

NIRPC Executive Board Meeting
Sycamore Hall, Woodland Park, Portage, IN
July 23, 2015

Minutes

Chairperson Blair Milo called the meeting of the Executive Board to order at 9:10 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and a brief stretch session.

Executive Board Members present included Anthony Copeland, Don Ensign, Blair Milo, Bob Schaefer, Greg Stinson and Jim Ton.

Other Commissioners present included Geof Benson, Kevin Breitzke, Bob Carnahan, Tom Clouser, Anthony Copeland, Jon Costas, Jeff Dekker, Stan Dobosz, Jeff Freeze, Diane Noll, Jean Poulard, Lori Reno, Tom Schmitt, Joe Simonetto, Joe Stahura, Ron Stallings, George Topoll and Dave Uran.

Others present included Justin Mount, Jim Nowacki, Cary Kirkham, Joseph Crnkovich, Tayler Wegrzyn, David Wright, Bruce Spires, Greg Falkowski, Dan Schulte, J. Rurode, Mike Vandergast, Mary Brown, Deb Backhus, Matt Deitchley, Julia Surber, Dennis Metheny, Salvatore DiBernardo, Bill Otter, Chris Murphy and Val Gomez.

Staff present included Kathy Luther, Gary Evers, Mitch Barloga, Eman Ibrahim, Belinda Petroskey, Kelly Wenger, James Winters, Sarah Geinosky, Scott Weber, Gabrielle Biciunas, Stephen Sostaric and Mary Thorne.

Appointment to the Commission: Dave Hollenbeck announced the appointment of David Anderson to the Commission representing the Town of Winfield.

Presentation: Bill Otter and Dan Schulte of Quandel Consultants, Inc. presented on the Bikes on Trains study, which included the preferred recommendation to retrofit five cars to accommodate up to 30 bikes at a cost of \$10 million for a five-year pilot program. Discussion followed.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the May 12, 2015 meeting were approved on a motion by Greg Stinson and a second by Dave Schaefer.

Report of the Chair:

- Blair Milo asked Commissioners to fill out their committee preference selection forms giving one to three choices and returning the forms to Mary Thorne. The new committees were approved at the May 21, 2015 meeting. Failure to turn in a form will result in your appointment to a committee at the discretion of Blair Milo. The selections will be voted on at the next Full Commission meeting.

- Blair Milo gave an update on the Regional Cities Initiative. House Bill 1403 passed earlier this year which created the Regional Cities program to champion the effort to build our State's communities in a regional capacity that celebrates the quality of life across the regions in Indiana. There is a maximum of \$84 million available for the programs submitted by a collection of regional cities. Applications are created by members consisting of either counties or cities which are a Class 2 or above with a population of at least 200,000. The Northwest Regional Development Authority is working closely with Northern Indiana Regional Cities Initiative to compile an application for the program. The Initiative consists of St. Joseph, Elkhart and Marshall County. They are applying for NICTD improvements across the northern tier and the NICTD service area. By having these two different entities working together, it potentially doubles the chance of both entities receiving an award. Heather Ennis of the Northwest Indiana Forum has been working closely with Bill Hanna of the RDA and First District Congressman Pete Visclosky's office towards building the application. Heather Ennis added that there will be public meetings soon in locations along the rail line and a survey can be found on the Forum, NIRPC and NICTD websites.
- Blair Milo said the regional organizations of One Region, the Northwest Indiana Times, the RDA, Forum, NIRPC and NIPSCO met to discuss initiatives to better integrate each of their missions and clarifying each group's roles across the region for the 2040 Regional Comprehensive Plan vision and with legislative initiatives and continuing collaboration on challenges, financial restrictions, infrastructure spending and major issues at the local, state and federal levels.

Report of the Executive Director:

- Kathy Luther reported for Ty Warner and presented a service award to Stephen Sostaric for five years of service with NIRPC. She reported that Ty Warner conveyed his thanks to the Commissioners for their flexibility in attending this meeting and for the well wishes to his family. He conveyed his thanks to the Northwest Indiana Forum for the use of their office space to NIRPC staff due to the burst water main.
- Geof Benson reported on the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) Conference last month on transportation bills. PowerPoint presentations are on their website, including a very good one on elder care. The NARC Board meeting is August 11 and 12 in Austin, Texas.
- Kathy Luther reported that the solarize campaign, partnered with NARC, had over 100 applications from residents and businesses, with the first contract being awarded to a dental office in LaPorte.
- Kathy Luther reported that a new proposal being submitted tomorrow is for a \$1 million from NOAA for coastal hazard and extreme climate event water resilience thinking of the 2008 flooding, shoreline facilities subjected to winter storms. This program would be modeled similar to NIRPC's Creating Livable Communities program for a grant opportunity within the Lake Michigan watershed.

Finance & Personnel Committee:

Jim Ton reported for Roosevelt Allen, Jr. that the committee met this morning. Two items are being brought to the Executive Board. The Finance & Personnel Committee recommends the 2015 budget amendment transferring funds within the environmental department to promote from environmental *projects* to environmental *programs* in the amount of \$3,000. On a motion

by Jim Ton and a second by Greg Stinson, the Executive Board voted unanimously to adopt the budget amendment.

The Finance & Personnel Committee recommends the procurement recommendations for three vehicle replacements, Procurement #14-10.02 for LaPorte TransPorte. On a motion by Jim Ton and a second by Greg Stinson, the Executive Board voted unanimously to adopt the budget amendment.

Transportation Policy Committee:

Stan Dobosz reported that the Transportation Policy Committee met on July 21 and four actions are sought.

- Resolution 15-17, the 2nd amendment to the FY 2016 Unified Planning Work Program, was summarized by Eman Ibrahim. The amendment adds STP funds for two programs for trail counters and trail marker and sign development. The amendment also corrects CMAQ funding by \$141,375 for air quality education/outreach and diesel engine retrofit. On a motion by Jim Ton and a second by Greg Stinson, the Executive Board voted unanimously to adopt Resolution 15-17, the 2nd amendment to the FY 2016 UPWP.
- Resolution 15-18, the adoption of new federal aid projects for state fiscal years 2016-2021 under the Notice of Funding Availability for CMAQ and HSIP projects in Lake, Porter and LaPorte Counties and STP projects in LaPorte as well as CMAQ projects in the Chicago Urbanized Area was described by Gary Evers. On a motion by Don Ensign and a second by Greg Stinson, the Executive Board voted unanimously to adopt Resolution 15-18, the adoption of new federal aid projects for state fiscal years 2016-2021.
- Resolution 15-15, the first amendment to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program adding INDOT highway projects or phases was described by Gary Evers. On a motion by Robert Schaefer and a second by Anthony Copeland, the Executive Board voted unanimously to adopt Resolution 15-18, Amendment #1 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program.
- Resolution 15-16, the second amendment to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program adding local projects or phases was described by Gary Evers. The amendment also deletes nine local projects or phases which were fully funded in the prior year and seven, which were deleted at the Local Public Agency's request. On a motion by Jim Ton and a second by Greg Stinson, the Executive Board voted unanimously to adopt Resolution 15-16, Amendment #2 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program.

Stan Dobosz said the date of the next meeting of the Transportation Policy Committee will be announced.

Northwest Indiana Economic Development District: No report was given.

Indiana Department of Transportation: Matt Deitchley reported that INDOT is working through pavement preservation projects and drainage issues from the heavy rains. Jim Ton thanked INDOT for the quick emergency repairs on SR 49 from Oakhill Road to the Indiana Toll Road and Robert Carnahan mentioned that a vehicle drove through the wet concrete on a stretch of I-55 from Crown Point to Lowell.

Other Business: No other business was brought forward.

Public Comment on Agenda Items:

Jim Nowacki, Gary, commented on the Bikes on Trains recommendation and the railroad crossing improvement on Lake Street. In answer to his question about a NIRPC contact person, Blair Milo said he should contact Gary Evers about funds received by the three counties served by NIRPC.

Announcements:

- Tom Schmitt reported that Main Street is closed at the Briar Ridge entrance for a \$1.6 million project to repair storm damage.
- Robert Carnahan announced that the parade of Lights is on November 21 and ask for two volunteer judges. Also, National Night Out in Cedar Lake on Tuesday August 4 will be at the town complex.

Hearing no other business, on a motion by Anthony Copeland and a second by Jim Ton, Blair Milo adjourned the meeting at 10:42 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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