier in April with Urban Waters. DNR presented on the Indiana Stream and Wetland Mitigation Program. This program will fulfill mitigation permits as required by the Army Corps of Engineers, Indiana Department of Environmental Management, Department of Natural Resources, Division of Water. The next meeting is May 3 at 9 a.m. The committee is looking for presenters on issues like chromium, lead, Kankakee River issues, etc.

Technical Planning Committee – Kevin Breitzke reported that the Technical Planning Committee met last Tuesday and heard updates and a presentation on the 2050 Plan Development. A 30-day public comment period was held from March 5 to April 4 on the draft FY 2019-2020 Unified Planning Work Program with no public comments received. INDOT had several technical comments which did not result in any significant changes. Trey Wadsworth overviewed Resolution 18-08, the draft FY 2019-2020 Unified Planning Work Program consisting of \$2,514,629 in planning activities just in 2019 and \$2,527,445 in 2020. On a motion by Kevin Breitzke and a second by Michael Griffin, the Commission voted to adopt Resolution 18-08, the draft FY 2019-2020 Unified Planning Work Program.

James Winters explained the 7-day public comment report on Amendment #12 to the FY 2018-2021 Transportation Improvement Program went from April 3 to April 10. No comments were received. The amendment lists several funding increases and well as decreases. On a motion by Kevin Breitzke and a second by Andrew Kyles, the Commission voted to adopt Resolution 18-09, Amendment #12 to the FY 2018-2021 Transportation Improvement Program. In other reports, Mitch Barloga said the TIGER grant is doing another round in June and we will be submitting another application. Charles Bradsky said each community is required to meet with NIRPC and INDOT on their projects quarterly. The quarterly reports are due April 30. Meetings will be held on May 11 in La Porte, May 12 and May 15 at NIRPC. The next meeting of the Technical Planning Committee is scheduled for May 8, 2018 at 9 a.m. at NIRPC.

Indiana Department of Transportation – Rick Powers reported that with such a bad winter, INDOT staff has spent almost 25,000 hours in pothole repair. Construction season is open. Brian Snedecor thanked INDOT for the work on SR 51 between US 20 and US 30.

Announcements

- Bob Carnahan said volunteer week is April 15-25. The 16-Plus meeting on April 27 will feature Hal Slager as US District Attorney Tom Kirsch was called to Chicago. Mr. Kirsch will present at the next meeting on May 25 at 9 a.m. at Schererville Town Hall.
- Kevin Breitzke said Earth Day will be held at Porter County Expo Center this Saturday.
- Ty Warner thanked One Region Director, Leah Konrady, for attending today and for an excellent regional tour recently celebrating the assets of the lakefront served by the Marquette Plan. Mr. Warner also noted a format change to the meeting packet highlighting NIRPC mission. Attendance at the 2050 public meetings was encouraged to hear perceptions about the future from Commissioners' constituents.
- Kathy Luther expressed staff's willingness to come to a council or chamber meeting to talk about the 2050 Plan.
- Tom McDermott moved to address the issue again with the RDA to change their meeting time so as not to conflict with NIRPC's meeting as a gesture of good government; Jim Ton seconded. Motion carried.

Adjournment – Hearing no other business, on several motions and seconds, Geof Benson adjourned the meeting at 10:15 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.

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