

NIRPC Executive Board Meeting
Construction Advancement Foundation
2050 Southport Road, Portage, IN
September 17, 2015

Minutes

Vice Chair Jim Ton called the meeting of the Executive Board to order at 9:05 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Executive Board Members present included Roosevelt Allen, Jr., Anthony Copeland, Dave Decker, Don Ensign, Michael Griffin, Rich Murphy, Bob Schaefer, Greg Stinson and Jim Ton.

Other Commissioners present included John Bayler, Geof Benson, Kevin Breitzke, Bob Carnahan, Stan Dobosz, Karen Freeman-Wilson, Richard Hardaway, Tom McDermott, Roger Miller, Diane Noll, Lori Reno, Tom Schmitt, Joe Simonetto and George Topoll.

Others present included Rick Powers, Matt Deitchley, Justin Mount, Rebecca Holwerda, Val Gomez, David Wright, Jim Nowacki, Mike Vandergast, Ray Dumbrys, Rebecca Williams and Deborah Laverty.

Staff present included Ty Warner, Steve Strains, Kathy Luther, Angie Hayes, Gary Evers, Mitch Barloga, Belinda Petroskey, Kelly Wenger, James Winters, Sarah Geinosky, Scott Weber, Gabrielle Biciunas, Stephen Sostaric and Mary Thorne.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the August 20, 2015 meeting were approved on a motion by Dave Decker and a second by Rich Murphy.

Presentation:

A video produced by Ball State University's Student Media on "*Indiana Crossroads: A Transit Choice*" was shown. The documentary showcased a more integrated transit system across multiple modes and makes the case for greater passenger rail in Indiana through a series of historical documents and interviews with transit leaders across the country. (The 30 minute video may be viewed at <https://vimeo.com/125381656>).

Report of the Executive Director:

- Ty Warner reported that there are five applications which were filed for the Regional Cities Initiative across the state. The presentations will be made in the beginning of October. The northwest Indiana application is for \$42 million for double tracking the South Shore from Michigan City westward.

- NICTD was a recipient of a \$300,000 Federal Transit Authority grant for a transit-oriented development study.
- Ty Warner reported that he met with Joe Szabo, the new Executive Director of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) in Chicago to increase cooperation across state lines.
- NIRPC is working on updating its cooperative agreements with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), Southwestern Michigan Metropolitan Planning Commission (SWMMP) and the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC), as part of the Wingspread Accord which allows for regional cooperation.
- Ty Warner said he sent the letter to the Regional Development Authority (RDA) asking that they not hold meetings on the same day and time as NIRPC, as requested at last month's Executive Board meeting as Dave Hollenbeck represents both NIRPC and the RDA. He informed the Commission that Bill Hanna, RDA President and CEO, is in Japan.
- NIRPC switched to Google Apps, and is now on a Cloud-based email system.
- Staff is in the process of moving into the new space. Ty Warner showed some before and after photos and said that this meeting should be back at NIRPC in January or February.
- The first new committee to be installed is the Transportation Resource & Oversight Committee (T-ROC) which will consist of all the stakeholders. Gary Evers will schedule the first meeting by the end of the year, which will basically be "Transportation Funding 101".
- The Fall Newsletter will be out shortly. Highlights include the Greenways & Blueways Plan, the new space and the committee structure.

Finance & Personnel Committee:

Roosevelt Allen, Jr. reported that the committee met this morning to review the financial status. No issues were found. The claims register was reviewed and approved unanimously. The Revolving Loan Fund Management Plan was approved and forwarded to the Economic Development Authority for their approval. Most of the meeting was used to examine and analyze the draft 2016 budget. Once finalized, it will go to the full Commission for adoption at its next meeting.

Environmental Management Policy Committee:

Geof Benson reported that at the last meeting, the Committee voted to recommend a SepticSmart Week resolution for the Board's approval. This year, SepticSmart Week is September 21-25 and the Committee asked that communities embrace this, advertise it and make their own resolutions of support. See Kathy Luther for a packet of information. On a motion by Richard Murphy and a second by Michael Griffin, the Executive Board voted to approve Resolution 15-24 in support of SepticSmart Week.

Transportation:

- Stan Dobosz reported that the committee met on September 8 and requests consideration on four items. Eman Ibrahim described Resolution 15-23, Amendment 3 to the FY 2016 Unified Planning Work Program. The Amendment consists of two La Porte County projects, one project for the City of Michigan City and one project for the City of LaPorte using STP Group II funds with local match provided by each community. On a motion by Dave Decker and a second by Roosevelt Allen, Jr., the Executive Board voted to approve Resolution 15-23.

- Stephen Sostaric presented the results from the seven-day public comment period held between August 28 and September 3 for proposed Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) amendments 3, 4 and 5. No comments regarding the amendments were received.
- Stan Dobosz reported that the second action is on Resolution 15-19, Amendment 3 to the 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program. Gary Evers described the amendment adding two INDOT projects. Don Ensign made a motion seconded by Greg Stinson to approve Resolution 15-19. Kevin Breitzke commented that there was a drainage issue on SR 130 at the Lake/Porter County Line Road. The Executive Board voted to approve Resolution 15-19, Amendment 3 to the FY 2016-2019 TIP.
- Stan Dobosz reported that the third action is on Resolution 15-20, Amendment 4 to the 2016-2019 TIP. Gary Evers described the amendment adding local projects for Munster, NIRPC, Highland, Lowell, Hobart, Lake County and Hammond and deleting a Munster grade separation project. INDOT awarded a grant of \$9 million to Munster and Munster's total match is \$16 million to complete the entire project. On a motion by Roosevelt Allen, Jr. and a second by Dave Decker, the Executive Board voted to approve Resolution 15-20, Amendment 4 to the FY 2016-2019 TIP.
- Stan Dobosz reported that the final action is on Resolution 15-21, Amendment 5 to the 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program. Belinda Petroskey described the amendment adding two FTA Section 5310 vehicles for Parents and Friends and two for Michiana Resources, both in LaPorte County. On a motion by Dave Decker and a second by Don Ensign, the Executive Board voted to approve Resolution 15-21, Amendment 5 to the FY 2016-2019 TIP.
- The Transportation Policy Committee will meet on Tuesday, October 6 here at the Construction Advancement location. The statewide MPO Conference will take place the following week, necessitating the date change. (NOTE: As of 9/29/2015, the meeting has been cancelled.)

Indiana Department of Transportation: Rick Powers said the bridge on I-65 has reopened. Staff are preparing for winter operations. Chip sealing will be finished within a month or so. The cable barriers on I-65 are working. Contact INDOT for repairs if you see any that have been hit. Tom McDermott said the 311 app has been implemented for Hammond which provides total accountability. Rick Powers said that Matt Deitchley is leading an effort statewide on the development of a similar app.

Video: Stephen Sostaric showed a 30-second video on "What is an MPO?" from Broward County, Florida. Jim Ton suggested it be shown at the MPO Council's annual meeting next year which NIRPC is hosting.

Other Business:

Dave Decker said he attended a meeting with Conexus, who is formulating their 30-year plan of things to do in the area. He would like to arrange for a presentation at a future meeting of the NIRPC Commission.

Public Comment on Agenda Items:

Jim Nowacki, Gary, expressed his disappointment that again the Regional Development Authority held their meeting at the same time as the Commission meeting and felt it was a conflict of interest for the attorney who is retained by both NIRPC and the RDA. He also commented that Lake County represents 80% of the South Shore ridership, but only has two members on their board.

Announcements:

- Robert Carnahan recommended that NIRPC send a letter thanking Construction Advancement Foundation for allowing NIRPC to hold meetings in their Training Center free of charge.
- Robert Carnahan asked to remember Brian Snedecor's family in prayer on the passing of his father.
- Geof Benson said the Dunes Learning Center brought in two-year federal grants to help pay for a canoe mobile seating 10 people on Hammond's Wolf Lake, Gary's Marquette Lagoon, Michigan City's Trail Creek and Hobart's Lake George. So far, over 4300 children have experienced this team-building experience. A Community Day is planned for September 26 in Michigan City and on October 3 in Hammond. Kevin Breitzke commented that there was a photo this morning in the Post-Tribune and the program is a great learning opportunity.
- Rich Murphy announced that on Saturday Michigan City is opening the first ADA-accessible kayak launch. He also thanked Ty Warner for sharing the rail video and it should be taken back to the communities to discuss how to leverage rail for economic development. Rich Murphy said he was pleased with Mike Noland's leadership efforts with promoting transit-oriented development.
- Bob Schaefer said from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on September 24, Michigan City and LaPorte Economic Development Corporations are hosting a "Made in LaPorte County event at the former Whirlpool Complex in the City of La Porte. Over 50 manufacturing and distribution companies will showcase products actually made in LaPorte County. There is no charge for attending.
- Rick Powers said INDOT is looking for seasonal employees.

Jim Ton said everyone should pay attention to meeting notices as there could be changes. Hearing no other business, on a motion by Bob Schaefer and a second by Don Ensign, Jim Ton adjourned the meeting at 10:20 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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