

**Transportation Resource Oversight Committee Meeting
(Lake and Porter County)
Tuesday, January 25, 2022
Minutes**

This meeting was convened as an *electronic meeting*, in accordance with House Enrolled Act (HEA) 1437. All persons were meeting remotely on a Zoom platform that allowed for real time interaction and supported the public’s ability to observe and record the proceedings. When the agenda item was provided for public comment, this was supported as well.

Charles Bradsky called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call was taken by Candice Eklund. In attendance were Duane Alverson (Lake County), Bob Thompson (Porter County), Greg Falkowski (Crown Point), Deb Backhus (Gary), Dean Button (Hammond), Phil Gralik (Hobart), Steve King (Merrillville), Sandy Kolb (Portage), Jeff Huet (Schererville), Mike Jabo (Valparaiso), Nick Bellar (Winfield), George Topoll (Union Township), Kevin Breitzke (Porter County), Chris Salatas (St. John), David Wright (Gary), Mark Fisher (Opportunity Enterprises), Beth Shrader (Valparaiso), and Carl Lisek (SSCC).

NIRPC staff included Charles Bradsky, Meredith Stilwell, Kevin Polette, Flor Baum, and Candice Eklund.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the October 26, 2021, TROC meeting were approved on motion by Jeff Huet and seconded by Chris Salatas. With Duane Alverson, Bob Thompson, Mark O’Dell, Greg Falkowski, Deb Backhus, Dean Button, Phil Gralick, Steve King, Sandy Kolb, Jeff Huet, Mike Jabo, Beth Shrader, Nick Bellar, George Topoll, Kevin Breitzke, Chris Salatas, David Wright, Mark Fisher, and Kyle Lisek voting in the affirmative, and no one voting in the negative, the motion passed.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Spending Plan Update

Charles Bradsky presented the current spending plan. The table below outlines the additional funding from the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (IIJA) for Group 1.

	<u>FY22</u>	<u>FY23</u>	<u>FY24</u>	<u>FY25</u>	<u>FY26</u>
Additional					
Group 1	\$4,073,468	\$4,558,032	\$5,052,288	\$5,556,429	\$6,070,653
Total	\$24,622,105	\$24,647,823	\$25,869,262	\$25,646,220	\$26,160,444

Charles discussed spending options in FY 2022 to allocate the additional \$4 million in IIJA funding. Several projects could not let in FY 2022, which is the risk when projects go to letting in the Spring. Each of these projects could be allocated in FY 2023, resulting in 2023 being nearly fully funded, but leaving a surplus of \$4.2 million in 2022. Additional FY 2022 funding requests for the projects are noted below, in the order they were discussed, and Charles updated the Spending Plan live.

- Lake County Veterans Trail - \$1,276 million for right-of-way
- Valparaiso - \$330,000 for multi-use trail from downtown to the TOD area
- GPTC – \$750,000 for Grant St/Hobart project. Charles will contact INDOT to verify if CMAQ funds can be allocated to this project and if funds can move into CMAQ for a startup project
- Valparaiso – \$318,746 for PE on State Route 130 and 400
- Valparaiso - \$97,000 for a change order for Silhavy Road
- Crown Point - \$100,000 for PE to expand the scope of the round-a-bout at 113th and 231
- Crown Point - \$129,600 for Row of Way (ROW) acquisition at 109th and Iowa Street
- Lake County – 45th Avenue going to letting in March. Requested additional \$800,000 to cover construction estimate costs
- Griffith – \$280,000 to advance engineering funds from 2023 to 2022 for their Intersection Improvement project at Avenue H and Broad Street. Will need to submit RFP immediately.
- Three new roadway projects:

- Porter County - \$216,000 for the NEPA on Willowcreek Road
- Porter County - \$144,000 for Phase 1
- St. John – Requested full PE funding for Cline Avenue roadway between 101st and 93rd Avenue
- Valparaiso Transit – Beth Shrader stated the ChicaGo DASH service is still only 15% of ridership and inquired if they could receive operating assistance. Charles noted highway funds cannot be flexed for operating assistance, but will address this internally at NIRPC to see if help is available to supplement the transit operators
- St. John - \$1,060,000 (\$1,332,650 federal) for engineering costs on the Cline Avenue extension project
- Porter County – Bob Thompson discussed the project on Willowcreek Road for Phase 2 in FY 2022. The bridges project over 130 is a transformative project and they are requesting \$832,000 in federal funding for engineering. An application for this project was not submitted in the last NOFA. Dean Button noted there was still a surplus remaining in FY 2022, but it would bypass the NOFA process.
- Schererville – Add PE funding to the Kennedy Avenue phases to allow an earlier start. This is also a transformative project (like the Willowcreek Rd project). Charles and Jeff Huet will discuss further offline
- Lake County - \$200,000 to fully fund the project on 45th Avenue for ROW acquisitions.

The revised balance total for FY 2022 is \$2.6 million. Charles will work with the sponsors to ensure the amended projects will be added to the RTIP system and stated they will need to start their RFP processes now, if they have not already done so.

On motion by Jeff Huet and seconded by George Topoll, the committee approved to allow PE funds to be assigned to the Willowcreek Road Phase 2 legacy project, which is outside of the NOFA process. With Duane Alverson, Bob Thompson, Mark O'Dell, Greg Falkowski, Deb Backhus, Dean Button, Phil Gralick, Steve King, Sandy Kolb, Jeff Huet, Mike Jabo, Beth Shrader, Nick Bellar, George Topoll, Kevin Breitzke, David Wright, Mark Fisher, and Kyle Lisek voting in the affirmative, and no one voting in the negative, the motion passed. Charles will send an updated spending plan to the Committee after the meeting.

2022 NOFA Update

Charles presented on NIRPC's 2022 NOFA, *Invest NWI*, and said the NOFA Continuous Improvement Plan working group made adjustments to the NOFA process. One of the goals is for submitted applications to be 100% complete and all supporting documentation be included. Road Safety projects will now be done through NIRPC and the City Engineer or the ERC, and the Emergency Chief or their Deputy, will need to be present. Changes also included CMAQ calculations will need to be completed with the submission, and they have tightened requirements for legacy and transformational projects and for PE/ROW funding. A community's workshop for the NOFA will be held on March 31, 2022 with the applications being submitted between September and October.

Jeff Huet discussed Schererville being awarded Local Trax funds and said they have experienced greater than anticipated costs. Schererville submitted a request for grant funding assistance in the prior NOFA but was denied because state funding cannot be matched with federal funding. At a meeting he attended last week with INDOT, they cleared the way for funding to be supplemented with MPO funds, if available. Schererville requested \$1.16 million in funding to fill this gap in FY 2024. Dean Button stated Hammond is in a similar situation and requested \$2 million to also help with their Local Trax match for FY 2024.

Other New Business

Charles presented on the FHWA Highway Safety commitment to Vision Zero Goal and discussed the six foundational principles. When the requisitions come out for IJA, INDOT will be looking at HSIP qualifications because there will be more funding for those projects.

The confusion with the TIP/STIP continues with the 2022-2026 TIP because the STIP has not been approved by the FHWA yet. INDOT is hopeful the STIP will be approved by mid-February. Once approved, Charles will submit an emergency amendment to ensure the TIP and STIP are in sync.

No new business was discussed.

Adjournment

Having no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:38 a.m. The next meeting will be held on May 17, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. Future meetings are scheduled for August 16 and November 11.