

NIRPC Executive Board Meeting
NIRPC, 6100 Southport Road, Portage, IN
October 20, 2016
Minutes

Chairman Jim Ton called the meeting to order at 9:25 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. Bob Carnahan asked for a moment of silence for the people who recently lost their lives on I-65 and reminded people to be extra careful when driving through work zones.

Executive Board members present included Kevin Breitzke, Dave Decker, Blair Milo, Diane Noll, Greg Stinson and Jim Ton.

Other Commissioners present included Bob Carnahan, Christine Cid, Will Farrellbegg, Karen Freeman-Wilson, Sylvia Graham, Richard Hardaway, Jack Jeralds, Dave Shafer and George Topoll.

Guests present included Joyce Newland, Susan Orona, Rick Powers, Christopher Anderson, John Swanson, Heather Ennis, Dean Button, James Nowacki, Don Oliphant, Bill McCall, Tim Zorn and Andrew Steele.

Staff present included Ty Warner, Steve Strains, Ethan Lowe, Jody Melton, Angie Hayes, Kathy Luther, Eman Ibrahim, Gary Evers, Mitch Barloga, Gabrielle Biciunas, Scott Weber, James Winters, Stephen Sostaric and Mary Thorne.

Jim Ton noted that there was not yet a quorum to conduct business, so agenda items not requiring action would be discussed first.

New Appointments: Ethan Lowe announced that two certificates of appointment were received, one from the City of Gary appointing Karen Freeman-Wilson and one from the Town of Burns Harbor appointing Eric Hull.

Report of the Chair – Jim Ton

- 1) Jim Ton announced the formation of the Nominating Committee; the members are Jim Ton, Michael Griffin and Diane Noll.
- 2) It has become evident that there are urban core and environmental justice concerns that can be more explicitly written into our existing committee structure. Action will be taken on this in order to address the need for more explicit language. The committee preference sheets for the 2017 cycle will again go out and your participation is appreciated.
- 3) The Local Government Assistance Committee will be given the additional charge of supporting urban core communities.
- 4) The Outreach Committee will be charged to have a specific awareness of environmental justice issues.
- 5) This new paradigm for committee structure has created some discussion, a part of which is the use of the same acronym for both the former Transportation Policy Committee and the new

Technical Planning Committee. However, the new TPC performs different functions than the former committee. Some inflight adjustments have been made. Two directly funded transit operators have been added to the committee membership with voting privileges. These changes will be made to the committee descriptions and a new request for participation will be sent out.

- 6) The comment period for the notice of proposed federal rulemaking on consolidation of Metropolitan Planning Organizations has been reopened until October 24. Mary Thorne will provide the contact information for submitting your comments regarding the proposed rulemaking, most likely in opposition.

Report of the Executive Director – Ty Warner

- 1) Ty Warner said he will be speaking tomorrow morning at Ivy Tech at a Business & Economic Outlook Forum.
- 2) Regarding the proposed federal rulemaking mentioned by Jim Ton, there was a great outpouring of concern across the country against the proposed MPO consolidation. NIRPC is working on a follow up joint letter with Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning and Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.
- 3) The Indiana Bicentennial Torch was carried by Bob Carnahan, Brian Snedecor, Dave Uran, Joe Stahura, Michael Griffin, Geof Benson and Justin Kiel, the youngest town council member in the State of Indiana. Bob Carnahan said he was at the very well-attended closing ceremony that evening in the Town of Waterman.
- 4) Dave Shafer received the Indiana Association of Cities and Towns (IACT) Financial Management award.
- 5) Ed Soliday received the Indiana Legislator of the Year award from IACT.
- 6) On December 8, the second Thursday of the month, the Full Commission will meet to approve the budget. Also, there will be a celebration commemorating NIRPC's 50th Anniversary. Kevin Breitzke noted that the 200th birthday of Indiana is on December 11th.

Minutes: Jim Ton noted that with the arrival of Blair Milo, a quorum of the Executive Board has been met. The minutes of the September 15, 2016 Executive Board meeting were approved on a motion by Greg Stinson and a second by Kevin Breitzke.

Addition to the Report of the Chair – Jim Ton

Jim Ton asked for action on Resolution 16-29, Support for the Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority's Strategic Development Plan Update with focus on the West Lake expansion and the South Shore double-tracking project. Kevin Breitzke made a motion, seconded by Greg Stinson, to adopt Resolution 16-29 supporting the RDA's Strategic Development Plan Update focusing on the West Lake expansion and the South Shore double-tracking with the costs, benefits and fiscal and economic impacts of that expansion. The motion carried.

Finance & Personnel Committee:

- Diane Noll reported that the committee met this morning to review the tentative budget which will be brought to the commission on December 8 along with recommendation on the Executive Director's contract.

Technical Planning Committee:

- 1) Vice Chair Kevin Breitzke reported that the Technical Planning Committee met on October 11th and heard a presentation from staff on the Greenways & Blueways 2020 Plan and Open House Schedule. The draft Plan will be on NIRPC's website tomorrow, along with information on the four Open Houses scheduled to take place. The final draft of the Plan is expected to be before the TPC and Commission in December for an action to approve. Please contact Mitch Barloga for details.
- 2) An ad-hoc committee met and reviewed the "B-List" application solicitation for projects in Lake and Porter Counties. Project proposals would be received and ready to be presented for recommendation at the November 1st Technical Planning Committee meeting, and then on to the Full Commission for consideration and action at its December 8th meeting. The application deadline was yesterday. Staff will review the applications and develop draft rankings for the ad-hoc committee to review. The TPC will review the rankings at their next meeting and recommend them to the NIRPC Board for adoption at their meeting on December 8 at 9 a.m. at NIRPC.
- 3) Staff presented on the Air Quality Conformity Determination between the 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan as updated and amended, the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program and the Indiana State Implementation Plan for Air Quality.
- 4) Four actions were presented for recommendation. The first action was on Resolution 16-30, Amendment No. 30 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement, found on pages 14 to 19. Gary Evers explained the amendment for INDOT projects. The amendment was vetted by the Interagency Consultation Group and no public comments were received. On a motion by Greg Stinson and a second by Dave Decker, the Executive Board voted to adopt Resolution 16-30, Amendment No. 30 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program.
- 5) The second action was on Resolution 16-31, Amendment No. 31 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement. Gary Evers explained this amendment for Local Public Agency projects. The amendment was vetted by the Interagency Consultation Group and no public comments were received. On a motion by Blair Milo and a second by Greg Stinson, the Executive Board voted to adopt Resolution 16-31, Amendment No. 31 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program.
- 6) The third action is on Resolution 16-32, the LaPorte County B-List Rankings. Gary Evers explained this amendment listing five new Federal Aid projects totaling \$317,801 for LaPorte County. On a motion by Greg Stinson and a second by Blair Milo, the Executive Board voted to adopt Resolution 16-32, the LaPorte County B-List Rankings.
- 7) The fourth action was on Resolution 16-33, Amendment No. 1 to the FY 2017-2018 Unified Planning Work Program. Eman Ibrahim explained this three-part amendment which adds a new program for a Household Travel Survey, I-65/US 30 safety planning and Air Quality Education/Outreach. NIRPC is grateful to INDOT for allowing us to use the carryover funds for these programs. On a motion by Dave Decker and a second by Blair Milo, the Executive Board voted to adopt Resolution 16-33, Amendment No. 1 to the FY 2017-2018 Unified Planning Work Program.
- 8) The last action was on the Interlocal Agreement to Engineer Signage on Regional Trails. Mitch Barloga explained this action on the agreement between 10 local agencies and NIRPC. On a motion by Greg Stinson and a second by Blair Milo, the Executive Board voted to adopt the Interlocal Agreement to Engineer Signage on Regional Trails.
- 9) The Committee also heard updates from all Topical Committees either through NIRPC staff or committee members. Please see Mitch Barloga for details on these reports.

- 10) Due to the November 8 elections, the next meeting of the Technical Planning Committee will be moved up one week to Tuesday, November 1st at 9 a.m. in NIRPC's Lake Michigan Room.

Indiana Department of Transportation:

- 1) Rick Powers commended the efforts of the LPAs and INDOT staff during the construction season, which made the Northwest District number 1. Approximately 163 contracts were awarded; none were rejected. The impacts are already being felt. The roads in LaPorte are greatly improved. Construction should be completed on time. People should be extra cautious and slow down to avoid any accidents in these construction zones.
- 2) There are increased thefts of copper wire and everyone is encouraged to report any suspicious activity. Repair and replacement costs are very high. Indiana taxpayers are being ripped-off and highway safety is being compromised. INDOT is considering implementation of some theft deterrent measures.
- 3) Winter preparation has begun.
- 4) INDOT is working with the City of Gary on the high water issues.
- 5) With regard to the Illiana, INDOT is in the same position as in the beginning. Ty Warner commented that there is a lawsuit filed against the State of Illinois.

Other Business:

- 1) Blair Milo said the Legislative Committee will meet next month at a date to be determined to put together a plan of action for the next legislative session of the General Assembly. There would be some cohesion with the Indiana Association of Cities and Towns (IACT).
- 2) Blair Milo thanked everyone involved in the improvements made to the roads in the City of La Porte.
- 3) Kevin Breitzke said NIRPC is monitoring the Great Lakes Basin Railroad plan and reminded everyone that up-to-date information can be found on NIRPC's website under "Hot Topics."
- 4) Dave Decker said that the Freight Committee will meet on Tuesday, November 1 at 10 a.m. at NIRPC.

Public Comment on Agenda Items:

James Nowacki, Gary resident, commented on the presidential election, the flooding situation on the 12/20 corridor project in Gary and the lead poisoning issue in East Chicago.

Announcements:

- 1) Robert Carnahan asked for volunteer judges for the Cedar Lake Parade of Lights on November 19.
- 2) Steve Strains, who has been at NIRPC for 43 years and Belinda Petroskey, who has been at NIRPC for 41 years, were feted with a presentation on their careers and words of praise from John Swanson, former Executive Director and Ty Warner, current Executive Director. Belinda Petroskey was out of town. Steve Strains spoke briefly on his career with NIRPC.

Hearing no other business, on a motion by Greg Stinson and a second by Kevin Breitzke, Jim Ton adjourned the meeting at 10:45 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.

For requests for alternate formats, please contact Mary Thorne at NIRPC at (219) 763-6060 extension 131 or at mthorne@nirpc.org. Individuals with hearing impairments may contact us through the Indiana Relay 711 service by calling 711 or (800) 743-3333.

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