

NIRPC Full Commission Meeting  
NIRPC, 6100 Southport Road, Portage, IN  
January 19, 2017  
Minutes

**Call to Order**

Chairman Jim Ton called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioners present included Kyle Allen, Jr., Jeannette Bapst, John Bayler, Geof Benson, Robert Carnahan, Christine Cid, Anthony Copeland, John Costas, Bill Emerson, Jr., Will Farrellbegg, Sylvia Graham, Michael Griffin, Richard Hardaway, Jack Jeralds, Tim Jones, Justin Kiel, Cary Kirkham, Tom McDermott, Jr., Blair Milo, Diane Noll, Ray Poparad, Lori Reno, Dave Shafer, Fred Siminski, Greg Stinson, Mary Tanis, James Ton, and George Topoll.

Guests present included Jim Biggs, Mary Brown, Justin Mount, Rick Powers, Matt Keiser, Jon Krueger, Jeff Huet, Rebecca Williams, Don Oliphant, Christopher Murphy, Salvatore DiBernardo, Sanjay Patel, David Wright, Mike Yacullo, James Nowacki, Tim Zorn and Andrew Steele. Joyce Newland participated via conference phone.

Staff present included Ty Warner, Dave Hollenbeck, Angie Hayes, Kathy Luther, Jody Melton, John Smith, Eman Ibrahim, Gary Evers, Mitch Barloga, Scott Weber, James Winters, Stephen Sostaric, Gabrielle Biciunas, Sarah Geinosky and Mary Thorne.

**New Appointments to the Commission**

Dave Hollenbeck announced new appointments to the Commission of Andrew Kyres for the City of Crown Point, Mary Tanis for the Town of Dyer, Tim Jones for the Town of Kouts and Ray Poparad for the Town of Burns Harbor. The Porter County Board of Commissioners appointed Jim Biggs at their meeting; the letter of appointment is forthcoming.

**Approval of Minutes**

On a motion by Geof Benson and a second by Kyle Anderson, Jr., the minutes of the December 8, 2016 meeting of the Executive Board were approved as submitted.

**Report of the Executive Director**

Ty Warner encouraged the new Commissioners to contact staff as needed for assistance. The NIRPC 2016 Year in Review was available, and is a web-based document. NIRPC received a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting Award and the Commission applauded Angie Hayes and the Finance Department. NIRPC has a new website that launched with the new year; some of the new content is still under development. Ty Warner presented Jody Melton with an award for 35 years of service and John Smith for 40 years of service to the agency.

**Finance & Personnel Committee**

Diane Noll reported that the Finance & Personnel Committee met this morning and action is needed on three items. The agreement between NIRPC and South Shore Clean Cities for provision of professional education and training services was adopted on a motion by Diane Noll and a second by Geof Benson. The Agreement between NIRPC and Responsive Management for the Air Quality Survey was adopted on a motion by Diane Noll and a second by Greg Stinson. Resolution 17-01 Establishing an Internal Control System and Policy and a Materiality/Irregular Variances, Losses and Shortages Policy was adopted by the Commission on a motion by Diane Noll and a second by Michael Griffin.

### **Legislative Committee**

Blair Milo gave a follow-up report from the November 2016 meeting of the Legislative Committee, which will meet as needed to identify and discuss issues relative to transportation both at the state level and at the federal level working with the National Association of Regional Councils. The committee will continue to monitor progress in support of the West Lake Corridor and NICTD double tracking. NIRPC Delegates will attend the February NARC conference and visit with congressional delegations regarding issues relevant to Northwest Indiana.

### **Environmental Management Policy Committee**

Geof Benson said the Environmental Management Policy Committee had a joint meeting in November with the Urban Waters Partnership. The next meeting will be on February 2 at 9 a.m. at NIRPC.

### **Report of the Chair**

Jim Ton thanked the Commission for helping to celebrate NIRPC's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary last month. The new committee structure is in place, implementing the structure spearheaded the previous year by Mayor Milo. The Nominating Committee produced a slate of nominations as follows:

Officers:	Michael Griffin	Chair
	Geof Benson	Vice Chair
	Diane Noll	Secretary
	Karen Freeman-Wilson	Treasurer
Executive Board:		
	Lake County:	Anthony Copeland
	Lake County:	Tom McDermott
	LaPorte County:	Blair Milo
	LaPorte County:	Justin Kiel
	Porter County:	Jim Ton
	Porter County:	Greg Stinson

The continued appointment of Rep. Ed Soliday as the Governor's appointee to the Executive Board is assumed. There were no nominations from the floor. On a motion by Jon Costas and a second by Kyle Allen, Jr., the Commission voted to adopt the 2017 slate as presented. Jim Ton turned the gavel over to newly-elected Chairman Michael Griffin. To celebrate his service as 2016 Chairman, Michael Griffin and Ty Warner presented Jim Ton with the Gavel Plaque. Michael Griffin recognized NIRPC past Chairs present at the meeting: Dave Shafer, Jon Costas, Blair Milo, Tom McDermott and Jim Ton. The 2017 Schedule of Meetings was available in the packet.

### **Technical Planning Committee**

Michael Griffin reported that the Technical Planning Committee met on January 10 and heard an overview of the vision and principles of the *2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan*. Goals, objectives and implementation projects will be presented at future meetings. Stephen Sostaric presented the Regional Corridors Study Public Comment Report, which had no adverse comments.

Eman Ibrahim gave a brief presentation on the Regional Corridors Study Plan and explained Resolution 17-02 for adoption. On a motion by George Topoll and a second by Kyle Allen, Jr., the Commission voted to adopt Resolution 17-02, the Regional Corridors Study Plan.

Amanda Pollard explained Resolution 17-03, Amendment #33 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program consisting of one project for the City of Portage. She explained that the two Valparaiso projects listed will be deleted from this amendment and will be included at a later time. On a motion by Jon Costas and a second by Kyle Allen, Jr., the Commission voted to adopt Resolution 17-03, Amendment #33 as amended.

The Transportation Policy Committee will meet on February 14, 2017 at 9:00 a.m. at NIRPC.

### **Indiana Department of Transportation**

Rick Powers announced several staffing changes. INDOT's new Commissioner is Joe McGinnis, former Mayor of Franklin. Lyndsay Quist is on maternity leave. Brandye Hendrickson left INDOT to become the Commissioner for State Personnel. Louis Torres is now Inspector General. Randy Gallagher, Operations Deputy is going to Purdue. In other news, the copper wire thief has been caught.

### **Other Business**

Tom McDermott, pleaded strongly for a resolution of support for the Cline Avenue Bridge which has still not been built more than seven years after being condemned by the state. Traffic is still diverted to local roads in East Chicago, Hammond and Whiting and no state money is forthcoming to assist in this infrastructure. Anthony Copeland said that when the state declined to replace the bridge, privatization was the available alternative. Mitch Barloga indicated he had already been speaking with the Figg Group, and offered to contact the consultants to give a presentation at the next NIRPC meeting.

Joyce Newland said USDOT will be conducting its regular four-year review of the metropolitan planning process for northwest Indiana in July.

### **Public Comment**

James Nowacki, Gary resident, said he walked from Gary to Indianapolis in support of the legalization of medical marijuana in Indiana and gave his thoughts on striping of the roads along the way. He asked everyone to support SB 255 to legalize medical marijuana in Indiana.

### **Announcements**

Robert Carnahan announced the second annual Winter Wine Tasting event on Saturday, February 4 at The Lighthouse Restaurant.

### **Adjournment**

Hearing no other business, Michael Griffin 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. 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](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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