

NIRPC Executive Board Meeting

6100 Southport Road, Portage, IN

September 20, 2018

Minutes

Call to Order - Chairman Geof Benson called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and self-introductions. The meeting was streamed live on YouTube and filmed for local public access.

Executive Board members present included Geof Benson, Karen Freeman-Wilson, Justin Kiel, Mark Krentz, Tom McDermott, Jr., Diane Noll, Ed Soliday, Jim Ton and George Topoll.

Other Commissioners present included Robert Carnahan, Tom Schmitt, Dave Shafer and Mary Tanis.

Guests present included Rick Powers, Justin Mount, Matt Deitchley, Adam Parkhouse, Heather Ennis, Terry Velligan, Jay Rohleder, Carl Lisek, Jim Nowacki, Christopher Murphy, Andrew Steele and Tim Zorn.

Staff present included Dave Hollenbeck, Ty Warner, Kathy Luther, Daria Sztaba, Trey Wadsworth, Talaya Jones, Dominique Edwards, Charles Bradsky, Eman Ibrahim, Candi Eklund, Gabrielle Biciunas, Peter Kimball, Scott Weber and Mary Thorne.

Public Comment –Jim Nowacki, Gary resident, commented on flooding issues on the 12/20 corridor.

Minutes – The minutes of the August 16, 2018 Full Commission meeting were approved on a motion by Ed Soliday and a second by George Topoll.

Presentation – Terry Velligan, United Bridge Partners and Jay Rohleder, Figg Group, presented an update on the Cline Avenue Bridge project. Once completed, it is expected to bring more economic development, improve transportation and congestion. If traffic counts are high enough the two-lane configuration could be expanded to four lanes. Charles Bradsky (NIRPC) relayed that INDOT has a project in 2023 to rehab Cline Avenue going into the bridge. More information is available at www.clineave.com. Bob Carnahan added that a more detailed presentation on the bridge will be given at the 16 Plus meeting at Schererville Town Hall on September 28. A brief question and answer session followed.

Report of the Executive Director –

- Ty Warner said he attended and was on a panel for the launch of the strategic plan for regional development spearheaded by the NWI Forum (“*Ignite the Region: Northwest Indiana’s Strategy for Transformation*”), for which he served on the Leadership Group. Though there are no initiatives for which NIRPC is specifically tagged that have not already stemmed from prior planning initiatives including the *2040 Plan*, “Ignite the Region” aligns the efforts of NWI’s regional agencies toward strategic goals. One of the recommendations, which is very helpful, is for the region to support NIRPC’s efforts to close the loop on the Economic Development District designation. The plan also syncs with the development of the *2050 Plan*. The strategic plan also support NIRPC hosting a Regional Economic Development Summit through the Economic Development Administration that will bring other federal partners to match federal programs to the region’s desired projects, which is planned for November 14. Heather Ennis thanked NIRPC and the communities for their participation in creating the plan. The plan is on the Northwest Indiana Forum’s website at www.nwiforum.org/economic-initiative.

- Mr. Warner referenced the activity outside the building. 300 trees are being delivered today as part of the US Forest Service's CommuniTrees program. A workshop will be held here on October 19 on trees and tree ordinances.
- Mr. Warner referred to the copy of a Northwest Indiana Times editorial provided at the request of Kevin Breitzke on driving deaths in the region. The Time's report on this last weekend correlates to NIRPC's efforts to reduce congestion through livable communities, transit-oriented development, safety targets and other programs to increase mobility and reduce the need for vehicle trips.
- Related to the value of creating opportunities for other transportation modes, Mr. Warner invited the Commissioners to take copies of the new Greenways and Blueways maps that have recently been printed and are being distributed throughout the region. .

Finance & Personnel Committee –

- George Topoll said the committee met this morning to review the financial status, reconciliation of expenses, and approve the claims register.
- Daria Sztaba said the Committee recommends approval of Procurement 18-21 for the purchase of vehicle replacements for Valparaiso V-Line, Procurement 18-20 for the purchase of two vehicle replacements for Porter County Aging and Community Services and two vehicle replacements for Valparaiso's V-Line and Procurement 18-24 for purchase of two vehicle replacements for East Chicago Transit. On a motion by Jim Ton and a second by Ed Soliday, the Executive Board voted to approve the procurements.
- Kathy Luther said the Committee also recommends approval of the addendum to the contract with South Shore Clean Cities for them to implement the Northwest Indiana Green Fleets Program, a duty of NIRPC's former environmental educator whose position is unfilled, through the balance of 2018 in the amount of \$30,000. On a motion by Ed Soliday and a second by Diane Noll, the Executive Board voted to approve the addendum to the contract as presented.

Environmental Management Policy Committee –

- Kathy Luther reported that the Committee recommends the adoption of Resolution 18-15 in support of SepticSmart Week which is this week. On a motion by George Topoll and a second by Justin Kiel, the Executive Board voted to adopt Resolution 18-15.
- Ms. Luther said EMPC will meet on October 4. NIRPC business will be conducted first at 8:30 a.m., and then at 9:30 a.m. the Environmental Protection Agency will join the committee to develop a Northwest Indiana sub-area contingency plan for emergencies for environmental instances. This is a result of the letters on the US Steel chromium spill.

Technical Planning Committee –

- Committee Vice-Chair Jim Ton reported that the Technical Planning Committee met on September 11 and heard a staff presentation and provided feedback on the draft Performance-Based Planning (PbP) Framework for the 2050 Plan. The Committee also heard a staff presentation and provided feedback on the draft Programmatic Investment Approach for the 2050 Plan and 2020-2024 Transportation improvement Program (TIP). Both presentations are on the website. Staff also gave updates on the 2050 Plan outreach.
- The Technical Planning Committee recommends action on Resolution 18-16, the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Performance Plan which must be submitted to FHWA by October 1st. Scott Weber explained the Plan. On a motion by Jim Ton and a second by George Topoll, the Executive Board voted to adopted Resolution 18-16.
- Action on the Project Substitution and Scope Change Policies will be sought at the Full Commission meeting in November.
- The Technical Planning Committee will meet on October 9 at 9 a.m. at NIRPC.
- Mr. Warner added that the PowerPoint presentations on the Performance Based Planning Framework and Programmatic Investment Approach are being worked through NIRPC's committees. While

sparing the Executive Board the same presentations today, staff did want to provide the Commission with an opportunity to review the presentations and offer feedback on the performance measures and the proposed new project selection process, which will ultimately increase transparency, objectivity, and predictability.

Legislative Committee – Mary Tanis announced the committee will meet on October 9 at 11 a.m. in the Dune Room at NIRPC and will feature a report from the AIM summit. Ms. Tanis said she testified on SB 195 about an increase in benefits to surviving spouses for first responders and she also encouraged attendance at the CommuniTree workshop.

Local Government Assistance Committee – The committee did not meet.

Indiana Department of Transportation – Rick Powers thanked Mr. Velligan for his work on the Cline Avenue Bridge and in Chesapeake. He said the call for Community Crossings projects will close on September 28 and the Local Trax application program closed August 31. Construction is moving along. The ADA retrofitting work is being done. INDOT is looking for winter drivers with CDLs. The LaPorte County project will be completed in a couple of weeks. Ed Soliday said the at-grade crossing experiments were mostly in Northwest Indiana with safety and congestion relief primary goals. Communities should make sure they apply for Community Crossings before the deadline. Charles Bradsky added that Northwest Indiana had six of the 36 applications submitted for Local Trax.

Other Business –

- Jim Ton read a statement regarding the importance of internal controls in the committee structure. He praised the shift of money management responsibilities from staff to the new Transportation Resource Oversight Committee.
- Mary Tanis said Main Street in Munster needs to be increased to four lanes under the West Lake commuter train corridor into Illinois (connecting to Joe Orr Road) to relieve congestion in the Dyer area.

Announcements –

Bob Carnahan said the Lake County Solid Waste District is holding two more waste collections: Saturday, October 13 in Griffith and Saturday, October 27th in Hammond.

Adjournment –

Hearing no other business, on a motion by Jim Ton and a second by George Topoll, Geof Benson adjourned the meeting at 10:20 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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