

NIRPC Executive Board/Full Commission Meeting
NIRPC/Forum Building, Portage, IN
July 17, 2014
Minutes

Chairman Brian Snedecor called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and self-introductions. The quorum was short one commissioner to hold a Full Commission meeting, however, there was a quorum for a meeting of the Executive Board.

Executive Board members present included Brian Snedecor, Blair Milo, Nancy Adams, Roosevelt Allen, Jr., Anthony Copeland, Dave Decker, Jim Ton, Don Ensign and Tom Schmitt.

Other Commissioners present included John Bayler, Geof Benson, Kevin Breitzke, Tom Clouser, Jeff Dekker, Stan Dobosz, Bill Emerson, Jeff Freeze, Michael Griffin, Richard Ludlow, Diane Noll, Lori Reno, Joe Simonetto, James Snyder, Joe Stahura, Ron Stallings and Eldon Strong.

Others present included David Capp, Ryan Holmes, Robert Alderman, Jennifer Alander, Rebecca Holwerda, Joyce Newland (via conference phone), Mary Brown, Bob Carnahan, Dennis Rittenmeyer, Ron Kurmis, David Wright, Tim Richardson, Pat Vassar, Greg Mance, Troy Williams, David Dowling, Bob Byrd, Jim Reeder, Rick Zormier, Paul Oliver, Deb Backhus, Rebecca L. "Sis" Williams, Christopher Meyers, Kristen Wells, Julia Surber, Jim Nowacki, Teresa Auch Schultz, Lu Ann Franklin, Renae Jackson, Teresa Torres and Rudy Velasco.

Staff present included Ty Warner, Steve Strains, Angie Hayes, Kathy Luther, Mitch Barloga, Scott Weber, Jack Eskin, Sarah Geinosky, Gabrielle Biciunas, Kathleen Honl, Terrell Waddell and Mary Thorne.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the June 19, 2014 meeting were approved on a motion by Jim Ton and a second by Nancy Adams.

Presentation: The Board heard a presentation by Northern Indiana District US Attorney David Capp on crime in Northwest Indiana. The US Attorney's office has four regional offices in Northwest Indiana, South Bend, Fort Wayne and Indianapolis as well as others throughout the rest of the state. Regional law enforcement are making effective use of science and ballistics technology to try to control gun crimes and homicides.

David Capp described a couple of cases his office worked on in recent years which illustrated that "crime knows no borders". One example was that of a methamphetamine ring run out of Kouts which was shut down. Another example was a Chicago Latin Kings battle which played out with a double homicide in Griffith. This case led to indictments of 21 major Latin King gang members who were held without bond, and solved 20 previously unsolved homicides in Northwest Indiana and South Chicago. A burglary ring in Lafayette which was broken up involved firearms found in Chicago 24 hours later. Heroin from Chicago was selling in the Pines, Michigan City and Valparaiso. Unfortunately, methamphetamine is still a problem.

The Attorney's Office is working in partnership with the Chicago Police Department's (CPD) Intelligence Center as well as with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) on the movement of firearms across the border in both directions. David Capp said the Chicago ATF Special Agent in Charge, Karl Vasilko is a former Munster police officer. The Chicago ATF has a program called e-Trace, which tracks guns through their serial numbers. The National Integrated Ballistics Information Network labs (NIBIN) utilizes technology to trace guns through shell casing evidence imaging. Federal, state and local law enforcement are striving for consistency in collecting firearms evidence. This evidence-gathering was instrumental in identifying and matching firearms and ballistics which helped solve many of the 20 homicides in the Latin Kings indictment. Science and technology are also used in conjunction with information gathered from witnesses, informants, etc. to piece together more information about seemingly unrelated crimes. In answer to a question, David Capp said turnaround time on evidence submitted to local NIBIN labs is about a month and he would like to see that reduced. Consistent improvement is needed in evidence processing by federal, state and local law enforcement which will provide regional accessibility and help solve crimes in a timelier manner.

The US Attorney's Office has some of the best training in the country, run by Ryan Holmes. Ballistics training has been held in Lake, Porter and La Porte Counties. David Capp extended an invitation to local law enforcement to attend ballistics training which will soon be offered in South Bend.

There was some discussion on the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act, commonly referred to as the RICO Act. David Capp said the RICO Act was the initial step used in taking out the 21 Latin King gang members as well as 15 members of the Imperial Gangsters terrorizing East Chicago. The RICO Act allowed the attorney's office to reach back over 10 years for conduct on the federal level, and also look at state violations as a predicate act for a federal offense.

David Capp thanked the elected officials for their interest in the process and said there is a lot of science which could be brought here should there be more funding assistance forthcoming at the federal and state level. He can be contacted at 219-932-5601 or by email at david.capp@usdoj.gov.

Brian Snedecor thanked David Capp and the Police Chiefs who attended and allowed any of the officers to leave the meeting at this time if they chose to do so.

Report of the Executive Director: Ty Warner reported on several items:

- Emails from NIRPC are now on Constant Contact. Ty Warner cautioned that some have gone into spam or blocked folders and asked everyone to check their email folders. The notices do look different than what most are used to receiving. In the bigger picture, the new system does a much better job of managing our electronic mailings than in the past.
- An exact construction schedule has not yet been determined for the new office build-out. The architect, Jeff Liggett, will be available in the Board Room after this meeting and Commissioners were invited to view the color palette for the new space.
- The House and Senate both passed stopgap versions of the Highway Trust Fund for \$10.8 billion, which would extend the fund through May, but with different funding sources so it's still in process on the national level. Dave Decker reported that at the National Association of Counties (NACO) meeting, it was announced that the President's push will be on transportation, particularly rail, in addition to highways and bridges and wants a six-year trust fund plan.

- Under the guidance of Blair Milo, the Committee on Committees to the Commission continues to meet, with assistance from staff on NIRPC projects and committee structure. A new construct to be considered should be ready for 2015.
- Ty Warner introduced Kathleen Honl, NIRPC's new Accounting & Procurement Coordinator.
- NIRPC continues to work with NICTD on transit-oriented development efforts, and will be providing support for a TOD deep-dive during the upcoming Strong Cities symposium.
- The Bikes on Trains study continues to progress with proposals to be scored shortly.
- Staffers Sarah Geinosky and Scott Weber have provided data support for the tri-state effort for the Alliance for Regional Development for transportation logistics and economic development and NIRPC has been leading the charge for asset dataset collection.
- A Functional Classification System educational meeting for municipal engineers will be held on July 28 from 10 a.m. to noon at the Construction Advancement Foundation Training Center, 6050 Southport Road. Emails will be sent with more information.
- The City of Gary received a Strong Cities designation from the White House. Information on the Strong Cities, Strong Communities, Strong Northwest Indiana Symposium was in the meeting packet. The symposium is next Tuesday and Wednesday, July 22-23 at the Genesis Center in Gary. The symposium is of great benefit not only to Gary for but to the entire region and attendance is strongly encouraged. Registration information is on the NIRPC website.
- Ty presented Terrell Waddell, Transportation Data Collection, with an award and congratulated him for 25 years of service with NIRPC measuring traffic around the region.

Finance & Personnel Committee: Jim Ton reported that the committee met this morning. The review of the financial status was sound with no cash issues. The Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) was issued on July 3 and is on the website. There were no issues or comments. Jim Ton congratulated the Accounting staff for their work on the audit. The building improvement status is fluid and moving in all directions simultaneously. There was one meeting with all involved parties and clarification is needed on some issues. A meeting will be held tomorrow with another group which has not yet signed off on the project. The construction project will then be sent to the state with final approval expected two to five weeks thereafter. The furniture and a color scheme have been selected, and swatches were available for viewing in the Board Room after this meeting. Comcast has begun connection for high speed internet and should be available during construction.

Transportation Policy Committee: Stan Dobosz reported that the committee met on July 8. Gary Evers described Resolution 14-20, the 21st Amendment to the Fiscal Year 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program, which adds one INDOT project to the TIP. On a motion by Dave Decker and a second by Jim Ton, the Executive Board adopted Resolution 14-20, Amendment #21 to the Fiscal Year 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program.

Gary Evers described Resolution 14-21, the 22nd Amendment to the Fiscal Year 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program, which adds 16 projects to the TIP. The Porter County project was deleted for CR 100 South as money was only earmarked for Willowcreek Road improvements. There were three other Porter County projects deleted for the same reason. On a motion by Tom Schmitt and a second by Nancy Adams, the Executive Board adopted Resolution 14-20, Amendment #22 to the Fiscal Year 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program.

Mitch Barloga described Resolution 14-22, the approval of the FY 2015-2021 Transportation Alternatives Program. The program is unique as it is now a seven year cycle with a record amount of

\$30 million in requests for about \$7 million in funding, which is 80% for bike and ped projects, and 10% each for Safe Routes to Schools and Environmental and Historic projects. The projects were ranked based on criteria and a formula. On a motion by Jim Ton and a second by Tom Schmitt, the Executive Board adopted Resolution 14-22, the approval of the FY 2015-2021 Transportation Alternatives Program.

The next meeting of the Transportation Policy Committee is scheduled for 9:00 a.m., Tuesday, August 12th at the NIRPC office.

Pathway to 2040 Committee: Nancy Adams reported that the committee met on July 10th and heard a presentation from EPA on the upcoming Strong Cities, Strong Communities Symposium to be held July 22-23 at the Gary Genesis Center. Staff presented on the Marquette Plan update and the committee provided suggestions which will be discussed at a meeting in August, date to be determined. The committee also were provided with a preliminary schedule for the 2040 Plan update.

Indiana Department of Transportation: Bob Alderman reported that emergency repair contracts are going forward. However, the contractors for the northern repairs chose to start in the east counties rather than the west, but the major part of the northern damage is in Lake and Porter Counties. Work continues on zoning issues in Lake County. The East Chicago 312 contract should let soon. Cline Avenue is looking better. There's a lot of damage south of here. SR 8 and SR 18 are in horrible shape as is Broadway in the north due to the bad winter. Trucks are moving demolition debris out of Gary. The FOP wanted to close 4th and 5th for the Gary Police Officer's funeral, but it couldn't happen because of the steel mills. INDOT and FOP worked on a solution which worked out well. There are no problems with the 12/20 project. There are issues with mowing contracts statewide and INDOT is still filling potholes. Bob Alderman complimented NIRPC on the hiring of Ty Warner as NIRPC's Executive Director, saying he has enjoyed working with him as well as members of the Commission.

Brian Snedecor said the presentation on the Hobart Comprehensive Plan would have to be postponed to next month due to an illness; however, he thanked NIRPC staff for their help with the Plan and recommended their professional assistance to any other communities who may be doing a comprehensive plan.

Other Business: None.

Announcements:

- In answer to a "trivia question" posed by Steve Strains, Michael Griffin said Indiana became a state on December 11, 1816. Steve Strains commented that Indiana will be celebrating its bicentennial and at the same time NIRPC will be celebrating its golden anniversary, forming 50 years ago in late 1966. Steve welcomed Kristen Fuhs Wells, Indiana Humanities who announced that August 15 is the deadline for communities to apply for a facilitated workshop to help prepare for the Bicentennial through "Community Conversations" which will help communities handle challenging issues. Communities would be assisted in creating a customized program to convene regional conversations, evaluate possible solutions for challenges, provide access to resources, and provide ongoing consultation in addressing these challenges. Information was available in the packet.
- Bob Carnahan announced the South Shore Summer Music Festival dates. The first one is Saturday in Cedar Lake with fireworks, July 25 in Griffith, July 26 in Crown Point, August 1 at Wolf Lake in Hammond and August 9 in Schererville.

- David Wright announced that the GPTC, North Township and East Chicago Transit will be joining Everybody Counts to provide Transit Day service to the Lake County Fair on Thursday, August 7. Details are available on their GPTC website as well as the Lake County Fair website.
- Deb Backhus announced that South Shore Clean Cities will celebrate its 15th anniversary on July 24 with an open house from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Purdue Tech Center in Crown Point.
- Dave Decker announced that the Super Bowl Race will be held in Michigan City August 1-3. Go to www.superboat.com for more information.

Public Comment on Agenda Items:

- Teresa Torres, Everybody Counts, said next year also marks the 25th anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Indiana Governors Planning Council gave Indiana a “C” with respect to compliance. Northwest Indiana received a “D+”. NIRPC can help improve that grade. ADA is a philosophy of inclusion about people’s civil rights. Next year, the ADA Legacy Tour will be touring large cities like Sacramento, Denver, Atlanta and they will also tour Northwest Indiana. Everybody Counts would hope Northwest Indiana can improve and showcase significant movement towards positive changes between now and next year.
- Jim Nowacki, Gary, commented that US Highway 12 has been designated as the Iron Brigade Memorial Highway to honor the Civil War Union Army unit; it has the same designation in Michigan, Wisconsin and Illinois. One of the signs has gone missing since the road work was done. Robert Alderman responded that although construction is now handled in the Central Office, he would look into the matter. Jim Nowacki also commented that part of 5th Avenue has now been designated the “Mayor Rudolph Rudy Clay Memorial Highway”, but the street sign should be changed to the proper title of “Rudolph Rudy Clay Memorial Highway”. Jim Nowacki was informed he should contact Sen. Earlene Rogers who proposed the resolution or the Indiana Historical Society who provided the sign.

On a motion by Nancy Adams and a second by Dave Decker, Brian Snedecor adjourned the meeting at 10:35 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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