

Minutes of the June 23, 2011 NIRPC Full Commission Meeting

Chairman Tom McDermott, Jr. called the meeting to order and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance. Self-introductions were made.

Commissioners present were Nancy Adams, Geof Benson, Michele Bollinger, Kevin Breitzke, Mary Brown, Bob Carnahan, Kathy Chroback, Christine Cid, Anthony Copeland, Jeff Dekker, Chet Dobis, Stan Dobosz, Michael Griffin, Eric Kurtz, Ken Layton, Richard Ludlow, Tom McDermott, Stephen Mockler, Chuck Oberlie, Shawn Pettit, Jim Polarek, Bob Schaefer, Tom Schmitt, Dave Shafer, Brian Snedecor, Keith Soderquist, Jim Ton, David Uran, George Van Til, and Olga Velazquez. Staff present included John Swanson, David Hollenbeck, Tom Vander Woude, Kathy Luther, Chase Morris, Bill Brown, Jody Melton, Hubert Morgan, Angie Hayes, La Kisha Girder, Eman Ibrahim, Belinda Petroskey, Gary Evers, Mitch Barloga, Gabrielle Biciunas, Steve Strains, and Kathy Dubie.

David Hollenbeck reviewed the appointment of Mayor Anthony Copeland, East Chicago, to NIRPC. He advised that the appointment was in order and welcomed Mayor Copeland.

John Davies spoke about the Society of Innovators and its awards program. He encouraged people to make nominations and celebrate what is going on in northwest Indiana.

Chairman McDermott reported on the recent National Association of Regional Councils' (NARC) conference held in San Diego. In addition to informative workshops, Dave Shafer was elected President-Elect and Kathy Chroback was elected to the Board of Directors. Geof Benson, Kathy Chroback, Dave Uran, Dave Shafer, and John Swanson added comments about the conference. John Swanson added that Congressman Visclosky has announced the awarding of \$50,000 for the Northwest Indiana Economic Development District to support the development and implementation of a comprehensive economic development strategy.

On a motion by Stan Dobosz, second by Stephen Mockler, the June 2 minutes were approved.

On a motion by Michael Griffin, second by Kevin Breitzke, the consent agenda was accepted.

Finance and Personnel Committee: David Uran, Chairman, reported that there were two items for commission action. On a motion by Jim Ton, second by George Van Til, the new contract between the Kankakee River Basin Commission and NIRPC was approved. A budget amendment was explained. This is money being received by NIRPC. On a motion by Shawn Pettit, second by Stephen Mockler the amendment was approved.

Environmental Management Policy Committee: Geof Benson, Chairman, reported on the committee's recommendation to form a work group to investigate the creation of a task force on septic treatment and its scope. He added that more information will be shared as it becomes available.

Transportation Policy Committee: Stan Dobosz, Chairman, reported there are four actions to be considered. Steve Strains explained Resolution 11-12, which would amend the Unified Planning Work Program to include the 2012 planning emphasis areas. On a motion by Stan Dobosz, second by Shawn Pettit, the resolution was adopted.

Bill Brown explained that Resolution 11-13 would certify NIRPC's compliance with Federal Transportation Planning laws and regulations. On a motion by Stan Dobosz, second by Shawn Pettit, the resolution was adopted.

Bill Brown explained that Resolution 11-14 would make the air quality conformity determination for the proposed 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan as well as the proposed 2012 – 2015 Transportation Improvement Program. He added that one comment was received and a response has been added. On a motion by Stan Dobosz, second by Shawn Pettit, the resolution was adopted.

Gary Evers explained Resolution 11-15, which would adopt the 2012 – 2015 Transportation Improvement Program, pending favorable action by the Commission on the 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan. He said that there are 464 projects valued at approximately \$665 million. Safety is a big item in this TIP. No public comments have been received. On a motion by Stan Dobosz, second by Bob Carnahan, the resolution was adopted.

Comprehensive Regional Plan Steering Committee: Chuck Oberlie, Chairman, commended staff and the steering committee for the great work they provided. He stressed that local issues rest with local officials and the CRP is, as its name indicates, regional. While the plan is being submitted today for approval, the steering committee is not done. It will meet again in September.

Phil Hanegraff presented power point information on the plan. He said that the plan direction and initiatives grew out of the public involvement. Also, the vision and strategy support all six livability criteria. He encouraged those involved to stay at the table...to get this implemented. On a motion by Chuck Oberlie, second by Jim Ton, Resolution 11-16, Adoption of the 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan, was approved.

Mayor Oberlie moved that Mayor McDermott dissolve the current steering committee and create a new implementation committee for the plan. The motion was seconded by Jim Ton and passed. Mayor McDermott said he will appoint a committee chair at the next Commission meeting. Anyone interested in serving on the committee should contact either Chuck Oberlie or Tom McDermott.

INDOT: Mike McPhillips and Angie Fegaras reported on pending action. INDOT and the casino do not have an agreement yet regarding Cline Avenue. Also, the first round of public meetings was held regarding the Illiana Corridor. Tom McDermott stressed that INDOT does cooperate and NIRPC's meetings provide a good forum for communication.

Public Comment: Gary resident Jim Nowacki asked when INDOT will be addressing the condition of 4th and 5th Avenues in Gary. Mr. McPhillips said he anticipates that the roads will be redone in 2012.

Announcements: Kathy Luther reported that northwest Indiana will be one of the seven national pilot sites for the newly formed water cleanup program of the Urban Waters Federal Partnership. However, that designation does not include funding.

Steve Mocker reported that Towns and Small Cities Council will not meet in June. The next meeting will be on September 29. A host community is needed.

Minutes of the June 23, 2011, NIRPC Full Commission Meeting
Page three of three

Olga Velazquez announced that a new company will be locating in Portage. Once operational, it will employ 500 people.

Report of the Executive Director: John Swanson said NIRPC has had very good interns. The two most recent are Chase Morris and La Kisha Girder. They were introduced.

The meeting was adjourned.