

## **Transportation Policy Committee Meeting**

NIRPC Auditorium

May 12, 2015

### **MINUTES**

#### **Members Present**

Joe Simonetto, Roosevelt Allen, Jr., John Baylor, George Topoll, Delbert Brown, Matt Deitchley, Jeff Huet, Joe Crnkovich, Mark O'Dell, Tom MacLennan, Art Biciunas, David Wright, Stan Dobosz, Frank Rosado, Jr., Taylor Wegrzyn, Phil Gralik, Don Parker, Bruce Spires, Carl Lisek, Mike Yacullo and Jerry Siska and Joyce Newland via conference phone.

#### **Guests**

Bob Carnahan, Julie Ritzler, Mike Sietz, James Mandon, Mike Jabo, Brad Minnick, Amy Stanley, Ron Wiedeman, Chris Murphy, Peter Kohut, Chris Moore and Mitch Bishop.

#### **NIRPC Staff**

Belinda Petroskey, Mitch Barloga, Gabrielle Biciunas, Scott Weber, Gary Evers, Stephen Sostaric and Mary Thorne.

#### **1. Call to Order, Opening and Announcements**

- a) 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.
- c) On a motion by Joe Simonetto and a second by Don Parker, the minutes of the April 14, 2015 meeting were approved as submitted.

#### **2. Planning**

- a) Public Comment Period Results – Stephen Sostaric reported that the comment period for the 2040 CRP Update, FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program and the Air Quality Conformity Determination began March 9 and ended April 27. The report consists of public comments and responses from staff and is formatted as recommended in the Public Participation Plan.
- b) Air Quality Conformity Determination – Scott Weber reported that the Air Quality Conformity Determination which is included in the packet is required for the new FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program, and the update of our long range 2040 comprehensive regional plan for all added capacity regionally significant projects. The group of six agencies that conducted the determination were FHWA, FTA, USEPA, INDOT, IDEM and NIRPC through two teleconferenced meetings on projects going out from 2015 through 2045. We are in a non-attainment area for ozone. We were in a maintenance area in 1997 for fine particles but we are actually now in an unclassifiable area (In Indiana, Lake and Porter Counties are classified as unclassifiable of EPA's 2012 annual National Ambient Air Quality Standard.) The emissions analysis results shown in Table 4 for ozone for volatile organic compounds (VOC) and nitrous oxides (NOx) are less than the Motor Vehicle Emission Budgets established in the State Implementation Plan for Lake and Porter Counties for all years through 2045. The PM2.5 emissions in Lake and Porter Counties are also under the established emissions budgets for all years through 2045. Therefore, the 2040 CRP Update and the FY 2016-2019 TIP are in conformity with the federal regulations. On a motion

by Joe Simonetto and a second by Don Parker, the Transportation Policy Committee voted to recommend the Air Quality Conformity Determination to the NIRPC Commission for adoption.

- c) 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan Update Companion – Mitch Barloga reported that the draft update has been on the website since March. He read the memorandum from the Pathway Committee, giving their recommendation to approve to both the TPC and the NIRPC Commission. In answer to a question, Mitch Barloga said the Willowcreek extension project will not be in the TIP until the CRP update is adopted. Once adopted, additional artwork and some formatting will be added for the final update. On a motion by David Wright and a second by Don Parker, the Transportation Policy Committee voted to recommend the 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan Update Companion to the NIRPC Commission for adoption.
- d) Quarterly Tracking – Reporting for Amanda Pollard, Stephen Sostaric said the meetings are occurring this month.

### **3. Programming**

- a) FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) – Gary Evers presented the list of projects for both highway and transit portions of the new FY 2016-2019 TIP for both INDOT and local projects. Another handout was presented of fiscally constrained local highway projects. We are under spending in the TIP. There have already been some changes to the projects which will take place in the next few months and staff are working with the Local Public Agencies (LPAs) to see that all dollars are spent. Gary Evers pointed out a few regionally significant highway projects. There is a new interchange in La Porte County at SR 2 and US 20 which will improve safety. We continue to include the Illiana and I-65 added travel lanes projects, as well as center turn lane projects on US 41 from SR 231 to US 30. Don Parker made a motion and Joe Simonetto seconded the motion to recommend the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program to the NIRPC Commission for adoption. In answer to a question from Joe Crnkovich, Belinda Petroskey said the TIP does include all of the NICTD transit projects. In answer to a question from Joe Crnkovich, Gary Evers replied that the new TIP is effective as of July 1 assuming DOT and INDOT approval, and the 2015 projects will be done under grants which will be submitted prior to July 1. Belinda Petroskey added that any problems would result in amending FY 2015 projects into the new TIP. David Wright asked that all GPTC projects in the 2015 TIP be carried over into the new TIP. Gary Evers said that would need to go out for public comment. Any significant changes would need to be done through a TIP amendment after July 1. Belinda Petroskey said she will contact FTA about the grants. Stan Dobosz asked for a vote on the motion and a second. The Transportation Policy Committee voted to recommend the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program to the NIRPC Commission for adoption.
- b) Spending Update – Gary Evers reported that a request to move dollars to transit was made on Friday. There are two outstanding purchase orders in Lake and Porter Counties. We have closed out 2015 and zeroed out the Michigan City Urbanized Area and are within \$75,000 of closing out the Chicago Urbanized Area. We will obligate projects if possible from July through March and then work to close out the fiscal year. There is no time for anything new during the last three months of the state fiscal year cycle. Unexpectedly, INDOT did increase our FY 2015 apportionment last week and gave us two days to spend the money. That got handled as well. Gary Evers said he met with stakeholders in La Porte County regarding the projects submitted under the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) and they identified their top three projects which were shown in a handout. La Porte County spent their allotment in every year except 2020-2021. The results will be confirmed within the next 30 days and brought to this committee and the Commission as an amendment to the TIP in July. This will be done with a transfer of funds between urbanized areas. In 2017, funds will be moved from the Michigan City Urbanized Area into the Chicago Urbanized Area and then moved back to the Michigan City Urbanized Area in 2018.

- c) Internal Review Process – Gary Evers referred to a previous memorandum from Ty Warner shared last month stating that staff will review all projects for CMAQ, STP and HSIP for all counties to insure conformity with our plans and policies with regard to ADA compliance, Livable Centers, Complete Streets, NEPA and transit service expansion. NIRPC plans to have a pre-application eligibility review for all projects, as to some other MPOs do, before Memorial Day. Staff will meet with the LPAs to review and modify their applications and wrap up the selection of projects by the end of June or beginning of July for eligibility determination by late July. Gary Evers said Mitch Barloga will work with the Employees in Responsible Charge in presenting the results.

#### 4. Indiana Department of Transportation

Julie Ritzler reported that the July lettings are ready to go. In August, RS37239 will move to November 10, 2015 due to an ADA compliance issue.

#### 5. Transit Operators Reports

- a) **LaPorte Transit** – No report.
- b) **Valparaiso V-Line and Chicago DASH** – Taylor Wegrzyn reported that the ChicagoDash had its highest ridership level ever.
- c) **East Chicago Transit** – No report was given.
- d) **GPTC** – David Wright reported that April ridership is up 2% over April 2014 and the Lake Shore South experienced a high level in ridership. GPTC is looking to announce this summer the sale of bus passes in Hammond and Highland and GPTC will be working to add mail order and online pass. The Livable Broadway steering committee meeting last Thursday was attended by other large organizations including NIRPC and discussed recommendations to the board. The next meeting is Thursday, May 15 at 9:00 a.m. at the Gary Metro Center.
- e) **Michigan City Transit** – No report was given.
- f) **NICTD** – Joe Crnkovich reported that April ridership was down about 2% over April of 2014 probably due to spring break being held in March this year, but ridership is still up about 2% over the same time last year. Public hearings were held during April and the first week of May on a proposed fare increase. Few people protested the general fare increase, although some opposed raising the rates for cash fares, which pays for the cost of accounting for those cash fares. Suggestions are being reviewed and the Board will act on the proposal at their meeting on May 29. The East Chicago station stairway was rebuilt and opened for service on May 4. Staff is reviewing proposals for engineering work on five bridges. The overhead wire project continues and additional funding is being sought to speed up the process.
- g) **North Township Dial-A-Ride** – Jerry Siska reported that they are taking the final steps of an agreement with GPTC to sell bus passes. Ridership in the first quarter has increased. April has leveled off but ridership is still up over 2014.
- h) **Opportunity Enterprises** – No report was given.
- i) **Porter County Council on Aging and Community Services** – No report was given.
- j) **South Lake County Community Services** – No report was given.

#### 6. Regional Transportation Partners –

- a) Gary Chicago International Airport Manager Delbert Brown reported that operations are running 24/7 on the runway expansion for completion by the June 25 target date.
- b) South Shore Trails' Don Parker reported that information tables will be set up at the Tour de Highland Bike event on May 30. June 6 is National Trails Day and South Shore Trails are working on arrangements to participate with the Gary Air Show. Contact South Shore Trails to get help on your bike events.
- c) South Shore Clean Cities Executive Director Carl Lisek reported that the USEPA is offering a Diesel Emissions Reduction Act grant. Grant money is also available for school corporations for bus heaters.

SSCC also applied for a DOE Midwest Clean Drives grant to drive an alternate fuel vehicle. Electric charging station grants are available through NIPSCO. The next session of the Green Commuter Show on FM 89.1 will be on May 20 with the Mayor of South Bend. A Green Fleet Symposium will be held at Purdue Tech Center in Valparaiso. SSCC is hosting a Green Drives event at the DuPage County Fairgrounds in Illinois. Contact Carl Lisek for more information on these events.

7. **Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration** – Joyce Newland reported that on May 18, FHWA is coming out with a Separated Bike Lane Planning and Design Guide with a national webinar on June 2.
8. **Planning Neighbors** – No reports were given.
9. **Public Comment on Agenda Items** – No requests were received.
10. **Other Business, Staff Announcements and Upcoming Meetings**
  - a) **Other Business** – Gary Wright said Transit Day will again be done at the Lake County Fair.
  - b) **Staff Announcements** – No announcements were given by staff.
  - c) **Upcoming Meetings at NIRPC** –The Finance & Personnel Committee will meet at 8:00 a.m. May 21 at NIRPC. The Full Commission/Executive Board will meet at 9:00 a.m. May 21 at NIRPC. The Ped, Pedal & Paddle Committee is scheduled to meet at 1:30 p.m. April 23 at a location to be determined. The Environmental Policy Committee is scheduled to meet at 9:00 a.m. June 4 at a location to be determined.

During the NIRPC office rebuild, staff will be housed in the Auditorium. The next meeting of the Transportation Policy Committee will be announced.

On a motion by Joe Simonetto and a second by Don Parker, 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](mailto: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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