

Transportation Policy Committee Meeting

NIRPC Auditorium

November 12, 2014

MINUTES

Members Present

Stan Dobosz, Dave Decker, Bruce Spires, Phil Gralik, Tom MacLennan, Nick Minich, Don Parker, Bruce Lindner, Margot Sabato, David Wright, Jerry Halperin, Joe Crnkovich, Jeff Huet, Mark O'Dell, Jezreel Rodriguez, Deb Backhus, Beth Shrader, Craig Phillips, Claudia Taylor

Guests

Jennifer Alander, Justin Mount, Bob Fulton, Brad Minnick, Jake Dammarrel, Mike Jabo, Craig Hendricks, Matt Kaiser, Mary Jane Thomas, Keith Benman, Chris Moore.

NIRPC Staff

Steve Strains, Mitch Barloga, Eman Ibrahim, Gary Evers, Mary Thorne, Stephen Sostaric, Sarah Geinosky, Scot Weber, and Gabrielle Biciunas

1. Call to Order, Opening and Announcements

- a) Vice-Chairman Stan Dobosz called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and self-introductions.
- b) The INDOT voluntary participation survey was available on the table.
- c) On a motion by Bruce Lindner and a second by Bruce Spires, the minutes of the October 14 meeting were approved as submitted.

2. Planning

- a) 2040 CRP Update
 - Public Meetings – Stephen Sostaric reported that 15 meetings were in all three counties and included sessions on motorized surface transportation, transit, environment and land use. There was a lot of interest in public transit, the West Lake Corridor expansion, and the Main Street extension to connect Joe Orr Road into Illinois. The public comment summary report will be completed soon.
 - Project Selection – Scott Weber said the CRP update will include a solicitation for new capacity expansion projects. A list of scoring criteria will be used to evaluate the projects in areas such as mobility, transportation and land use, safety, environment, and quality of life for a baseline total of 45 points. Project description and sources are required.
- b) Quarterly Tracking – Stephen Sostaric reported that communities are required to attend their meetings and turn in their quarterly reports. Gary Evers commented that “no meetings + no reports = no federal aid”.
- c) Public Participation Plan Update
 - Stephen Sostaric said the 45 day public comment period ended October 31. The report was available in the packet and was also emailed. No comments were received outside of the October 28 meeting.
 - Public Participation Plan – Steve Strains presented on the Public Participation Plan which was last updated in 2007. The update began in January, 2012, with presentations to the NIRPC subcommittees. The recommended draft was presented to the TPC in October of 2012. A public comment period was extended and public meetings were held in spring of 2012. The Commission asked for an ad hoc committee to meet with Everybody Counts in the summer of 2013. Further discussions were held with Everybody Counts through the settlement agreement and another

comment period was held, resulting in the final draft presented today. NIRPC will provide eventual real-time remote meeting access and consider rotating this committee's meetings when there are significant transportation planning decisions. Also, the Commission meetings will be held at other locations when attendance to the meetings warrants it, as with the meeting on the Illiana. There will be a more open process to comment on TIP projects, and extensive outreach methodologies will be implemented. Meeting locations will be ADA accessible. Staff will generate a meeting report and public comment report. David Wright moved to recommend and Phil Galik seconded the motion. Don Parker suggested that a timeline and budget for the remote access and other technologies be put into the UPWP. Steve Strains agreed, as funding for this technology becomes available. The Transportation Policy Committee voted unanimously to recommend the Public Participation Plan to the NIRPC Board for adoption at its December meeting.

- d) ITS Architecture – Scott Weber reported that the roles and responsibilities report was provided to the various stakeholders. The Architecture is currently being reviewed by FHWA and a draft will be unveiled at the December meeting. Contact Scott Weber with any questions.
- e) Functional Classification System – Scott Weber reported that he and Sarah Geinosky have met with 24 LPAs throughout the region to create an inventory of how our roads work. There are still 16 communities they need to meet with and they plan to do so by the end of the year. Contact Sarah or Scott if your community has not yet met with them. Results will be brought to the Transportation Policy Committee next year.

3. Programming

Gary Evers presented an overview of the solicitation for Notice of Funding Availability 2014 (NOFA) for new transportation projects for all counties for all funding programs. The deadline for applications is December 1, 2014. (Note: after the meeting, the deadline was extended to January 15, 2015.) Eligible applicants were listed, however, eligibility for state agencies has not been determined by INDOT. Submissions will be accepted via email, USPS, and in person. Handwritten applications will be accepted. Any public-private applications will need to be worked out prior to submission as they must be submitted by a unit of government or an eligible party. Criteria was overviewed. This is the final solicitation for alternative fuels. The project selection process is currently in place at NIRPC. The full list of projects will be brought to this committee in December for recommendation to the Board at their December meeting. All the information is on NIRPC's website. For HSIP Process, contact Stephen Sostaric ssostaric@nirpc.org, for STP & CMAQ funding, contact Gary Evers gevers@nirpc.org, and for general questions regarding the solicitation, deadlines, document formats, and meetings, contact Amanda Pollard aperegrine@nirpc.org.

4. Indiana Department of Transportation

Jennifer Alander reported on the lettings. For October, 34250 was rejected but will be combined in another contract. For January, the letting date for 24643 has been moved to March.

5. Transit Operators Reports

- a) **NICTD** – Joe Crnkovich reported that ridership was up in October about 1% over October but was still down for the year due to the bad winter. Extra trains will be added on Saturday, November 22 from Chicago to Michigan City for the festival of the lights on Michigan Avenue. Extra trains will run starting at 2 p.m. on November 26 and November 29 for shoppers. A regular weekday schedule will be followed on November 28. The new bridge at Hudson Lake began service on October 24. New rail was installed from the bridge west to Bircham Road. Five additional miles of catenary wire has been installed from the shops in Michigan City east. Westlake scoping meeting on the draft EIS was held on October 28 in Munster. Feedback was mostly positive, and questions were asked about stations, locations, etc.

- b) **GPTC** – David Wright reported that October ridership was the highest of the year to date, with increasing activity on the Lake Shore South in Hammond, Munster and Highland at a 30% increase as well as increasing activity on the Griffith route, as well as the two routes that serve Ivy Tech. Bus pass purchase arrangements are being worked out with Ivy Tech. An open house on the Livable Broadway project will be held on November 17 at 9:00 a.m. at the Purdue Tech Center, 9800 Connecticut Drive, hosted by South Shore Clean Cities. Service will be added on December 12 on the Lake Shore connection from downtown Hammond to downtown Gary during peak hours with trips running hourly.
- c) **Opportunity Enterprises** – Claudia Taylor said they are in need of drivers with a CDL for a 32-hour work week in the Valparaiso area. Applications are at www.oppent.org.

6. **Regional Transportation Partners** – No reports were given.

7. **Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration** – No reports were given.

8. **Planning Neighbors** – No reports.

9. **Other Business, Public Comment, Staff Announcements and Upcoming Meetings**

a) **Announcements** –

- Steve Strains commended Jerry Halperin, and announced that he will retire on February 27.
- Mitch Barloga announced a forum on livable centers will be held at the Blue Chip Casino on November 19. The cost is \$15. (Note: This was later cancelled).
- Mary Jane Thomas announced that Beth Shrader is the new City of La Porte Planning Director.
- Jack Eskin announced that a presentation will be made on the bikes on trains project next month at TPC and 3PC.
- Mitch Barloga announced that Tim Morgan is leaving LaPorte County Parks to take on a job in Michigan. An open house will be held tomorrow from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Red Mill County Park.

b) **Public Comments** – None.

- c) **Upcoming Meetings** –The schedule for both NIRPC committee meetings and the remaining 2040 CRP update public comment meetings was provided in the materials. The *Pathway to 2040* Committee will meet at 9 a.m. on November 13. The Land Use Committee will meet on November 19 at 10:00 a.m. at the Blue Chip Casino in Michigan City. (Note: This was later moved back to NIRPC). The Environmental Management Policy Committee will meet December 4 at 9:00 a.m. The Ped, Pedal and Paddle Committee will meet on December 4 at 1:30 p.m. The Executive Board will meet on December 11 at 9 a.m.

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

Stan Dobosz adjourned the meeting at 10:00 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. 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. The Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, marital status, familial status, parental status, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program.