

Transportation Policy Committee Meeting

NIRPC Auditorium

May 14, 2013

MINUTES

Members Present

Duane Alverson, Art Biciunas, Joe Crnkovich, Dave Decker, Stan Dobosz, Stan Dostatni, Phil Gralik, Jerry Halperin, Jeff Huet, Tyler Kent, Bruce Lindner, Chris Meyers, Ian Nicolini, Mark O'Dell, Shawn Pettit, Jezreel Rodrigues, Claudia Taylor, Mary Jane Thomas, Bob Thompson, David Wright, Mike Yacullo. Joyce Newland participated via conference phone.

Guests

Dawn Biela, Marcia Blansett, Glen Campbell, Susan Carr, Janet Cypra, Rob Earnshaw, Craig Hendrix, Mike Jabo, Pete Kohut, Mike Mikus, Chris Moore, Christopher Murphy, Spike Peller, Chris Reynolds, Stu Summers, Ron Wiedeman, Kate Zale

NIRPC Staff

Mitch Barloga, Gabrielle Biciunas, Bill Brown, Jack Eskin, Gary Evers, Sarah Geinosky, Eman Ibrahim, Belinda Petroskey, Stephen Sostaric, Steve Strains, Mary Thorne

1. Call to Order, Opening and Announcements

- Chairman Shawn Pettit, NIRPC Commissioner and Merrillville Town Councilman, called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and self-introductions.
- The INDOT voluntary participation survey was available on the table.
- Dave Decker motioned to approve the minutes of the April 9 meeting; seconded by Bruce Lindner. Motion carried.

2. Programming

- FY 2012-2015 TIP Amendment #28 –Bill Brown described the four INDOT projects and five LaPorte County CMAQ projects. On a motion by Stan Dobosz and a second by James Ton, the committee recommended the amendment for adoption by the Full Commission.
- FY 2012-2015 TIP Amendment #29 – Belinda Petroskey described the transit amendment for engineering work for improvements to the NICTD Millennium Station boarding platforms. James Ton motioned to approve the minutes of the April 9 meeting; seconded by David Wright. Motion carried.
- FY 2014 Unified Planning Work Program Amendment – Eman Ibrahim reported that the federal transportation cut was 20%. Eman described the budget amendment which lowers NIRPC's total 2014 budget by 20%, from \$2,106,936 to \$1,664,911. The Marquette Plan will be updated with funding through the RDA and Coastal in the amount of \$55,000. MAP-21 recommendations for improved efficiency, congestion and safety are already being addressed through performance measures for all work we are doing. A new Valparaiso V-Line route analysis using FTA 5307 funds in the amount of \$100,000 will be posted on the website tomorrow. On a motion by Dave Decker and a second by Bruce Lindner, the committee recommended the amendment for adoption by the Full Commission.

3. Planning

Presentation – Public Participation Plan – Steve Strains described the significant input and work over the course of the past year, which resulted in changes in the new update of the plan. A Public Comment Summary Report was provided. There was a 170-day plus comment period. Levels of participation were measured. New outreach techniques being added include Facebook, webinars, Friends of NIRPC and youth

outreach. Twitter will be added this year. NIRPC is taking the TPC out to communities in the region several times a year. Once broadband is installed, we will be able to webcast our meetings. Staff completed internal review and met with the disability community. Other resources will also be used to meet the requirements when selecting meeting locations accessible to people with disabilities. While responsibility for public participation belongs to every staff person, after July 1, NIRPC regional planner, Stephen Sostaric, will oversee public involvement and communications. Discussion followed. James Ton motioned to recommend the plan to the full commission for adoption; second by Bruce Lindner. Motion carried.

4. Presentation – HB-1067, Mike Jabo, DLZ

HB-1067 establishes the federal fund exchange program to allow a county or municipality that receives funds from the federal surface transportation program to exchange the federal funds for an agreed upon amount of state funds. It provides that the Indiana Department of Transportation shall administer the program. Key points of the program were described. However, procedures for the process still must be developed, and questions need to be answered including application procedures and competition for funding, definition of project development tasks (e.g. NEPA documentation), a review process, right-of-way acquisition, definition of design and construction standards, level of construction oversight and necessary post-project documentation. An example of a project using STP-1 funds was illustrated. Brief discussion followed. Gary Evers commented that while each community will make its own decisions, no community can act independently of this MPO.

5. Indiana Department of Transportation

- Chris Reynolds highlighted projects being let in April, May and July.

6. Transit Operators Reports

- **NICTD** – Joe Crnkovich reported that ridership was steady. The board awarded contracts for the study to the RDA. The ridership survey was completed. Work on the new high-level platform at the Dune Park Station is underway. Catenary replacement work east of Michigan City is slow due to lack of funding.
- **GPTC** – David Wright reported that ridership figures are up 12%. The 2013 co-marketing campaign with the Railcats has begun. They will offer a \$5 discount on day-game admission to 30-day adult and student pass holders. Projects include a roof and landscaping at the Metro Center and landscaping at the opera facility. Other projects include modifications for two TIP projects, a JARC project to increase service on the tri-city corridor to extend service for North Township.
- **Porter County Aging and Community Services** – Bruce Lindner said senior and disability community service is from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday. They service 24,000 riders per year. They are currently working with Valparaiso for the V-Line.
- **Opportunity Enterprises** – Claudia Taylor said service is from Broadway, through most of Porter County and a small part of LaPorte County to provide rides to hospitals, doctors, etc. They have 18 vehicles. There is a shortage of drivers.
- **La Porte County Council on Aging/Parents and Friends, Inc.** – Susan Carr/Dawn Biela – The agency provided over 36,000 medical, shopping trips for the elderly and disability community, running 11 vans per day. Michigan City Public Transit and LaPorte Public Transit provide rides but not in between the two cities. There is a huge need for public transportation.
- **VLine/Chicago Dash** – Tyler Kent said service is expanding. A study will determine what other routes are needed. There are over 100,000 riders on the 4-vehicle Chicago Dash line.

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7. Federal Highway Administration/Federal Transit Authority

Joyce Newland said NIRPC's certification review will take place June 18 to 20 with a public meeting. TPC members may submit comments on the planning process directly to Joyce or Reggie Arkell of FTA.

8. Other Business, Public Comment and Upcoming Meetings at NIRPC

Announcements –

- Gary Evers said the new TIP is going out for public comment this weekend. There will be no capacity expansion highway projects; they will be added in as amendments after the comment period. The new air quality budgets were just published, and are effective in July.
- Mitch Barloga said the deadline for TAP and STP 1 trails is Friday. Applications for the new TIGER fund from \$10-\$200 million from grants.gov will be ready by June 30, 2014.

Upcoming Meetings:

- Land Use Committee – Tentatively at 10:00 a.m. May 22
- NIRPC Full Commission/Executive Board – May 23. Executive Session at 9 a.m.; public session at 11 a.m.
- Ped Pedal and Paddle Committee – May 23 at 1:30 p.m.
- Environmental Management Policy Committee – 9:00 a.m. June 6

The next Transportation Policy Committee meeting will be at 9:00 a.m. Tuesday, June 11, 2013 at NIRPC.

Chairman Pettit adjourned the meeting at 10:15 a.m.