

NIRPC Executive Board Meeting

6100 Southport Road, Portage, IN

May 19, 2022 Minutes

Call to Order

Chairman, Justin Kiel, called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting was streamed live on YouTube.

New Appointments to the Commission

Dave Hollenbeck announced there were no new appointments to the Commission.

Roll call was taken by Candice Eklund.

Present

The 8 Executive Board members present at the meeting included Tom Dermody (La Porte), Richard Hardaway (Merrillville), Justin Kiel (La Crosse), Sue Lynch (Portage), Lori Mercer (Westville), Wendy Mis (Munster), Greg Stinson (Porter), and Jim Ton (Chesterton).

The 7 other Commissioners present included George Topoll (Union Township), Kevin Breitzke (Porter County Surveyor), Robert Carnahan (Cedar Lake), Joshleen Denham (Trail Creek), Duane Parry (Michigan City), Tom Schmitt (Schererville), and Mary Tanis (Dyer).

Absent

The 3 Executive Board Members absent at the meeting included Bill Emerson (Lake County Surveyor), Sheila Matias (La Porte County Commissioner), and Jim Pressel (Governor Appointee).

The 32 other Commissioners not present for the Executive Board meeting included Kyle Allen (Lake County Commissioner), Duane Arndt (Kingsford Heights), Jeannette Bapst (Dune Acres), Janet Beck (Pottawattomie Park), Geof Benson (Beverly Shores), Jim Biggs (Porter County Commissioner), Charlie Brown (Lake County Council), Bill Carroll (Lake Station), Anthony Copeland (East Chicago), Jon Derwinski (Winfield), Daina Dumbrys (Michiana Shores), Denise Ebert (Wanatah), Robert Forster (Kouts), Tony Hendricks (La Porte County Surveyor), Jack Jeralds (Schneider), Mike Jessen (Porter County Council), Scott Kingan (Ogden Dunes), Andrew Kyres (Crown Point), Robert LeMay (Long Beach), Tom McDermott (Hammond), Mike Mollenhauer (La Porte County Council), Edward Morales (Porter Township), Matt Murphy (Valparaiso), David Peeler (Hebron), Jerome Prince (Gary), Rick Ryfa (Griffith), Angie Scott (Burns Harbor), Brian Snedecor (Hobart), Steve Spebar (Whiting), Gerald Swets (St. John), Sharon Szwedlo (New Chicago), and John Yelkich (Lowell).

Highland, Kingsbury, and The Pines have appointed no representatives to NIRPC.

Staff present included Ty Warner, Thomas Dow, Denarie Kane, Kevin Polette, Candice Eklund, and attorney Dave Hollenbeck.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the April 21, Full Commission meeting were approved on motion by Jim Ton and seconded by Richard Hardaway.

Public Comment – There were no public comments.

Report of the Chair– Justin Kiel

Justin Kiel had no updates to report.

Report of the Executive Director– Ty Warner

Ty Warner thanked the Commissioners who attended the Finance and Personnel (F&P) Committee meeting that was held prior to this meeting and appreciated the discussions regarding NIRPC's financial future situation and how to strategize and be more efficient in the challenges being faced. Ty also noted INDOT will be presenting on electric vehicle charging stations later in the meeting.

Finance & Personnel Committee (F&P) – Thomas Dermody

Thomas Dermody reiterated the engaging conversations at the F&P meeting this morning, adding they want to spend more time ensuring members understand NIRPC's F&P Committee as well as how to move forward with hiring quality staff. The financial reports, bank reconciliations, and claims registers for April 2022 were also reviewed.

1. Resolution #22-14: A Resolution of the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission for Year-End Reporting for Indiana State Board of Accounts (SBOA). Talaya Jones stated that in the past, the finance department provided financial statements to the SBOA under Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) reporting, which is typically financial data for investors looking to invest in certain companies. This reporting is costly, entails of a lot of staff time, and it is not needed for our agency. Since GAAP reporting is not a requirement of the SBOA for NIRPC's audits, the finance department is seeking approval to revert to the regulatory reporting, which is mandated by the SBOA. On motion by Richard Hardaway and seconded by Wendy Mis, the Executive Board approved Resolution #22-14.
2. Mr. Dermody noted the F&P Committee also approved an addendum to the LaPorte County Revolving Loan Fund Management Plan.

Technical Planning Committee (TPC) - Kevin Breitzke

Kevin Breitzke reported the TPC met on May 3, 2022 and heard a presentation on NIRPC's Regional Climate Action plan framework. The next TPC meeting will be held on July 5 at 10:00 a.m. The TPC brought the action item below to the Executive Board for consideration and adoption.

1. Resolution #22-13: 2023-2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). Thomas Dow stated the UPWP is adopted every two years. It is anticipated that a portion of the local funds will be allocated to some of the local partners on transportation related planning activities due to funds remaining from prior years. With the comments received recently from INDOT and federal agencies, this resolution is requesting the adoption to include the language "the UPWP document will be adopted to include any changes that may be required by funding agencies". On motion by Greg Stinson and seconded by Thomas Dermody, the Executive Board adopted Resolution #22-13. The amended document will be presented at the Full Commission meeting on July 21.

Economic Development District Report – Denarie Kane

Denarie Kane stated applications for the *Recover NWI* loan program are encouraged to be submitted through the end of June because the program ends in July this year. Contact Denarie for additional information.

The Economic Recovery and Resiliency plan initiative is advancing. A draft plan is expected the end of May, all round table discussions with stakeholders are complete, and the steering committee will have their final meeting on June 20. The final plan will be presented to the Full Commission on July 21.

INDOT – Matt Deitchley

Matt Deitchley noted the preliminary work that is being done on I-94 West between Illinois to Cline Avenue. Matt addressed the long grass on the state highway right-of-way and stated it was due to the amount of rainfall received this year. There is only funding allocated to mow three times a year, but sight line issues will be addressed as needed. Contact Matt if you would like to discuss further.

Matt discussed INDOT's Bike Helmet program. Representatives from INDOT are visiting schools to discuss bike safety and delivering helmets for children in kindergarten through second grade. Schools can apply to have INDOT come to the school or schedule helmets to be dropped off. To sign up, visit bikesafeindiana.com.

Scott Manning, Deputy Chief of Staff with INDOT, presented on the electric vehicle charging stations and provided an update on the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) program. The NEVI formula is federal funding that is allocated to each state through the FHWA funding formula and will be disbursed over the course of the five-year life of the bill, with Indiana receiving just under \$100 million. The goal of the program is to add a half million chargers nationwide by 2030. Metropolitan planning areas are also eligible to apply for NEVI funding. An EV charging infrastructure must be located within 50 miles of each charging station, needs to be within one mile of the interstate, and include at least four (150 KW direct current) fast chargers at each station. Scott informed the commission that state NEVI plans are due by August 1, 2022. INDOT feels Indiana's state approach will work with surrounding states. An in-person meeting is scheduled on June 2 from 3-5 p.m. ET in Plymouth Indiana. For

additional information, contact Scott Manning at smanning1@indot.in.gov. NIRPC will send INDOT's slide presentation to the Commissioners after the meeting.

Ty Warner added that NIRPC partners with Drive Clean Indiana (formerly known as South Shore Clean Cities), who is also working closely with INDOT, and is on top of all Electric Vehicle (EV) initiatives in Indiana. If partnered with their Green Fleets program, they can also help you partner with all regional EV infrastructure programs.

Other Business

Bob Carnahan announced that Cedar Lake's Town Manager, Chris Salatas, is looking for a Planning Director.

Announcements

Bob Carnahan announced the Cedar Lake Chamber of Commerce is hosting a Kids Fishing Derby on June 4. The first 100 kids will receive a free cane fishing pole.

Hearing no other business, Justin Kiel adjourned the meeting at 10:00 a.m. The next meeting on July 21 will be a Full Commission meeting.

The livestream video recording for this meeting is available on NIRPC's YouTube Channel at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aiYDZTmn3Dg>